



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: PW/Flood Control
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: October 4, 2022
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District

FROM: Department Scott D. McGolpin, Public Works Director, (805) 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director – Flood Control (805) 568-3436

SUBJECT: Central Coast Water Authority Exchange Request

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District:

- a) Approve an exchange of State Water Project water between Carpinteria Valley Water District and San Geronio Pass Water Agency and authorize the Director of the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District or his designee to execute the associated Department of Water Resources conveyance and approval agreement.
- b) Find that the proposed exchange of water between Carpinteria Valley Water District and San Geronio Pass Water Agency is in the best interests of the County because acquisition of this water is necessary to meet short term water supply needs for the community that the Carpinteria Valley Water District serves and the Central Coast Water Authority reports the exchange is the only available method for Carpinteria Valley Water District to supplement its immediate supplies.
- c) Find that this action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to 14 CCR 15269(a), 14 CCR 15061(b)(3), and 14 CCR 15301, and direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption with the Santa Barbara County Clerk.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda in order to approve a request from the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) for an exchange of State Water Project water between Carpinteria Valley Water District and San Geronio Pass Water Agency and authorize the Public Works Director or his designee to execute the associated Department of Water Resources conveyance and approval agreement. Carpinteria Valley Water District has entered into an agreement to receive up to 400 acre-feet (AF) of State Water Project water from San Geronio Pass Water Agency in 2022 in exchange for a return of two AF for each AF of transfer water (or up to 800 AF) before December 21, 2032. Because this exchange is at a ratio greater than 1:1, approval by your Board is required prior to processing by staff pursuant to Board Resolution No. 21-73 (Attachment B).

Carpinteria Valley Water District has three water supplies: local groundwater, Cachuma Project water, and State Water Project water. Generally, Carpinteria Valley Water District uses Cachuma Project water during wet and normal conditions, supplemented with State Water Project water, and uses minimal groundwater. As multiyear drought conditions occur, the strategy shifts away from using its surface water and imported supplies and leans more heavily on local groundwater. However, capacity of the Carpinteria Valley Water District well field is limited and cannot meet demand during the summer months so water must be taken from surface water supplies during the warmer months. This requires replenishing surface water supplies through the supplemental water program at CCWA as the drought persists.

As a result of the recent multiyear drought, groundwater storage is at a historic low in the Carpinteria Basin, and allocations from the Cachuma Project and the State Water Project have been reduced significantly, severely constraining Carpinteria Valley Water District's supply. The shortage of water supplies across the state has caused supplemental water to be scarce and only available at a very high cost or in uneven exchanges. If the drought continues, Carpinteria Valley Water District projects that maintaining supply through the next two years will require heavy groundwater use, purchase of around 500 AF/year of supplemental water, and achieving a minimum of 20% conservation. Because the entire state is in a multiyear drought, supplemental water availability is expected to continue to decline and future terms will be more onerous. Repayment of the 2:1 exchange is required to be completed in 10 years. Return will be made annually in 10% increments so as to not critically affect Carpinteria Valley Water District's water supply. If the water year is critically dry (below a 20% State Water Project allocation year), then Carpinteria Valley Water District would not be required to return the 10% per year until the water condition return to normal. In addition to water supply source strategies, Carpinteria Valley Water District has implemented its Water Shortage Contingency Plan and in October will likely be issuing a Stage 3 emergency calling for 30% conservation.

Both the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the Department of Water Resources also must approve any exchange of State Water Project water. Staff recommends approval of the exchange given the reasons discussed above and the ongoing drought emergency in Santa Barbara County and throughout the State of California.

The Department of Water Resources has not yet considered the exchange. If it does not approve the exchange, it will not proceed.

Background:

Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (“District”) has a Water Supply Contract with the Department of Water Resources for State Water Project water. Local purveyors, such as Carpinteria Valley Water District, receive State Water Project water through subcontracts with the District. On April 20, 2021, the District Board approved Amendment 21, (also known as the Water Management Amendment) to the Water Supply Contract. Along with this approval, the District Board passed Resolution No. 21-73 to guide the performance of the District’s duties to the Department of Water Resources under Amendment 21 in light of the ongoing drought emergency in Santa Barbara County and throughout the State of California.

Resolution No. 21-73 provides as follows:

- a. That requests for purchases of water outside the County to meet local water supply needs are generally recognized as beneficial and may be reviewed and approved by Director of the Flood Control District (District), or his or her designee.
- b. That transfers and sales of SWP water should be prioritized to purveyors inside the County to preserve and maximize the County’s available water supplies.
- c. That all requests for sales and transfers of SWP water outside the County, in accordance with Amendment 21, shall be presented to the Board for approval only after there are no in-county transfer options and the sale or transfer meets the following criteria;
 - a. That exchanges should be a minimum 1:1 so that they will not reduce the long-term water supplies, unless otherwise approved by the Board based on evidence of the benefits of the proposed transaction to the County.
 - b. That sales of local SWP water to SWP Contractors outside the County would be considered for approval by the Board based on meeting the following:
 - i. Right of first refusal for in-county agencies be offered first at a reasonable cost to in-county water purveyors; and
 - ii. That any sale of SWP outside the County also show an equivalent replacement of a new local supply.
- d. Changes in conditions may necessitate additional requirements, and changes in water supplies will require the Board to evaluate any transaction based on in-county conditions at the time.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Narrative:

N/A

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to email a copy of the minute order of these actions to clopez@countyofsb.org.

CCWA Exchange Request, 1st Supervisorial District

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Attachments:

Attachment A: CCWA Letter dated 9/22/2022

Attachment B: Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and
Water Conservation District No. 21-73

Attachment C: CEQA NOE

Authored by:

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