



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: Water Agency
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: December 8, 2015
Placement: Set Hearing
Estimated Time: 90 minutes on 12/15/15
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Water Agency

FROM: Department Scott D. McGolpin, Public Works Director, 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3436

SUBJECT: Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives Study and Update on
Drought and Short-Term Water Issues, All Districts

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors:

Set a hearing to consider recommendations regarding the Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternative Study and to receive an update on current drought and short-term water supply issues:
(FOR DECEMBER 15, 2015 ESTIMATED TIME: 90 MINUTES)

- a) Receive and file the Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives Report and Executive Summary;
- b) Determine that the Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives Report is exempt under California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Section 15262; Feasibility and Planning Studies and Section 15306 (Class 6) Basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities, as previously approved on August 26, 2014
<https://santabarbara.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1882950&GUID=1B83B6F5-E445-4BFD-90F0-E2A350D5A4B1>;
- c) Receive an update on current drought and short-term water supply issues from participating local water purveyors; and

- d) Determine that the proposed action is not subject to California Environmental Quality Act pursuant Guidelines Section 15378(b) (5), as it is an administrative action that will not result in direct or indirect changes to the environment.

Summary Text:

Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives

As directed by the Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara County Water Agency, the Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives Report (Report) was prepared to identify and characterize all viable options for accessing additional increments of water supply to meet long-term demands within the County of Santa Barbara. The Report was prepared during the fourth year of an historic drought and reflects the interest of many local and regional stakeholders to work together to take meaningful steps toward enhancing regional water supply reliability. In addition, the ongoing drought has highlighted the shortages of existing water supplies when stressed under current climate and use conditions.

The intent of the County-wide planning effort was to be comprehensive in identifying opportunities, but also to help in focusing the region on those opportunities that show the greatest potential to generate larger cost-effective supplies on a regional scale. It is also intended to identify implementation considerations which may make particular options less feasible. It is important to note that while this Report focuses on identifying supply options, increasing future water resources reliability for municipal, agricultural, and environmental demands will also require a companion understanding of water use efficiency strategies that can best leverage existing and future supplies.

This Report identifies and examines nearly 120 options to access, convey, treat and distribute supplies for use within the Region. These options were compiled from input received from the public at public meetings and through the project website as well as from local water and wastewater management agencies and user representatives at multiple Planning Partner workshops. Relevant options identified through previous planning efforts conducted for the Region as well as outside of the Region were also included.

Completion of this work compliments the existing Integrated Regional Water Management Program (IRWMP) process that the Water Agency coordinates regionally. It is anticipated that projects evaluated within the Report may be vetted and pursued through the IRWMP process and as such stands to be more competitive for State water supply related grants. The State is funneling more of the funding for water, wastewater, and flood control through the IRWMP process because it focuses on regional cooperation.

Short Term Water Supply / Drought Issues

By some measures, the last four years have constituted the most severe drought of modern record, both in Santa Barbara County and state-wide. Annual rainfall at Gibraltar Reservoir represents the driest consecutive four years on record during the 95 years of data collection. Rainfall at Gibraltar Reservoir is indicative of potential for inflow to the three reservoirs in the Santa Ynez River Watershed which constitute a major supply source for the County's south coast and Santa Ynez Valley.

The drought has a variable impact depending on the affected purveyor. While North County purveyors typically are reliant on a mixture of groundwater and imported water from the State Water Project (SWP), South County Purveyors are typically more reliant on surface water reservoirs on the Santa Ynez River. In the 2016 Water Year (beginning October 1, 2015), there is a net zero allocation of new Cachuma Project Water for the first time ever. While no new allocations were made, all of the South Coast Cachuma Member Units have carry-over water in Cachuma Lake.

The Emergency Pump System built by Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB) is in place and operating to allow for delivery of remaining carry-over water and imported water, including any SWP allocations which are delivered to the lake.

Updates from the various water purveyors have been requested similar to the information request sent to the purveyors for the water supply and drought update that was brought to the Board on October 14, 2014. Local water purveyors were invited to speak to your Board as well to outline steps they are taking.

Additionally, the County has been active in drought and water supply issues. Staff has been engaged with Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) and COMB, including attendance of most meetings and have been in close coordination with their staff.

A list of County actions includes:

- Preparing a “Safe Yield” analysis for Cachuma Reservoir to provide a sustainable delivery plan for a critical drought period
- Initiated Cachuma Member Unit managers meetings monthly (started in January, 2014)
- Extended Cloud Seeding Program for FY 15/16
- Cooperated with COMB on delivery of the Emergency Pump System
- Calculated water balances and projections for Cachuma Reservoir
- Reductions in water use for County facilities (Parks, General Services, and Public Works)
- Executed State agreements in cooperation with CCWA for supplemental water deliveries above allocated State Water Project deliveries

Background:

As directed by the Chair of the Board of Directors on November 5, 2013, the Water Agency has undertaken to produce a study of local water supply options available now and into the future. This agreement was approved on August 26, 2014. The scope of the Report includes evaluation of the feasibility, reliability, and cost of multiple water supply options including recycled water, desalination, reservoir desilting or modification, additional surface water storage, groundwater recharge or banking, importation of non-local supplies, State Water Project options, and water transfers, among others.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

Narrative:

Costs for this report have been included in the adopted FY 2014-15 and FY 2015-16 budgets in the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department. There are no fiscal impacts associated with this Board action. No General Fund money was utilized for this report.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order of these actions to the Water Agency office, Attn: Christina Lopez.

Attachments:

Attachment A - Executive Summary

Attachment B - Long-Term Supplemental Water Supply Alternatives Report

Attachment C – Santa Barbara County Water Purveyors Drought Status & Description (11/16/15)

Authored by:

Fray A. Crease, Interim Water Agency Manager, 568-3542