



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** January 7, 2014

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Water Resources Division, Public Works Department

**SUBJECT:** Annual Water Supply Management Report

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve and adopt the City of Santa Barbara Water Supply Management Report for the 2013 water year, finding that groundwater resources are in long-term balance in accordance with the conjunctive management element of the City's Long-Term Water Supply Plan.

### DISCUSSION:

The Water Supply Management Report (WSMR) is an annual report summarizing activities of the past water year (October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013). The report fulfills a mitigation requirement of the Coastal Branch of the State Water Project to manage water supplies to prevent long-term overdraft of local groundwater. City staff also use the report to inform Council and the public about recent activities and current water supply conditions. Key issues of the report are summarized below.

- Lake Cachuma ended the year at 49 percent of capacity. Remaining 2013 entitlement water has been preserved in the City's account as carryover water for future use. As the City's largest water supply source, Lake Cachuma is the most important indicator of the City's water supply status. Because Lake Cachuma is less than half full, continued dry conditions through the winter would trigger concern about a potential local water shortage. Our water supply is managed with the idea that the end of a spill at Cachuma may be the start of an extended drought. Under the Long Term Water Supply Plan (Water Plan), staff manages supplies so that local water shortages are not expected until the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive dry year of a 6-year critical drought period. The 2013 water year marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive dry year.
- A ruling by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) on water rights for the Cachuma Project is still pending. At issue is how water should be managed to balance the needs for water supply while protecting fish. The updated Final Environmental Impact Report has been completed and was officially entered in the

record following a hearing in March 2012. We have been told that a draft water rights order is being prepared for consideration in early January 2014.

- Gibraltar ended the year at 8 percent of capacity and water is not currently being taken from the reservoir due to elevated total organic carbon concentrations compared with other available sources. Siltation related to the 2007 Zaca Fire resulted in significant reduction in storage capacity at Gibraltar Reservoir and continues to cause increased water treatment costs. The reduced storage volume is the impetus for our work on initiating the “Pass Through” option under the 1989 Upper Santa Ynez River Operations Agreement (also known as the “Pass Through Agreement”).
- Groundwater resources are in balance and long-term groundwater production does not exceed perennial basin yield. Construction of the Ortega Groundwater Treatment Plant (OGTP) is complete, providing treatment for iron, manganese and sulfide which are naturally occurring constituents in some areas of Storage Unit #1 in the downtown area. With the OGTP online, the City now has capacity to operate both groundwater basins (Storage Unit #1 and Foothill) within the sustainable yield over the long term, with heavier use during extended dry periods and reduced use during subsequent wetter years to allow recovery of storage levels.
- The 2013 State Water Project allocation was 35 percent of Table A contract amounts. The City reserved most of its allocation of SWP water in San Luis Reservoir for use in future years. The City’s amount of SWP water in San Luis Reservoir carryover storage was 2,634 AF at the end of the 2013 water year. In addition, the City has 1,632 AF of banked water in the Dudley Ridge and Palmdale water banking programs. The initial allocation for 2014 is 5 percent, although this is subject to change depending on hydrologic and water supply conditions.
- Final design for the City's new recycled water filtration plant is complete and the project is currently out to bid. The new facility will use a membrane treatment technology to remove pathogens and particles that affect the appearance of the water, providing exceptional water quality that will reliably meet regulatory standards. The existing tertiary filter plant at El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant will be demolished and a new facility will be constructed in the same general location. Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2014 and be completed in Summer 2015. During construction, the recycled water system will be supplied with potable water. New recycled water customers will not be promoted during construction, but customers interested in recycled water can install new connections and will be billed as potable customers until construction is complete.
- In accordance with the Water Plan, the Water Conservation Program is operated to minimize the use of potable water supplies, meet the requirements of the California Urban Water Conservation Council Best Management Practices, and achieve compliance with the State’s “20% x 2020” per capita water use reductions. Conservation measures are evaluated for cost effectiveness based on avoided cost

of additional water supplies. In 2013, the City began implementation of the Water Wise Commercial Survey and Incentive Program for large commercial water users, identifying strategies to substantially reduce water use. The Smart Landscape Rebate Program has now had 550 applicants since its inception, with 267 having received rebates so far. In addition, the City is continuing to implement the comprehensive water conservation marketing plan with last year's highlights including the launch of a new regional Water Wise brand, development of the Water Wise Garden Contest, and trainings and partnerships with landscape and horticultural organizations. These included installing an Ocean Friendly Garden at Spencer Adams Park and upgrading plants at the Water Wise Demonstration Garden at Alice Keck Park Memorial Gardens.

- Total supply produced for delivery to customers was 14,397 acre-feet (AF) for the year, with a per capita water use of 129 gallons per person per day. These values are somewhat above our long term targets but are to be expected, since they reflect a year of local rainfall that was about 68 percent below average, with a corresponding higher irrigation demand.

In summary, water supplies continue to be sufficient to meet the policies of the City's updated Water Plan.

The draft WSMR has been made available for public review/comment and was presented to Water Commission on December 9, 2013.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** 2013 Draft Water Supply Management Report

**PREPARED BY:** Joshua Haggmark, Acting Water Resources Manager/KD/mh

**SUBMITTED BY:** Rebecca Bjork, Acting Public Works Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office