



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Agenda Item No. _____

File Code No.

Item 12

AGENDA DATE: January 13, 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 2014 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, 2013 through September 30, 2014). 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 32 percent of capacity. Remaining 2014 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. The last three water years (Oct 2011-Sep 2014) have received the lowest cumulative rainfall in recorded history for a consecutive three-year period. As a result of critical drought conditions, City Council declared a Stage 1 Drought on February 1, 2014 and subsequently a Stage Two Drought Condition on May 20, 2014. The Stage Two Drought condition requires a 20% City-wide demand reduction, and includes drought water use regulations that went into effect upon the Stage Two declaration and drought-based water rates that went into effect on July 1, 2014.
- 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 endangered steelhead trout. 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 2015.

- Gibraltar ended the year at 17 percent of capacity. 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 underlying the downtown area. Several groundwater well projects are underway to increase production capacity during extended dry periods. Groundwater pumping is reduced during subsequent wetter years to allow recovery of water levels in the basin.
- The 2014 State Water Project (SWP) allocation was 5 percent of Table A contract amounts, or 165 AF for the City. In response to state-wide drought conditions, the City purchased supplemental water conveyed via the SWP. The City used a combined 2,682 AF from the SWP system in 2014, and remaining City water stored in San Luis Reservoir was 3,275 AF at the end of the 2014 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 2015 is 10 percent, although this is subject to change depending on hydrologic and water supply conditions.
- Construction of the City's new recycled water filtration plant is underway. The new facility will use a membrane treatment technology to remove pathogens and particles that affect the appearance of the water, providing water quality that will reliably meet regulatory standards. The existing tertiary filter plant at El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant was demolished and a new facility is being constructed in the same general location. Construction is expected to be complete in Summer 2015. During construction, the recycled water system will be supplied with potable water and recycled water customers are expected to reduce their demands to comply with Stage Two Drought water use regulations. 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 2014, the City continued 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 over 1,100 applicants since its inception, with approximately 500 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 drought response forums with property managers and landscape contractors, targeted advertising that highlights low reservoir levels and simple actions to save water, and increasing the number of water checkups. Staff outreach also includes making significantly more presentations to community and industry groups, offering printed materials with drought-targeted utility bill messaging, providing drought-signage at City facilities, and sponsoring many additional drought-related community trainings and workshops. Workload for the Water Conservation Program has increased dramatically as a result of the drought.

- Total supply produced for delivery to customers was 13,248 acre-feet (AF) for the year, with a per capita water use of 118 gallons per person per day. Production and usage was down overall from the previous year in response to the Stage Two Drought condition declared on May 20, 2014 requiring mandatory reductions in water use.

In summary, water supplies for Water Year 2015 are projected to be sufficient provided that City-wide demands continue to achieve the 20% reduction target. The drought water supply strategy is based on adopted policies of the City's 2011 Long-Term Water Supply Plan, and has been adapted to reflect current water supply conditions.

The draft WSMR has been made available for public review and comment. On December 8, 2014, the Water Commission reviewed the draft and voted (X-X-X) to recommend its adoption.

ATTACHMENT(S): 2014 Draft Water Supply Management Report

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

SUBMITTED BY: Rebecca Bjork, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office