



City of Santa Cruz Water Department and Soquel Creek Water District scwd² Desalination Program

Monthly Project Update & Latest News– May 2012

Differences and Similarities with the City’s “People’s Vote on Desal” Ordinance and the ballot initiative

As mentioned in last month’s email update, scwd² hosted an information booth at the ‘Earth Day Santa Cruz’ event on April 21st. This was a great way to reach out to the community and talk about the proposed project and answer questions. One of the most frequently asked questions was about the City of Santa Cruz’s Ordinance and a community driven ballot initiative. Below are some key similarities and differences:

- On March 13, 2012, the SC City Council Adopted Ordinance 2012-3 that added Chapter 16.10 to the Santa Cruz Municipal Code requiring voter approval for desalination plant construction. The ordinance requires environmental review of the desalination project to be completed prior to the vote and does not prohibit the City from appropriating the funds necessary to undertake environmental analysis studies or to otherwise continue to analyze the proposed desalination plant’s construction, operation, costs and financing. The vote would take place at either a regularly scheduled statewide or general municipal election. To view the ordinance, click www.cityofsantacruz.com/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=25592.
- There is currently a group of community members gathering signatures for a November 2012 ballot measure that would require a two-step voting process to give voters a say on desalination. This alternative movement will require a first vote in November 2012 to amend the City’s Charter to give voters the right to vote on the desalination plant and then second vote no sooner than 2014 similar in nature to the City Council’s ordinance discussed above.

The City’s ordinance was intended to assure voters the right to vote on desalination in either June or November while eliminating the need and associated costs of conducting two separate elections. Officials are also discussing options on how non-City water customers, including customers in Live Oak and Soquel Creek Water District, could also weigh-in and vote on the proposed project.

Project Overview Fact Sheet

A new two-page fact sheet on the proposed **scwd²** Regional Desalination Project is available that includes a general overview of the project components and provides information on why desalination was selected to further evaluate by Soquel Creek Water District and the City of Santa Cruz, preliminary cost estimates, and the latest on the environmental review process. Copies of this fact sheet are available at each agency’s offices and on the project website: www.scwd2desal.org/documents/Fact_Sheets/Project%20Overview_Lo.pdf

Reminder: 5% Water Cutbacks from May 1-October 31, 2012

The City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District have both initiated Stage 1 Water Shortage Alerts as a result of below normal rainfall conditions last season. Both agencies are asking customers to reduce water use an additional five percent or more during the dry months, May through October, by restricting outdoor irrigation and eliminating water waste.

For more information visit:

- City of Santa Cruz: www.cityofsantacruz.com/index.aspx?page=396
- Soquel Creek Water District: <http://www.soquelcreekwater.org>

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