



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

January 2013- Monthly Project Update and Related News

Happy New Year!

For the past four years our monthly email updates on the **scwd²** Desalination Program have provided current information on the evaluation of desalination as a supplemental water supply for the City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District. In 2012, we continued to focus on preparing the environmental review of the proposed 2.5 mgd seawater desalination project and informing the community about the project. Other highlights from the past year include:

- Awarded the National Grand Prize for Environmental Communications from the American Academy of Environmental Engineers on communicating perspectives on water supply and desalination energy use.
- City of Santa Cruz councilmembers adopted Ordinance 2012-3 to require voter approval for desalination plant construction, and the Charter of the City of Santa Cruz was subsequently amended, which solidified the requirement.
- Amended the Agreement between the City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District to establish the process for the joint lead agencies to consider and take action on the EIR and the proposed project.
- Created a new project overview handout, had information booths at several community outreach events (Earth Day Festival, SC Business Fair, Capitola-Aptos Business Showcase, and SC County Fair), met with and answered questions with many members of the public including presentations made to various community clubs and groups.
- Completed the Seawater Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) Desalination Facility Preliminary Design Report.
- Soquel Creek Water District Board of Directors adopted the 2012 Integrated Resources Plan Update which set the basin recovery goals and evaluated ten alternatives to achieve that goal, explored mandatory water restrictions in lieu of a sufficient supply, and reaffirmed the **scwd²** Desalination project as the preferred alternative to further consider.
- Featured in the dedicated “Deconstructing Desalination” Series of the Santa Cruz Sentinel.

Look for the Draft EIR in spring 2013

While previously planned for release in late 2012, additional time has been spent to:

- Evaluate the impacts based on new information regarding the current water supply; i.e., the District’s overdrafted groundwater conditions and revised

estimates for recovery, and the State and Federal regulations that will require the City to leave more water in streams/ivers to protect fish and threatened species than previously anticipated.

- Analyze various and cumulative alternatives that have been proposed or altered since the initial scoping process such as additional water conservation, mandatory restrictions, surface/ground water exchange, and expanded use of recycled water.
- Incorporate policy decisions such as the Santa Cruz City Council and Soquel Creek Water District Board declaration to design the desal facility to be net-carbon neutral and include components such as solar panels and energy recovery devices.

The report is scheduled to be ready in early spring 2013 and will be followed by a public review period that includes the opportunity for the public to provide written and oral comments on the document. The EIR and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process are the foundation upon which the community and elected officials will evaluate and make critical decisions about the future of our water supply. For more information on how to participate, visit www.scwd2desal.org/Page-Project-phases_EIR.php.

2013 Meeting Schedule for scwd² Task Force

The joint **scwd²** Task Force, comprised of two Santa Cruz City Council members and two Soquel Creek Water District Board members, meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings are open to the public and the location alternates between the City of Santa Cruz Police Community Room (155 Center Street, Santa Cruz) and Soquel Creek Water District Headquarters (5180 Soquel Drive, Soquel). The 2013 meeting schedule is available on-line at http://www.scwd2desal.org/documents/Meetings/2013/2013_meetings.pdf. Meeting agendas, packets, and minutes are also available on-line at http://www.scwd2desal.org/Page-Public_Meetings.php

You received this email because your email address has been entered into the email distribution list of individuals who are interested in the Integrated Water Plan and **scwd²** Desalination Program. The IRWM includes regional planning efforts of many water agencies- including the City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District. If you do not wish to receive emailed updates, you may unsubscribe by emailing melanies@soquelcreekwater.org and typing "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

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