



## City of Santa Cruz Water Department and Soquel Creek Water District scwd<sup>2</sup> Desalination Program

### Monthly Project Update & Latest News – July 2011

#### **Technical Working Group evaluates list of Renewable Energy and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Projects that will reduce the carbon footprint for the proposed desalination project**

Energy consumption and GHG emissions from the proposed desalination project are of major importance for both the City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District. We are committed to evaluating ways to reduce the project's energy requirements and how to make the project net carbon neutral. As part of the Energy Minimization and GHG Reduction Study (Energy Study), staff from both agencies recently met with technical experts in a day-long workshop to discuss potential projects that would reduce energy and carbon emissions for the project. More than 45 projects were discussed, including converting food waste to energy at the wastewater treatment plant, various types of solar projects, wind/wave/tidal/hydro projects, renewable purchases, GHG offsets, and additional water conservation programs, to name a few. The group highlighted 15 projects to recommend for approval to the **scwd<sup>2</sup>** Task Force for further evaluation in the Energy Study. This recommendation will be considered at the July 20, 2011 Task Force meeting.

Monthly status updates on the Energy Study are available on our project website at <http://www.scwd2desal.org/Page-Energy.php#Status Reports of the Energy Study>.

#### **City of Santa Cruz amends municipal code to allow graywater systems for irrigation**

On June 28, 2011, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2011-04 that amends the SC Municipal Code and adds a new section to allow graywater use for irrigation. Graywater is wastewater that originates from showers, bathtubs, bathroom sinks and clothes washing machines. To view the ordinance, click here:

<http://64.175.136.240/sirepub/cache/2/c15i4145n4nfuw55yt0vpgna/286706707052011025341754.PDF>. This ordinance will go into effect July 28, 2011.

#### **Urban Water Management Plan Updates**

The City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District are currently each preparing their 2010 Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) which includes updating information on water demands, supply reliability, water conservation measures and water shortage contingency planning. Both agencies are planning on completing a draft of their UWMPs for public review and comment in late summer or early fall, and holding public hearings shortly thereafter.

#### **Inquisitive Minds Want to Know ...**

This month we're launching an on-going section that will answer frequently asked question(s) related to the proposed desalination project and/or our local water supplies. *For more FAQs, please visit the FAQs section of [www.scwd2desal.org](http://www.scwd2desal.org).*

**Q: Does the City plan to use the desalination plant in all years (not just drought years) to increase safe fish flow passages?**

A: No, the City would use Newell Creek Reservoir (often referred to as Loch Lomond Reservoir) to make up for the water the City must leave in the streams for fish. Newell Creek Reservoir currently represents the City's only drought protection; if a dry winter follows a summer where the reservoir is drawn down significantly for safe fish flows, the desalination plant would be used to help meet the following summer peak demands instead of further drawing down the reservoir supply. Since the reservoir fills up in normal rain years, it would not typically be necessary for the City to use desalinated water and Soquel Creek Water District would be using the supplemental supply to help restore its groundwater basin and protect against seawater intrusion.

**Q: Will the proposed project produce 2.5 million gallons per day (mgd) or 4.5 mgd?**

A: A project-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is currently under way for the proposed 2.5 mgd facility that will be shared by the City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District. The City's 2003 Integrated Water Plan identified 3.5 mgd and 4.5 mgd as potential expansions of the proposed facility and these expansions may be addressed at a cumulative or programmatic level in the forthcoming EIR. However, the City is currently re-evaluating whether these expansions are still appropriate with lowered water demand projections and to the extent the City still foresees a potential need to expand it in the future, the current EIR would address that possibility. However, if built and the City was ever interested in expanding it, a new project-level EIR and new permitting would be required assuring that keeping the possibility of expansion open today most certainly does not assure its approval in the future.

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