



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

Monthly Project Update & Latest News– June 2011

County Issues Status Report on Surface Water Transfer Concept between Santa Cruz and Neighboring Water Agencies

Last month, Santa Cruz County issued a status report on the Surface Water Transfer Concept that included the preliminary assessment of transferring surface water from the City of Santa Cruz (City) to the Scotts Valley area (Scotts Valley) and Soquel Creek Water District (SqCWD). The report included preliminary calculations of potential volumes available for transferring as well as the benefits and limitations associated with this concept.

The Surface Water Transfer Concept outlines how excess winter flows from the San Lorenzo River could be treated at the Santa Cruz Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant and delivered to Scotts Valley and SqCWD for direct use instead of groundwater or for infiltration into the groundwater basin.

There are a number of challenges related to this water supply concept including: 1) the annual amounts that could be available for transfer are highly volatile, and the average of 340 acre-feet per year (afy) identified for SqCWD would only provide 18% of their supplemental supply objective (currently estimated at 1,880 afy) to restore the Soquel-Aptos groundwater basin to levels protective against seawater intrusion; 2) given the limited average yield, sufficient water could not be banked in the aquifers within SqCWD to address the City's water shortage in the event of drought (estimated at 1,600 afy); and 3) permitting from fisheries resource agencies and the required amendment by the state to expand the allowed place of use under the City's current water rights are far from guaranteed and could take up to 20 years before a transfer would be allowed.

Despite the limitations and challenges, the City and SqCWD support further evaluation of a regional surface water transfer as a means of maximizing beneficial use of existing water supplies. The County of Santa Cruz will begin their second phase of the evaluation, to be funded by Prop 84 (Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant), with expected completion in 2012.

To access the County's status report:

http://www.scwd2desal.org/documents/Reports/Status_Report_SWT_May2011.pdf

To access the Powerpoint presented by John Ricker, County Water Resources Division Director, at the May 17th SqCWD Board Meeting:

<http://www.scwd2desal.org/documents/Presentations/Status%20Report%20on%20the%20Potential%20for%20Surface%20Water.pdf>

scwd² Seawater Desalination Pilot Plant receives a 2011 Merit Award from ACEC

The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) recently awarded engineering firm CDM with a 2011 Merit Award for the scwd² Seawater Desalination Pilot Plant Project. The pilot plant was recognized as a project that demonstrated a high degree of innovation, achievement and value. CDM was the engineering firm that designed, built, and operated the 13-month study from 2008-2009.

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