

# How to Participate

## in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Process

The EIR identifies and evaluates environmental impacts, identifies mitigation measures, and evaluates potentially feasible alternatives to the proposed project.

### 2008-2012

#### Technical Studies

- Community meetings held

### December 2010

#### Scoping Comment Period

- Public input received on what should be studied in EIR

### May-July 2013

#### Draft EIR Comment Period

- Public input at meetings (June 3)
- Written comments\* accepted by email and mail

### Early 2014

#### Consider EIR Certification

- Hearings scheduled by governing bodies to consider certification of Final EIR

### November 2010

#### Notice of Preparation (NOP)

- Community meetings held

### Spring 2013

#### Draft EIR Released

- Electronic copies available online
- Hard copies available at the City and District offices and local libraries (in service area)

### Late 2013

#### Final EIR

- Final document refined based on comments and includes responses to public comments

### 2014

#### Agencies' Decision

- City and District may consider conditional approval, subject to a vote of City of Santa Cruz residents

\*Written comments can be submitted to:

Mail: Heidi Luckenbach, Desalination Program Coordinator  
City of Santa Cruz, Water Department  
212 Locust Street, Suite C  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Email: hluckenbach@cityofsantacruz.com

## Milestones

**2008-2009** Pilot Plant Testing

**2010** Begin Environmental Review Process

- 2012**
- City and District commit to making desal plant net-carbon neutral
  - City of Santa Cruz adopts ordinance to require voter approval for desalination plant construction
  - Passage of Measure P

**2013** Release of Draft EIR and Final EIR

- 2014**
- Consider EIR Certification
  - Vote on desal plant construction by City of Santa Cruz residents\*

**2015-2016** Permitting and Design\*\*

**2016-2019** Construction\*\*

\*Officials are also considering ways to involve District and non-City customers in the decision making process.

\*\*contingent on project approvals

If you wish to receive email broadcasts and announcements, sign up at: [www.scwd2desal.org/Page-Contact.php](http://www.scwd2desal.org/Page-Contact.php)

### For more information, contact:

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Soquel Creek Water District  
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### For Project and EIR details, visit:

[www.scwd2desal.org](http://www.scwd2desal.org)



## Regional Seawater Desalination Project

a collaboration between the  
City of Santa Cruz and  
Soquel Creek Water District



[www.scwd2desal.org](http://www.scwd2desal.org)

# Our Community's Water Challenge

The City of Santa Cruz (City) and Soquel Creek Water District (District) face challenges in meeting the future water supply needs of their communities. The City of Santa Cruz faces two major challenges: Making sure there is enough water for its customers during droughts and protecting the habitat of endangered fish in the San Lorenzo River, Newell Creek, and North Coast streams. Soquel Creek Water District relies entirely on groundwater from a local aquifer that is being pumped at an unsustainable rate, resulting in groundwater levels that are too low to protect against seawater intrusion.

While both agencies have made ongoing and new conservation programs a priority and have investigated numerous alternatives, a supplemental water supply is still needed.

## City of Santa Cruz

Based on the last 75 years of rainfall records, the City will experience some water shortage 37% of the time, with shortages that could be as high as 39%. Water shortages above 35% are considered by the City to be a Stage 5 Critical Emergency that could threaten the health, safety, and security of the community, and have substantial economic impacts to the area.

## Soquel Creek Water District

As the primary user of the groundwater basin, the District needs to reduce its pumping substantially. A 35% cutback is needed for the next 20 years to naturally restore groundwater levels and protect against seawater intrusion. If a supplemental water supply is not secured, the District may declare an emergency and invoke year-round mandatory water rationing for the next 20 years to limit use and protect the basin.

Based on independent studies, the City and the District both identified desalination as a preferred option to further consider. Since 2007, the agencies have collaborated on the evaluation and environmental review for the proposed scwd<sup>2</sup> Regional Seawater Desalination Project to address their need for a supplemental water supply.

# Project Overview

The City and the District have undertaken an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the proposed scwd<sup>2</sup> Regional Seawater Desalination Project, which would produce up to 2.5 million gallons per day (mgd) of water. The proposed project would be cooperatively operated to provide water to the City during times of drought and to provide water to the District during non-drought periods to allow groundwater levels to recover.

The proposed desalination project primarily consists of a seawater intake and conveyance system, a treatment plant, brine disposal, and potable water distribution system. Several potential locations have been identified for the plant on the west side of Santa Cruz. The current cost estimate is approximately \$115 million which would be shared by the City and District. A variety of design features (see right) have been included to address community concerns that would help minimize or avoid environmental impacts.

## Benefits and Challenges of Desalination

The City, District, and customers must weigh these and other benefits and challenges of desalination.

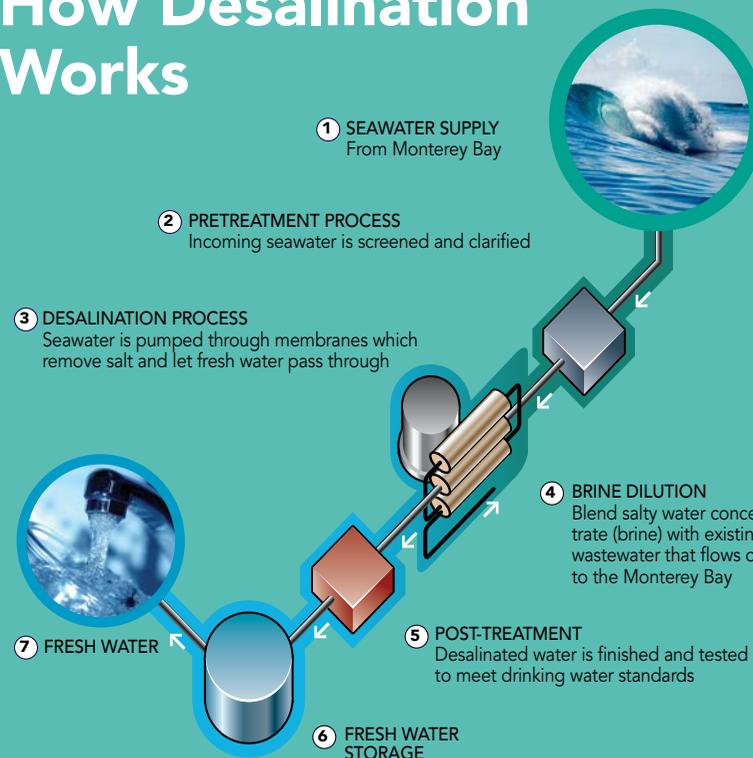
### Benefits

- Provides a supplemental supply to avoid high levels of curtailment or rationing
- Improves stream flows to protect endangered species such as coho salmon and steelhead trout
- Restores groundwater levels in overdrafted aquifer
- Protects drinking water wells against seawater intrusion
- Supports schools, homes, and businesses within our community

### Challenges

- Reducing energy demands and related greenhouse gas emissions
- Protecting marine life from being harmed by intake system
- Ensuring safe disposal of brine

# How Desalination Works



## Environmental Design Features that Address Challenges

The proposed project includes a number of design features that address the community concerns that would help minimize or avoid potential environmental impacts. These features include:

- A commitment of net carbon neutrality with construction and operation of the proposed project.
- Use of energy recovery devices, compliance with the City's Green Building Program, and solar panels to minimize energy use.
- Incorporate small, slot-sized screens at intake system to minimize impacts to fish and aquatic life (shown at right).
- Brine from the desalination treatment process would be blended with existing wastewater effluent that is currently dispersed into the Monterey Bay to have the same salinity levels as ocean water.

