

what was right in my heart."
But Small said he respected the decision of his colleagues and was not disappointed with the outcome. "That's fine with me," he said. "It will be good for the district as a whole."

Director Gordon Gracia said the directors' "first mistake" was calling an election on the issue because it made their action Tuesday more difficult — "None of the board feels good about it."

The state project will be dependable, he said. "It's a viable alternative

rationale that a 30-percent voter turnout is grounds for overturning the 349-325 result.

He said the 1988 presidential election only brought out 28 percent of the nation's eligible voters and asked, "Should we toss out George Bush?"

Gulyash pointed out that the state project can only deliver about half the water that has been subscribed for. "There is no such thing as water that's there forever," he said. "There's not an endless supply."

"People outside the district are getting you to overturn the vote," Mullikin told the board. "You're talking like you've already decided."

"Why don't you just go ahead and do what you're going to do?" Lewis added sarcastically, bringing loud cheers from the state project supporters.

"You told me this was going to be a binding vote," he said, just before the board took its own poll.

The directors will now have to decide how much water to ask for. They have said their previous plans for 3,500 acre-feet would be too costly and have more recently been mentioning figures between 1,500 and 2,500 acre-feet.



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Expansion possible

By Tom Friesen
Staff Writer

NIPOMO — Buoyed by the promise of state water, directors of the Community Services District indicated recently that they will reverse their ban on annexations and begin providing service to the parched Summit Station area.

Wells in the area, located just south of Los Berros Road near U.S. 101, are going dry at an alarming rate, and residents have been desperately seeking new sources of water.

"Our wells are pumping less and less, and some people are hauling

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Expansion may be possible

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water," resident Nancy Ybarra told the board. "It's almost an emergency in some locations."

The best wells in the area are still producing more than 300 gallons a minute, but others are down to less than half a gallon, residents said.

The directors' informal decision came just minutes after they voted 4-1 to overturn the results of the Nov. 5 election, in which district residents turned down the idea of participating in the State Water Project.

Although the directors want to provide service to the Summit Station area, it may be quite some time before NCSO water starts flowing through residents' taps.

Art Shaw, the district's legal counsel, said there is no way to predict how long it will take.

The district must first repeal its ban on annexations — a policy instituted because of the bleak outlook for future water supplies — and then gain the approval of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) before constructing the needed pipelines.

Shaw ruled out the possibility of bypassing that process by invoking emergency measures. An emergency situation is one that would call for temporary pipes placed on top of the ground rather than a permanent delivery system, he said.

Summit Station residents readily agreed to start compiling signatures on a letter guaranteeing they would not oppose annexation.

~~"The board is feeling very charitable toward helping you out,"~~ said board President David Manriquez.

Although the residents continued to press for some sort of formal commitment from the board, they were clearly pleased with what they heard.

"At one time you said no way we can serve you," Gene Kaye told the board. The Summit Station Road resident added that California Cities Water Co., a private water purveyor, had agreed to provide the service earlier this month.

The NCSO board took up the issue recently but decided to postpone any action on changing its annexation policy until the state water

issue was resolved.

At a meeting involving Summit Station residents and representatives of Cal Cities and NCSO on Nov. 5, Manriquez had indicated that the district could not annex the area.

As late as mid-November, the board remained hesitant about changing the policy without state water, but Kay said, "I called (General Manager) Ryder Ray and he said it looks like we're going to serve you."

Ybarra said Summit Station residents would prefer to get their water from the district, rather than from Cal Cities.

Ironically, earlier in the evening, she had spoken forcefully against overturning the election results, saying that the Nipomo Mesa has another 20 years of adequate water supplies and that local money should be spent locally on a desalination plant.

"They cannot flush their toilets in Los Angeles and they have state water," she'd said.

But the board may not have agreed to serve Summit Station without the possibility of tapping into the State Water Project.

Jack Carson was among the other Summit Station residents who said they would prefer to be in the district rather than buying water from Cal Cities. "We'd like to feel part of the community and ... eventually grow into a city," he said.

Ray said the area is made up of 145 5-acre parcels which would require a total of 70 acre-feet a year to service residential uses.

An acre-foot, or 326,000 gallons, is enough to serve two families of three for a year.

Carson said 80 local residents have been attending water meetings and a committee to work with NCSO is being formed.

Also on Tuesday Nov. 24, the district board voted 5-0 to send a letter of intent to the Lucia Mar Unified School District, promising to provide water to the proposed new middle school near Dana Elementary School.

That new school also requires an annexation, but the school will probably not be built for several years.