

Supervisors to decide on state water

By Scott Swanson
Staff Writer

SAN LUIS OBISPO — It's decision time on the State Water Project for county supervisors.

After months of postponing a final decision on whether or not the county should participate in the Coastal Branch of the State Water Project, the board is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the issue Wednesday.

The special meeting will be held, beginning at 9 a.m., at the Embassy Suites Hotel off Madonna Road in San Luis Obispo due to an expected large turnout.

The state has set June 3 as the final deadline for the county's decision on the Coastal Branch.

Supervisors, sitting as the county Flood Control and Water Conservation board of directors, will be asked to deal with a gamut of issues regarding the county's commitment to state water.

The board is scheduled to consider:

- Certifying the final environmental impact reports for both the proposed Coastal Branch and for local spur lines and a water treatment plant to be located in the North

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Supervisors to decide

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County;

- Directing county staff to move ahead with paperwork and other preparations for the Coastal Branch;
- Directing staff to continue working to get cities and other water contractors to sign contracts for state water.

According to deputy county engineer Glenn Priddy, various cities and other water agencies have requested between 6,000 and 18,000 acre-feet of the county's 25,000-acre-foot allocation of state water.

Priddy said the vast breadth between the numbers he cited are due to the fact that some water purveyors appear to be getting cold feet about the cost of state water. He did not elaborate on which agencies may be losing interest.

"They have the option of saying no state water, and we go away," Priddy said.

He said the board will be asked to review options for what the county should do if its entire 25,000 acre-foot entitlement is not spoken for.

He said the contracts would be brought back to the board next month.

"We're asking the board to think about what they want to do with the balance if we don't have all the water signed up," Priddy said.

The contents of the water purveyor contracts were the subject of a two-hour dispute between board members in December when the item showed up on the board's consent agenda.

Faced with protests from State Water Project opponents, supervisors postponed submitting the draft agreements.

After a two-hour hearing on the item, supervisors voted 3-2, with Ruth Brackett and Harry Ovitt dissenting, not to approve the draft contracts or send them to prospective participants until an EIR for the local delivery spur lines was completed;

- Directing staff to work with agencies that were not included in the planning process for the Coastal Branch or local spur lines.

Some agencies and organizations,

such as a group of farmers in the Nipomo area, have indicated that they may be interested in buying state water.

Priddy said the board will consider whether staff should work with those groups and whether the county should help them with the environmental review process and costs;

- Consider approving the final forms of three contracts with local purveyors, the Central Coast Water Authority, and the state.

The agreement with the state deals with how the county will pay for the project.

The agreement with the Central Coast Water Authority, an agency made up of purveyors in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties for the purpose of administering the State Water Project, deals with financing a water treatment plant and local pipeline extensions to deliver state water.

The contracts between the county and individual water purveyors will dictate terms for payment to the Central Coast Water Authority through the county.

The board will also hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 9 a.m. Tuesday in the supervisors' chambers at the County Government Center.

Supervisors are scheduled to discuss a study on the feasibility of forming a countywide parks district. Information on the study was not available at press time.

The board will also consider:

- A proposal by Huber Ranch for a vesting tentative tract map to subdivide a 32.14-acre site into 29 parcels ranging from 1 to 2.20 acres.

The property is located on the north side of Los Berros Road, east of Valley Road, south of Arroyo Grande. It is zoned for residential suburban land use. Staff recommends approval of the project;

- A proposal by George Widmark and Donald Coudriet for a development plan and vesting tentative tract map to subdivide a 162.65-acre site into a cluster division with 27 residential lots ranging from 1 to 2.75 acres and three open-space lots ranging in size from 16.04 to 42.85 acres.

The property is located at 951 Eucalyptus Road in Nipomo. It is zoned for residential rural land use. Staff recommends approval of the project;

- A proposal by Roy Anderson for a vesting tentative parcel map to subdivide a 10.04-acre site into two parcels of 5.02 and 5.02 acres.

The property is located on the northeast corner of Mesa Road and Viva Way, about two miles west of

Libertarians set general meeting

SAN LUIS OBISPO — The San Luis Obispo Libertarian Party is having a general meeting at 7 p.m. on March 27, at 4620 Portola Avenue, San Luis Obispo.

All members and others interested are invited. Call Gay Kirkland at