

NEWSlines

November 6, 1992

NEWSLINE: Keeping You Informed On The Local Water Issues

The Facts on the State Water Project Public Meeting Announcement

State Water is our least cost alternative

The local water supply continues to decline. Meanwhile, time is quickly running out to reserve our share of State Water via the new Coastal Aqueduct. Construction will begin soon, based on a specific allocation to each water purveyor. California Cities Water must make a final commitment in the next few months to assure our customers a continuing supply of quality water.

Our application for rate increases to fund this project is now before the California Public Utilities Commission. Long before its submission, we reviewed alternative solutions to satisfy the water needs of the community.

Information was developed by the California State Department of Water Resources and was also contained in an Environmental Impact Report. Many other reports, since 1961 to present, have also addressed alternatives to satisfy the needs of the region. Our conclusion is that State Water is the most realistic least cost solution available. Other solutions considered were:

Solutions

1. **Constructing a reservoir on the Sisquoc River.** Costs are higher than State Water, its capacity would be only 10% of State Water.
2. **Increase Twitchell Reservoir.** The drainage area is not sufficient to support an increase. It already contributes 25% to the groundwater production.
3. **Desalinization.** Costs twice as much as State Water.
4. **Conservation.** Projected customer usage would have to be reduced by 50%. Rationing would be necessary to reach the desired reduction goals. Drastic water use restrictions would be implemented with no water quality improvements.
5. **Agricultural Water Use Reduction**
 - Agriculture has already instituted extensive conservation measures to remain competitive; substantial additional water savings is not expected without taking significant acreage out of production.
 - Total acres under cultivation in the Santa Maria Valley is approximately 40,000. A 10% reduction in agricultural production would have a \$40 million dollar direct loss per year to the economy of the community with no water quality improvements.
6. **Agriculture Participation**
 - The economic issue is that agriculture cannot afford State Water Project because it must compete with other agricultural areas where water cost is minimal.
 - Agriculture needs water at peak times; the proposed State Water Project is a constant flow system year round which cannot support agricultural use.

- Agriculture has already participated in supplemental water by paying for the Twitchell Reservoir which contributes 25% to the groundwater production.

7. **Doing nothing -- simply ignoring the water shortage** -- would ultimately cost even more than desalinization. Reasons:

- Water levels would continue to decline destroying the areas only water source.
- Water quality would continue to decline, necessitating costly treatment measures and increased waste-water treatment rates.
- Sea water would ultimately intrude on the overdrafted ground water supply.
- Agricultural activity would be severely limited, resulting in economic hardship to the entire region.
- Water rationing would be highly probable.

The company is charged with assuring its customers a continuing supply of quality water. State Water is the most realistic, least cost alternative available to assure a continuing supply of quality water to the Santa Maria area to meet the needs of the Community now and into the future.

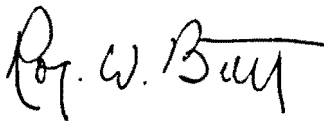
You're invited to our informal meetings

Because your voice is important, California Cities Water will hold two informal meetings to hear your concerns and discuss the issues on the State Water Project:

- 1) **Tuesday, November 17 at 7:00 p.m. at Nipomo Youth Recreation Center: 170 South Frontage Road, Nipomo.**
- 2) **Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 p.m. at Lakeview Junior High School: 3700 Orcutt Road, Santa Maria.**

Meanwhile, feel free to call our Santa Maria district office at 937-2007. Or stop by and visit me or one of my staff at 4854-F Bradley Road. We will be happy to answer your questions about the planned Coastal Aqueduct.

Very truly yours,



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California Cities Water

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WATER IS BECOMING MORE PRECIOUS...THANK YOU FOR USING IT WISELY.



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