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INTERIM URGENCY ORDINANCE...

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Date Listed: November 16
Newspaper ID #685768

INTERIM URGENCY ORDINANCE NO. 615 AN INTERIM URGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON THE APPROVAL OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, AND DECLARING THE URGENCY THEREOF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS: SECTION 1. FINDINGS. The City Council finds as follows: A. As detailed in the September 8, 2009 staff report to the City Council, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office and incorporated into this Interim Ordinance as if fully set forth herein, the City of Arroyo Grande (City) is dealing with a critical water shortage while simultaneously pursuing a statutorily required update of the Housing Element and Conservation Element of the City's General Plan. During preparation of the City's 2001 General Plan and 2005 Urban Water Master Plan, the lack of water resources was identified as a significant issue. Since that time the City has conducted studies and made extensive efforts to develop a strategy to address the lack of water resources, including studying and prioritizing alternatives and options for short-term and long-term options and supplemental water supplies. B. After it was determined in 2008 that the City had utilized 99% of its water entitlements, the City Council approved Resolution No. 4118 on August 12, 2008 declaring the existence of a severely restricted water supply condition and implemented mandatory water conservation measures. C. Among the short-term measures that have been identified to increase water supplies are water conservation public education efforts and implementation and enforcement of water conservation regulations, a tiered water rate structure, installation of Well No. 10, and the City has contracted with the Oceano Community Services District for delivery of water. Long-term measures that have been identified include a comprehensive groundwater study, the Nacimiento Lake water project, a desalination project study, State water, and study of two (2) recycled water projects, the first in cooperation with the South San Luis Obispo County Sanitation District and the second a joint project with the City of Pismo Beach. In addition, the City has been participating in a study of raising the height of the spillway of the Lopez dam to increase the capacity of Lopez Lake. D. Based upon preliminary data resulting from a groundwater monitoring program implemented in early 2009 by a group of cities that include the Cities of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Pismo Beach and the Oceano Community Services District, groundwater levels and water quality sampling have shown early signs of seawater intrusion in the part of the basin from which the City obtains the majority of its groundwater supply. Seawater intrusion can be a serious threat. Seawater is highly saline (with typical chloride concentrations of 19,000 mg/L) and mixing even a small amount, as little as two percent, with fresh groundwater is enough to make water undrinkable. Once seawater has intruded and mixed in a groundwater basin, it is very difficult and costly to remove. While this is preliminary data, and additional evaluation and recommendations from consultants are expected, this new information combined with the severely restricted water supply conditions and related concerns discussed above, create an immediate need to study and understand its implications in relation to the City's General Plan update and other development proposals, policies and programs. E. The Community Development Department of the City of Arroyo Grande recently initiated the process of updating the City's General Plan, with immediate emphasis on the Housing Element and the Conservation Element; as the Conservation Element provides for the conservation, development and integration of natural resources, this process will enable the City to immediately address



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