

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL  
AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Notice of Meeting**  
Wednesday, September 4, 2002  
1:30 p.m.

1. Introductions
2. Public Comments and Items of Interest
3. Approval of June Meeting Notes (Steve Sinton)
4. WRAC Membership (Steve Sinton)

The majority of the agencies have followed through with membership confirmations (thank you very much). We await confirmations from the cities of Atascadero and Paso Robles, Cambria CSD, NarMAC, Camp SLO, and Cuesta College. Follow-up contacts were made with these agencies. Staff is also seeking nominations from the Board of Supervisors. Once this is in hand, we will take all nominations to the Board of Supervisors for confirmation.

5. Keeping Pace with Planning Commission Calendar (John Hand)

At the June meeting, our subcommittee distributed recommendations for planning referrals to the WRAC. Attached are revised guidelines reflecting WRAC discussion at that meeting. We will discuss the schedule for bringing forward referrals to the WRAC.

6. Status Reports (attached)
7. 1998 Master County Water Plan (Steve Sinton)

We will build on the master water plan program overview and recap what work lies ahead. We have also been asked by the Board to make an activities report during November.

**Special Note:** The Cooperative Extension meeting room is not available in October. We will be meeting at the Joint Media Center, 1135 Kansas Avenue, San Luis Obispo, on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1:30 pm.

**Purpose of the Committee:**

*To advise the County Board of Supervisors concerning all policy decisions relating to the water resources of the SLO County Flood Control & Water Conservation District. To recommend to the Board specific water resource programs. To recommend methods of financing water resource programs.*

*Excerpts from WRAC By-Laws dated 1998*

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**Meeting Notes  
June 5, 2002**

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1. Introductions.  
Chairman Sinton called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm.
2. Public Comments.  
Under public comments, Steve Sinton noted the receipt of notice of preparation for the growth management ordinance and for the El Pomar-Estrella Area Plan Update. Christine Ferrara reported that many WRAC memberships have lapsed or were never formalized by the Board in the first place. More than 20 members will be receiving letters regarding membership. Responses will be taken to the Board for approval.
3. May Meeting Notes  
Doug Jones moved approval of the May 1st meeting notes; Eric Greening seconded; passed unanimously.
4. Keeping Pace with Planning Commission Calendar.  
John Hand presented guidelines for WRAC input on items that come before the Planning Commission. These were developed by the referral subcommittee. (Refer to the May 2002 WRAC agenda packet.) There was general agreement with guidelines 1-6, noting that 10+ AFY of water usage would trigger referral. The seventh guideline was amended for referrals from any individual Board member. The eighth guideline pertaining to discharge of waste water was deleted altogether. John Hand agreed to bring back revised guidelines at a future meeting of the WRAC. Bill Bianchi suggested that we develop a checklist of issues to be considered for referrals to the WRAC. Doug Jones noted some concern about commenting on water availability for PUC-governed and special districts. It was pointed out that WRAC is only advisory and has no authority to overturn a special district assessment of water availability. John Hand moved adoption of the guidelines as amended; Jim Patterson seconded. Passed unanimously.
5. Lease of Excess State Water.  
Paavo Ogren expanded on the proposed lease of excess State Water. Refer to the summary in the June 5th agenda packet. Eric Greening suggested starting with a 5 year lease term, not 10 years as suggested. Mike Winn opined that County residents may place a higher value on the excess State Water entitlement than we may gain through a lease arrangement. Gary Henderson verified that State Water subcontractors had already been consulted regarding the potential lease. Frank Freiler noted concern about our ability to cancel the lease at the end of its term. How could a power plant continue operation without continued delivery of State Water? Eric Greening emphasized the importance of the WRAC review of the proposed terms of the lease. Paavo Ogren described that the proceeds of the lease would go back to the Flood Control General budget. The tax rate would not be revoked until a

sale was final. Jim Patterson stated that it is time to determine what it would take to reliably deliver our full State Water entitlement to this County. Mike Winn did not support the idea of exclusive negotiations with this party so long as they remain anonymous. There was general agreement on this point, however, Paavo Ogren stated that he may still recommend exclusivity to the Board. Doug Jones moved to proceed with negotiations with this party seeking more than the current carrying cost of the excess entitlement and at a 5 year maximum initial lease term; allow plenty of time for existing subcontractors to make drought buffer arrangements; no assurances regarding lease extensions should be made and any lease revenue in excess of our carrying cost should be dedicated to water supply planning. Tom Runels seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

7. Paso Robles Ground Water Basin Evaluation Phase 2.  
Christine Ferrara reviewed the status of the Paso Robles Ground Water Basin Evaluation (refer to June 5<sup>th</sup> agenda item) and the recommendations for further work. The WRAC indicated general support for keeping momentum going on the basin evaluation. Jim Patterson moved support for use of Nacimiento funding to proceed with the next phase of the Paso Robles Ground Water Basin evaluation with the understanding that the County would negotiate sole-source with Fugro West Inc. for these services. Eric Greening seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.
8. Master County Water Plan.  
Christine Ferrara and John Hand briefly reviewed the Master County Water Plan. The latest Plan was published by EDAW with Boyle Engineering Corp. and Cleath & Associates in September 1998. This included an inventory of existing water-related information, current and future water needs, existing and proposed water supplies. The intent was to use this basic information as the foundation for future water policy recommendations and as one consideration in land use planning. The 1998 Plan contrasted prior studies in that it referenced existing published reports only (i.e. no new numbers were developed). The 1998 Plan merely presented demand and supply quantities without drawing conclusions regarding the need for supplemental water supplies. Further, the evaluation was categorized by Water Planning Areas. Significant recommendations were to evaluate the Paso Robles Ground Water Basin (done in 2002), investigate....

Chairman Sinton adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.

Submitted by  
Christine Ferrara, Utilities Division Manager

## Guidelines for Planning Project Referrals to WRAC

### August 27, 2002

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WRAC review would focus on impacts on water supply, water quality and groundwater recharge capacity as they relate to use of water for agricultural purposes.

1. Proposed general plan amendments, including property owner requests, area plan updates and specific plans that would change land use designation from AG or RL to more intensive non-agricultural use. Such requests would involve parcels of at least 20 acres, since this is the minimum lot size in the AG and RL land use categories.
2. Proposed development projects with an annual water demand of **20** or more acre-feet per year, where the water source is a groundwater basin identified in the county Master Water Plan Update; projects with an annual water demand of **10** or more acre-feet per year, where the water source is recommended for Resource Management System Level of Severity III designation in the most recent Annual Resource Summary Report.
3. Proposed land subdivisions that would enable development with an annual water demand of **10** or more acre-feet per year, where the water source is a groundwater basin identified in the county Master Water Plan Update.
4. Proposed development projects or land subdivisions with a projected groundwater demand of **5** or more acre-feet per year where the water source is not from an identified groundwater basin, nor from an existing community water system.
5. At the discretion of the WRAC, projects affecting water supply or water quality where referral to the WRAC is requested by a Community Advisory Committee or a member of the WRAC.
6. Proposed annexations of **10** acres or more of agricultural land to cities or special districts that provide water service. The WRAC will transmit comments to LAFCo.
7. Projects that have been appealed to the Board of Supervisors because of water supply issues, and where referral to the WRAC is requested by a member of the Board of Supervisors.

## Status Reports August 2002

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**Lease of Excess State Water** – In June, the WRAC considered a request to negotiate for the lease of our 17,000 AFY excess State Water entitlement. An anonymous party seeks the right to exclusively negotiate for such lease. Staff sought input on this concept from the WRAC. Two important sentiments were expressed by the WRAC. One was that we should research the value of the water prior to entering into negotiations. This may entail researching similar negotiations throughout the western states. Another was that the initial lease term should be 5-year maximum. Concern was registered about agreeing to negotiations with an anonymous party. Since the June meeting, the County hired Optimal Water, Inc. to investigate the value of our excess State Water and to review the potential for banking. Negotiations with the interested party are on hold and will not be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors until the Optimal Water, Inc. findings are assembled.

**Paso Robles Ground Water Basin Evaluation** – The final report is being assembled now and will be release concurrent with a presentation to the Board of Supervisors. Staff recommends moving forward with further evaluation to include basin behavior as water demands increase, the impact of supplemental water such as Nacimiento deliveries, and a closer examination of declining water levels (esp. east of Paso Robles) and declining water quality. An economic assessment of increased costs to drill and operate deeper wells is also proposed.

Estimated cost to move forward with addressing these issues is \$300,000, including consultant and County staff time. Staff recommends negotiating an agreement with Fugro West Inc. on a sole-source basis. The WRAC, North County Water Purveyors Group and the North County Water Forum have all supported this approach, using funds from the Nacimiento Water Project budget. The Nacimiento participants have also endorsed this concept. Staff will seek authorization from the Board to proceed on this basis.

**DWR Nipomo Ground Water Basin Evaluation** – As of this date, the report is still being circulated through DWR and will be released for public review when that review is complete.

**Nacimiento Water Supply Project** – The environmental team is in full swing, working on the formal project description and beginning their impact evaluations in various areas. Project team representatives recently met with critical landowners east of Atascadero to establish an acceptable pipeline route. We also hired Northwest Economic Associates to evaluate the economic impact of the project construction and operation. The plan is to release the economic assessment concurrent with the Draft EIR (later this year). On Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce is hosting a meeting at City Hall to discuss the proposed pipeline route through the city. More public meetings will follow when the Draft EIR is released.

**2002 Update of the Resource Management System** – John Hand, County Planning Dept., is working on the 2002 RMS update. He will present the Paso Robles ground water basin section to the North County Water Forum on Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> and to the CSA 23 Santa Margarita advisory committee on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Nipomo ground water section will be presented to the Nipomo Water Group on Sept 16<sup>th</sup>. John plans to discuss the 2002 update of remaining water sections with affected water groups between now and November. The 2002 RMS update will be on the WRAC agenda in October for input prior to presentation to the Board in November.