CITY OF SANTA CRUZ
Downtown Library Community Room
224 Church Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

WATER COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

July 17, 2023

Updated July 17, 2023 – Note Regarding Meeting Attendance

7:00 P.M. GENERAL BUSINESS AND MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST, DOWNTOWN LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM/ZOOM

NOTE: This meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting with public attendance available both in-person and via teleconference.

This meeting may be viewed remotely, using either of the following sources:

- **Zoom Live (no time delay):** https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88439656476
- **Facebook:** https://www.facebook.com/SantaCruzWaterDepartment/?epa=SEARCH_BOX

PUBLIC COMMENT:
If you wish to comment on items the meeting, please see information below:

- **Call any of the numbers below. If one number is busy, try the next one. Keep trying until connected.**
  +1 669 444 9171
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  +1 253 205 0468
- Enter the meeting ID number: **884 3965 6476**
- When prompted for a Participant ID, press #.
- Press *9 on your phone to "raise your hand" when the Chair calls for public comment.
  - It will be your turn to speak when the Chair unmutes you. You will hear an announcement that you have been unmuted. The timer will then be set to three minutes.
  - You may hang up once you have commented on your item of interest.
  - If you wish to speak on another item, two things may occur:
    1) If the number of callers waiting exceeds capacity, you will be disconnected and you will need to call back closer to when the item you wish to comment on will be heard, or
    2) You will be placed back in the queue, and you should press *9 to "raise your hand" when you wish to comment on a new item.

NOTE: If you wish to view or listen to the meeting and don't wish to comment on an item, you can do so at any time via the Facebook link or over the phone or online via Zoom.

The City of Santa Cruz does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Out of consideration for people with chemical sensitivities, please attend the meeting fragrance free. Upon request, the agenda can be provided in a format to accommodate special needs. Additionally, if you wish to attend this public meeting and will require assistance such as an interpreter for American Sign Language, Spanish, or other special equipment, please call Water Administration at 831-420-5200 at least five days in advance so that arrangements can be made. The Cal-Relay system number: 1-800-735-2922.

APPEALS: Any person who believes that a final action of this advisory body has been taken in error may appeal that decision to the City Council. Appeals must be in writing, setting forth the nature of the action and the basis upon which the action is considered to be in error, and addressed to the City Council in care of the City Clerk. Appeals must be received by the City Clerk within ten (10) calendar days following the date of the action from which such appeal is being taken. An appeal must be accompanied by a fifty dollar ($50) filing fee.

Agenda and Agenda Packet Materials: The City Council agenda and the complete agenda packet containing public records, which are not exempt from disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act, are available for review on the City's website: https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/water/city-water-commission and at the Water Department located at 212 Locust Street, STE A, Santa Cruz, California, during normal business hours.

Agenda Materials Submitted after Publication of the Agenda Packet: Pursuant to Government Code §54957.5, public records related to an open session agenda item submitted after distribution of the agenda packet are available at the same time they are distributed or made available to the legislative body on the City's website at: https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/water/city-water-commission and are also available for public inspection at the Water Department, 212 Locust Street, STE A, Santa Cruz, California, during normal business hours, and at the Council meeting.

Need more information? Contact the Water Department at 831-420-5200.

Call to Order

Roll Call

Statements of Disqualification - Section 607 of the City Charter states that...All members present at any meeting must vote unless disqualified, in which case the disqualification shall be publicly declared, and a record thereof made. The City of Santa Cruz has adopted a Conflict of Interest Code, and Section 8 of that Code states that no person shall make or participate in a governmental decision which he or she knows or has reason to know will have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect distinguishable from its effect on the public generally.

Oral Communications

Announcements

Consent Agenda (Pages 1.1 – 3.2) Items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine in nature and will be acted upon in one motion. Specific items may be removed by members of the advisory body or public for separate consideration and discussion. Routine items that will be found on the consent agenda are City

Council Items Affecting Water, Water Commission Minutes, Information Items, Documents for Future Meetings, and Items initiated by members for Future Agendas. If one of these categories is not listed on the Consent Agenda, then those items are not available for action.

1. City Council Actions Affecting the Water Department (Pages 1.1 – 1.4)

   That the Water Commission accept the City Council actions affecting the Water Department.

2. Water Commission Minutes from June 5, 2023 (Pages 2.1 – 2.5)

   That the Water Commission approve the June 5, 2023, Water Commission Minutes.

3. Updated Working Draft Water Commission 2023 Work Plan (Pages 3.1 – 3.2)

   That the Water Commission accept the 7/10/2023 updated working draft of the Water Commission's 2023 Work Plan.

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

General Business (Pages 4.1 – 4.3) Any document related to an agenda item for the General Business of this meeting distributed to the Water Commission less than 72 hours before this meeting is available for inspection at the Water Administration Office, 212 Locust Street, Suite A, Santa Cruz, California. These documents will also be available for review at the Water Commission meeting with the display copy at the rear of the Council Chambers.

4. Regional Drought Resiliency Project: Intertie-1 Project, Water Commission Consideration and Recommendation (Pages 4.1 – 4.3)

   That the Water Commission take action to support staff's recommendation to City Council to approve the Intertie-1 Project considering the certified Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report and the Intertie-1 Project Addendum to the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report.

Subcommittee/Advisory Body Oral Reports

5. Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency

6. Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency

Director's Oral Report

Information Items (Pages 7.1 – 7.13)

Adjournment

WATER COMMISSION
INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: 07/11/2023

AGENDA OF: 07/17/2023

TO: Water Commission

FROM: Rosemary Menard, Water Director

SUBJECT: City Council Actions Affecting the Water Department

RECOMMENDATION: That the Water Commission accept the City Council actions affecting the Water Department.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

June 13, 2023

Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant Facility Improvements Project – Update Report / City Council Direction (WT/PL)

Motion **carried** to:

- Notify the Water and Planning Commissions that the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant Facility Improvements Project (Project) will be brought to the City Council for final consideration and action on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), discretionary permits/entitlements, and final project approval per Santa Cruz Municipal Code 24.04.175.2; and

Direct staff to coordinate with the Water and Planning Commissions to obtain project recommendations from those commissions on the Project EIR (Water Commission) and Project entitlements (Planning Commission) prior to Council's final action on the Project.

Loch Lomond Reservoir Oxygen Diffuser System – Notice of Completion (WT)

Motion **carried** to:

- Ratify Change Order No. 1 with Mobley Engineering Inc. (Norris, TN) related to redesign of the system to accommodate differing field conditions and several delays and remobilizations to the project in the amount of $53,521.80; and

Accept the work of Mobley Engineering Inc. (Norris, TN) as complete per the agreement and authorizing the filing of a Notice of Completion for the Loch Lomond Reservoir Oxygen Diffuser System and to authorize the Water Director to sign the Notice of Completion as the Owner's Authorized Agent.

Contract Amendment 2024-01 with HDR Inc. for Capital Program Management Services (WT)

Motion **carried** authorizing the City Manager to execute Contract Amendment No. 2024-01 with HDR for Service Order No. 9 in the amount of $6,933,644 in a form to be approved by the City Attorney.

Expansion of Technology Surcharge (PL)

Motion **carried** to:

- Adopt Resolution No. NS-30,161 to rescind Resolution No. NS-27,559, the Council's 2007 Technology Surcharge resolution, and expand the application of a six (6) percent Technology Surcharge to certain fees collected by the Planning and Community Development, Finance, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Fire, and Water Departments; and

Direct staff to take related implementation actions.

Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget

1. Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget Adoption (FN)

   Motion **carried** to:

   1) Adopt Resolution No. NS-30,164 adopting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget including the Capital Investment Program (CIP), effective July 1, 2023; authorize the City Manager to allocate within the applicable funds the FY 2024 Schedule of Administrative Budget Changes to the appropriate accounting classifications and to approve related and applicable transfer in/out between funds; and authorize the Finance Director to create additional appropriations to provide for commitments carried over from the prior fiscal year, including contract and purchase order encumbrances and unexpended project balances, so long as there is a sufficient fund balance to finance these commitments; and

   2) Accept the Water Commission's recommendations regarding the Water Department's FY 2024 Operating and Capital Investment Program (CIP).

2. Resolution Amending the City of Santa Cruz Personnel Complement and Classification and Compensation Plans for the Public Works, City Manager, Finance, Parks and Recreation, Police, Water, Fire, Library and Human Resources Departments (HR)

Resolution No. NS-30,165 was adopted amending the Classification and Compensation Plans for the FY 2024 budget personnel complement by implementing the approved FY 2024 budget/position changes in several departments.

June 27, 2023

Real Property Negotiations (Government Code §54956.8)

3) Property: Firehouse Lane, Unincorporated Santa Cruz, CA
APN: 067-202-60
Owner: C-SHORE, a Partnership; Robert R. Rittenhouse and Edithanne Rittenhouse; and Denoyer F. O'Laughlin and Nancy T. O'Laughlin
City Negotiator: Rosemary Menard
Negotiating Parties: City of Santa Cruz and C-SHORE, a Partnership; Robert R. Rittenhouse and Edithanne Rittenhouse; and Denoyer F. O'Laughlin and Nancy T. O'Laughlin
Under Negotiation: Price, terms of payment, or both

4) Property: 6000 La Madrona Drive, Scotts Valley, CA
APN: 021-141-20
Owner: Scotts Valley Fire Protection District
City Negotiator: Rosemary Menard
Negotiating Parties: City of Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley Fire Protection District
Under Negotiation: Price, terms of payment, or both

5) Property: 175 Sims Road, Santa Cruz, CA
APN: 067-202-66
Owner: Craig Yates and Nichole Yates, Co-Trustees of the Yates Family Trust Dated June 14, 2019
City Negotiator: Rosemary Menard
Negotiating Parties: City of Santa Cruz and The Yates Family Trust
Under Negotiation: Price, terms of payment, or both

Council **received** a status report from the City Negotiators, and **no reportable action was taken**.

Beltz Well 9 Aquifer Storage and Recovery Pilot Testing – Approval of California Environmental Quality Act Exemption, Plans and Specifications, and Authorization to Advertise and Award Contract (WT)

Motion **carried** to approve plans and specifications for construction of the Beltz Well 9 Aquifer Storage and Recovery Pilot Testing Program (Project), authorize staff to advertise for bids, find the Project exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and award the contract. Per Resolution No. NS-27,563, the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute the contract, in a form approved by the City Attorney. The Water Director is authorized to execute change orders within the approved project budget.

Resolution Transferring Funds within the Water Enterprise Funds to Meet FY 2023 Financial Targets – Budget Adjustment (WT)

Resolution No. NS-30,172 was adopted transferring $8,000,000 to the Water Operations Fund (Fund 711) and $600,000 to the Water 90–Day Fund (Fund 716) from the Water Rate Stabilization Fund (Fund 713).

PROPOSED MOTION: Accept the City Council actions affecting the Water Department.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ
Water Department

Water Commission
7:00 p.m. – June 5, 2023
Council Chambers
809 Center Street, Santa Cruz

Summary of a Water Commission Meeting

Call to Order: 7:02 PM

Roll Call

Present: J. Burks (Chair); T. Burns; M. Duncan-Merrell; D. Engfer (Vice Chair); A. Paramo; and G. Roffe

Absent: S. Ryan, with notification

Staff: R. Menard, Water Director; D. Baum, Water Chief Financial Officer; H. Cagliero, Administrative Assistant III; C. Coburn, Deputy Director/Operations Manager; H. Luckenbach, Deputy Water Director/Engineering Manager; and Sarah Perez, Principal Planner.

Others: Rob Swartz and Tim Carson from the Regional Water Management Foundation; and one member of the public.

Presentation: None.

Statements of Disqualification: None.

Oral Communications:

At 7:03 p.m. Chair Burks opened Oral Communications. Chair Burks closed Oral Communications at 7:05 p.m.

Announcements:

Chair Burks announced that June is LGBT Pride Month.

Consent Agenda:

1. City Council Items Affecting the Water Department

2. Water Commission Minutes from May 1, 2023

3. Fiscal Year 2023 3rd Quarter Unaudited Financial Report

Commissioner Burns moved approval of the Consent Agenda, with a request to add additional commentary regarding the $5 million repayment on the line of credit for the Fiscal Year 2023 3rd Quarter Unaudited Financial Report. Vice Chair Engfer seconded.

VOICE VOTE: MOTION CARRIED
AYES: All
NOES: None
DISQUALIFIED: None

Items removed from the Consent Agenda: None.

General Business

4. Water Department's Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Operating and Fiscal Year 2024-28 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Budgets

R. Menard introduced this item and noted that the attachments for this item should be reorganized so that Attachment 5: Water Commission Recommendation to City Council is the first attachment.

Commissioners Paramo and Roffe noted missing content to Attachment 5 on page 4.33 to 4.34 and requested correction.

Is there anywhere in the financial documents attached to this item that show Water Department total debt over time, including future projections?

- That information can be provided to the Commission; it is not included in the attachments for this item.

No public comments were received.

Vice Chair Engfer moved the staff recommendation on Item 4 as amended. Commissioner Paramo seconded.

VOICE VOTE: MOTION CARRIED
AYES: All
NOES: None
DISQUALIFIED: None

5. Groundwater Sustainability Planning

H. Luckenbach introduced Rob Swartz, Senior Planner from Regional Water Management Foundation for the presentation and discussion of Groundwater Sustainability Planning in the Santa Cruz Mid-County and Santa Margarita basins.

In light of the recent Supreme Court decision regarding the waters of the US, specifically with the import of that decision with respect to wetlands relating to streams, is there any conversation about challenges to the foundational elements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) based on that Supreme Court ruling?

- My understanding is that we have State laws that back up SGMA so that challenges based on the recent Supreme Court ruling wouldn't become an issue in the State of California.

Looking at the table showing the basin response to ASR in Mid-County, is it a scale issue that the Pure Water Soquel doesn't look very different from the baseline?

- No, it is not a scale issue; the basin doesn't react the same way at all monitoring sites. For this particular monitoring well (Moran Lake), the Pure Water Soquel project is located further east, and its contribution doesn't have much impact on groundwater at this site.

The presentation focused on two areas in mid- and north Santa Cruz County. Is the Pajaro basin also covered by the requirements of the SGMA?

- Yes, the Pajaro is a basin covered by SGMA. It was not noted in this presentation because it isn't directly related to City projects.

When climate change modeling was conducted, was the affect that climate change may have on sea water intrusion and rising sea levels taken into account and did you see any significant issues?

- Yes, however, it wasn't done separately from the other changes in hydrology, so it isn't possible to see if there was a significant difference associated specifically with sea water intrusion and rising sea levels.

When looking at table of extraction numbers for Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin in 2021 and 2022, what was the surface water source that was used in 2022?

- The surface water source was from San Lorenzo River tributary diversions that are owned and operated by the San Lorenzo Valley Water District (District).

Was the use of surface water from San Lorenzo Valley Water District in 2022 an experiment that was being done?

- Not really. During the CZU Fire, the District's north system diversions that serve the Boulder Creek area were damaged and still have not been repaired. To meet the need of providing water to the Boulder Creek area, additional surface water and groundwater was used from the District's Felton area facilities. In the first year following the CZU fire (Water Year (WY) 2021), more groundwater was used than additional surface water. In the second year, (WY 2022), more surface water was used than groundwater, resulting in the reduction in groundwater use shown on the table.

Do the diverse compositions of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and Santa Margarita GSA create any complexities or challenges around being able to proceed and align decision making?

- Both the joint powers authorities (JPA) have a requirement for unanimity between the member agencies with certain kinds of decisions, for example, approval of annual budgets. In those cases, the private well owners, who are not JPA member agency representatives, do not have the opportunity to veto the decision. Otherwise, all decisions are made by majority vote.

  Both agencies have had a very collaborative working relationship with their private well owner representatives. There has been a lot of good engagement and it is a useful

mechanism to have representation of domestic well owners as active members of the GSA boards since all groundwater users are potentially affected by the work of the GSAs.

Do water rights impact the relations within the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater and Santa Margarita Groundwater Agencies?

- Groundwater rights in the two local GSAs are not regulated in the same way that surface water resources have been over the years. For example, domestic users where use is less than 2-acre feet per year of water (about 650,000 gallons or about 1780 gallons per day) are categorically excluded from being subjected to regulation or limitation by a GSA. Further, groundwater withdrawals by larger users such as water utilities are not subject to the same kind of diversion rate or total volume withdrawals that the City's surface waters are constrained by. These circumstances make water rights less of a factor in groundwater planning than in producing and delivering water from surface water sources.

What is the purpose of the 5-year milestones required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and do you feel that the interval between milestones is an appropriate amount of time?

- When the law establishing SGMA passed, it allowed 20 years to bring a groundwater basin into sustainability. The milestones recognize the need to demonstrate that progress is happening over the 20-year period, and 5-year milestones are an appropriate interval to evaluate that. The required 5-year updates of GSPs provide a great opportunity to look at progress toward meeting measurable objectives and either adjusting interim milestones, measurable objectives, or both.

One public comment was received.

No motion is required for this item.

Subcommittee/Advisory Body Oral Reports

6. Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA)

The next MGA meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2023, and the agenda will include final action of the board on the budget for the next fiscal year. In addition, two private well owner representatives are at the end of their terms, and there will be an outline of a process and establishment of an ad hoc committee to work on recruiting, reviewing, and making recommendations on the private well owner representatives and whether there are additional people who are interested in those roles. After the June meeting, the MGA won't meet again until September.

7. Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA)

The SMGWA met last on May 25th, and the agenda was mostly administrative. The budget for the next fiscal year was approved and their Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was approved by the state with some comments; however, they were not approved for funding for the grant application.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 24th and staff will present more information on the GSP approval and grant funding situation, as well as provide guidance for updates to the GSP at

the 5-year cycle and discuss about how the agency might move forward on some of the activities that were hoped to be funded through the grant.

Director's Oral Report:

R. Menard announced that she delivered testimony on water affordability at the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife.

R. Menard also announced that the next two Water Commission meeting dates were rescheduled to July 17th and August 21st and will be held using an alternate location at the Downtown Library Community Room and a system that would allow our meetings to be hybrid for the public and presenters.

Information Items: Information items included in the agenda packet were not discussed.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

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WORKING DRAFT

Water Commission Work Plan – July 2023 through January 2024

(7/10/2023)

Major Water Commission Work Plan Item	Anticipated City Council Action on Water Commission Recommendations
July 17, 2023 (Rescheduled July 3rd meeting)	
➢ Santa Cruz Water-Scotts Valley Water District Intertie 1 – Project overview, CEQA Addendum	➢ August 8 Council meeting agenda item certifying the CEQA work and approving the project
August 21, 2023 (Rescheduled August 7th and September 4th meetings)	
➢ 2022 Water Quality Consumer Confidence Report and Santa Cruz Water Quality Lab Update	➢
➢ WSAIP Quarterly Report	➢
➢ Overview of Current Water Department Debt	➢
September 4, 2023 (Labor Day – Canceled)	
October 2, 2023	
➢ Customer Assistance Program Update	➢
➢ Presentation by Dr. Tiffany Wise-West on preparation of the updated Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Climate Adaptation Plan	➢
➢ Briefing on CA Water Use Efficiency Framework – issues, opportunities, and challenges	➢
November 6, 2023	
➢ 4th Quarter Financial Report	➢
➢ FIP Project Update (notice of pending release of the DEIR)	➢
➢ *Tentative* – Downtown Plan Expansion, DEIR release and Water Supply Evaluation	➢
➢ WSAIP Quarterly Report	➢
December 4, 2023	
➢ Anadromous Salmonid Habitat Conservation Plan Update and state and federal environmental document reviews	➢ January 9, 2024 – Council action on IS/MND and MMRP, and project approval
➢ Overview, Santa Cruz Water Department education and interpretive programs, including work on potential repurposing the Department's Nelson House facility in the Newell Creek Watershed to be an education/outreach/interpretative facility	➢
January 8, 2024 (Tentative reschedule for January 1, 2024)	
➢ Watershed Vegetation Management briefing	➢
➢ Meter Replacement Project Final Report	➢

MAJOR WATER COMMISSION/WATER DEPARTMENT WORK PLAN ELEMENTS THAT OCCUR ON AN ANNUAL OR 5 YEAR ROUTINE CYCLE

Major Routine Water Commission Work Plan Item	Anticipated City Council or Other Agency Action
Routine Items Occurring Annually	
➢ February and April – Annual Peak Season Water Supply Assessment and recommended water emergency declaration for shortage curtailments if needed	➢ First Council meeting in April: Council action, if emergency curtailment is recommended,
➢ February – Annual review of Department work on the CIP (aka: Parade of Projects)	➢
➢ May and June, Annual review and recommendation on Budget and CIP	➢ Council budget hearings late May and Council budget action in June
➢ Quarterly progress/status reporting on Water Supply Augmentation Implementation Plan through December 2024, then quarterly reporting on plan implementation (includes potential CEQA process)	➢
➢ Quarterly financial reporting	➢
FY 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)	
➢ Initiate 5-year update of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Plan (due to DWR January 31, 2025)	➢ See completion and action dates for this work in FY 2025
➢ GHWTP Facility Improvement Project EIR (February 2024)	➢
FY 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)	
➢ Initiate update of Urban Water Management Plan, including the following key element: ○ Long range water demand forecast ○ Water supply reliability analysis ○ Water Shortage Contingency Plan	➢ See completion and action dates for this work in FY 2026 and 2027
➢ Initiate update American Water Infrastructure Act required Risk and Resiliency Assessment	➢ See completion and action dates for this work in FY 2027
➢ Initiate update of Financial Planning and Initiate Water Ratemaking including: ○ Update Long Range Financial Plan ○ Cost of Service Analysis ○ Water Rates 5-year schedule for FY 2028 – FY 2032	➢ See completion and action dates for this work in FY 2026 and FY 2027
➢ Complete 5-year update of Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Plan (due to DWR January 31, 2027)	➢ Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board approval est. November 2026
FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)	
➢ Complete 2025 Urban Water Management Plan Update	➢ Council action on Urban Water Management Plan, June 2026
➢ Complete work updating Long Range Financial Plan	➢ Council action on Long Range Financial Plan, June 2026
➢ Initiate American Water Infrastructure Act required update of the Water Department's Emergency Response Plan	➢ See completion and action on this work FY 2027
FY 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027)	
➢ Complete recommendations on 5-year schedule of water rates for FY 2028 - 2032	➢ Council action on proposed FY 2028 – 2032 schedule of water rates, November 2026
➢ Complete American Water Infrastructure Act required Risk and Resiliency Assessment	➢ Certification required by December 31, 2026
➢ Complete American Water Infrastructure Act required update of the Water Department's Emergency Response Plan	➢ Certification required by June 30, 2027
➢ Complete update of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Sustainability Plan (due to DWR January 31, 2027)	➢ Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board approval est. November 2026

WATER COMMISSION
INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: 07/11/2023

AGENDA OF: July 17, 2023

TO: Water Commission

FROM: Sarah Easley Perez, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Regional Drought Resiliency Project: Intertie-1 Project, Water Commission Consideration and Recommendation

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RECOMMENDATION: That the Water Commission take action to support staff's recommendation to City Council to approve the Intertie-1 Project considering the certified Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report and the Intertie-1 Project Addendum to the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report.

BACKGROUND:
In 2013 the City of Santa Cruz (City) partnered with Scotts Valley Water District (SVWD) and was awarded grant funding under a California Department of Public Health Proposition 50 Grant. "Intertie-1" was part of a larger package of projects to establish regional emergency interties between SVWD, the City, San Lorenzo Valley Water District, and the Mount Hermon Association. Due to a reduction in funding, Intertie-1 was not constructed at that time. In December 2021, SVWD and the City of Santa Cruz Water Department collaborated on a grant application for funding from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) 2021 Urban and Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Program. SVWD served as the applicant for the Regional Drought Resiliency Project which included two project components: an intertie between the drinking water systems of the City of Santa Cruz and SVWD which are not currently interconnected (Intertie-1 Project), and a replacement groundwater well in Scotts Valley for SVWD. In March 2022, SVWD received a Letter of Commitment from DWR for grant funding of up to $9,449,783 with a zero-matching funds requirement for the Project. An implementation agreement was subsequently established defining the City of Santa Cruz as lead on the Intertie-1 Project and SVWD as lead on their replacement well.

The purpose and need of the Intertie-1 Project is to increase the emergency and drought resiliency of the City and SVWD by augmenting water supply, water storage, and fire flow capacities. The Project will enable the City and SVWD to better coordinate and maximize use of surface and groundwater supplies and facilitate the active and passive recharge of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin. The intertie, which will be used for both emergency and non-emergency water transfers and exchanges between the City and SVWD, will be bi-directional

and include a pump station. The intertie was evaluated as a programmatic component of the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that was certified by City Council in December 2021.

Since the evaluation in the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final EIR, the Proposed Intertie-1 Project is now being designed, with some modifications from the previously evaluated project. Analysis of the Intertie-1 Project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is tiered from the analysis of the Santa Cruz Water Rights Final EIR, and an addendum to the Water Rights Final EIR was prepared to satisfy the requirements of CEQA.

The Intertie-1 will connect the two water systems together from the northern extent of the City's system north of the Pasatiempo Golf Club and just west of Highway 17 to the southern extent of SVWD's system on La Madrona Drive and just west of Highway 17. The proposed pipeline alignment is the same as that contemplated in the Final EIR, with the exception that an additional 1,600-linear-foot segment is now proposed and being designed for the reach of pipeline along Firehouse Lane. The additional segment extends from the original southern terminus of the pipeline on Sims Road to a new connection to the City's Pasatiempo water tanks. Project operation would allow for a flow rate of 1.0 million gallons per day to either the City or SVWD. Project modifications also include specific information about the construction process, such as identifying areas for construction staging, changing the construction start date from the year 2027 to 2024, and extending the construction period from approximately 6 months to approximately 16 months. Furthermore, the Intertie-1 Project now includes the purchase and/or acquisition of various easements and/or parcels to accommodate project facilities and construction. Finally, the Intertie-1 Project includes the development of an operational agreement between the City of Santa Cruz and SVWD to provide for emergency and non-emergency use of the intertie between the City and SVWD.

The modifications to the intertie project represent minor changes that would not result in new significant or substantially more severe impacts than those identified in the certified Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final EIR. Similarly, there are no substantial changes with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken or new information of substantial importance that would result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in severity of previously identified impacts since certification of the EIR.

Since 2019, staff has been implementing an agreed-upon approach whereby the Commission provides, as appropriate, recommendations to the City Council on project elements prior to subsequent action by City Council.

DISCUSSION:
Approval of the Intertie-1 Project is planned to be considered at the August 8, 2023, City Council meeting, and the City Council will also consider action related to Intertie-1 Project real estate acquisition this meeting.

Following Council action, staff will file a Notice of Determination with the Santa Cruz County Clerk and California State Clearinghouse to document project approval and conclusion of the CEQA process for the Intertie-1 Project. The project is planned to be put out to bid in fall 2023, following further City Council action to approve the plans and specifications.

With this document, the Water Commission has received information on the purpose, need, cost, scope, schedule, and environmental impacts of the project.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with this item and the requested action. The cost of the project is being incorporated into the Department's financial planning efforts.

PROPOSED MOTION: Move to recommend the City Council approve the Intertie-1 Project considering the certified Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report and the Intertie 1 Project Addendum to the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Certified Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report: https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/Home/Components/BusinessDirectory/BusinessDirectory/126/2089
2. Intertie-1 Project Addendum to the Santa Cruz Water Rights Project Final Environmental Impact Report: https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/Home/Components/BusinessDirectory/BusinessDirectory/126/2089

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Marin Municipal Water District adopts budget to bolster water supply

By **WILL HOUSTON** | whouston@marinij.com |
PUBLISHED: June 21, 2023 at 6:21 p.m. | UPDATED: June 21, 2023 at 6:26 p.m.

The Marin Municipal Water District has approved a $305.9 million, two-year budget that will begin to make significant investments in new water supplies not seen by the agency in decades.

"We have a very big job ahead of us with this budget," Monty Schmitt, the president of the district's elected board, said before it voted unanimously to adopt the budget on Tuesday.

The budget covers the two-year period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025, and aims to funnel tens of millions of dollars into several priorities. They include new water supply projects; wildfire preparations in the district-owned Mount Tamalpais watershed; restoring tens of millions of dollars in reserve funds depleted by the recent two-year drought; and chipping away at an estimated $200 million backlog of maintenance to the water delivery system.

The budget comes after the agency faced the possibility of depleting its main reservoir supplies as soon as mid-2022 during the recent drought. The district has since adopted a plan to significantly expand its water supplies for the first time since the 1980s.
"I think as we look back on this decision tonight I expect that our community will see that this is a clear shift to further invest in our critical habitat, to encourage our efficiencies in our system, to stave off the deterioration of our infrastructure and increase our water resiliency for future generations," board member Jed Smith said during the meeting.

The district, which supplies water to 191,000 residents in central and southern Marin, is paying for the many priorities after adopting historic rate hikes last month. The median household will have its water bill costs rise 20% on average during the first year of the five-year rate plan. The new rates take effect on July 1.
Board member Larry Russell voted against the rate hike last month because of affordability and equity concerns. On Tuesday, Russell said some of the rate changes, including lowering the threshold for how much water a ratepayer uses before getting bumped into a higher-cost rate tier, will likely prompt some "significant pushback" from ratepayers in the coming months.

"Be aware, it's coming," Russell said during the meeting.

Bret Uppendahl, the district finance director, said another driver behind the budget increase is higher costs of operations caused by inflationary pressures on supplies, insurance premium hikes and ongoing reduced water sales.

The district is proposing to spend $34.7 million on new water supply projects in the next four years. The funding will be used both to begin near-term projects to improve the efficiencies of the agency's existing reservoir supplies as well as to begin studies on longer-term and more complex projects, such as enlarging reservoirs and a brackish desalination plant on the Petaluma River.
The agency is also looking to invest nearly $34.8 million during the next four years to address a backlog of maintenance in its water supply system, including pipes, water tanks, treatment plants, reservoirs and pump stations.

Additionally, the district plans to invest a $10 million in the next two years that will be split between two reserve funds.

One fund is the district's reserve fund, which was drawn down heavily during the recent two-year drought to cover losses from reduced water sales and to import more Russian River water from Sonoma County. The district receives about 25% of its annual water supply from the Russian River.

The reserve fund balance dropped from $63 million in 2021 to $28 million.

"It's going to take a long time to build back to where we were," Smith said.

The other fund would be used to pay for larger water supply projects by providing matching funds for state or federal grants.

Other allocations include about $8.1 million during the next two years for projects on the Mount Tamalpais watershed owned by the district. These projects include fire fuel reduction projects; roads and trail maintenance; and culvert and landslide repairs.

"We've got a watershed that is in a lot of need of maintenance as well as advanced or accelerated work toward the wildfire portion of it," board member Matthew Samson said during the meeting.

San Rafael resident Roger Roberts, a former Marin Conservation League board member, said he suspects the needed funding to prepare the 20,000-acre watershed for wildfire risk is "much greater" than the budget provides.

"And if we can find more money for that, I think that would be well spent," Roberts told the board.

- Tags:
- Drought

- Marin Municipal Water District
- MMWD
- newsletter
- water
- Water supply

Will Houston

Will Houston covers environment, transportation, West Marin and the city of Novato for the Marin IJ. He covered environment, cannabis and county government for the Eureka Times-Standard and was a contributor to the Monterey Herald. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from San Diego State University. Reach the author at whouston@marinij.com or follow Will on Twitter: @Will_S_Houston

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The Revelator
(https://therevelator.org/)

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Wetland restoration. Photo: USDA NRCS Texas, (CC BY 2.0)

The Future of Water

A new book from water expert Peter Gleick urges a rethinking of how we use, manage and value one of our most important resources.

The Ask (https://therevelator.org/category/ideas/the-ask/)

June 12, 2023 - by Tara Lohan (https://therevelator.org/author/taralohan/)

It's time for a reckoning … with water. It's central to our bodies, the planet, our modern lives, and yet we continue to use it unwisely, to pollute rivers, to overdraft groundwater, to dewater ecosystems, and to leave some of our fellow humans without this most basic necessity.

Faced with mounting water problems, compounded by biodiversity loss and climate change, we have an opportunity — and a necessity — to chart a new course.

“We are a minor character in the scientific epic of water — and we’re at a moment in time when we must decide whether to recognize that fact and all its consequences and move to a sustainable and equitable future or to barrel forward in catastrophic denial,” writes Peter Gleick (https://www.gleick.com/) in his new book, *The Three Ages of Water: Prehistoric Past, Imperiled Present, and a Hope for the Future (https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/titles/peter-gleick/the-three-ages-of-water/9781668626634/?lens=publicaffairs)*.

Gleick, a scientist and founder of the global water think tank the Pacific Institute, has been a leading voice on water’s connection to conflict, climate change, human rights and privatization. He’s written 14 books but it’s his most recent that brings together much of his work over the past three decades into a call for action.

The book stretches from the Big Bang to our future path.

Gleick’s first age covers how water shaped the planet and later how it shaped the lives of early humans. The second age encompasses advancing civilizations like the Greeks and Romans and continues into our own lifetimes. This includes the advent of aqueducts and dams, deadly waterborne diseases, scientific and technological breakthroughs, and “replumb[ing] the entire planet” — what Gleick calls the “hard path.” The third age is what lies ahead, and Gleick presents a “soft path” that takes humanity on a less perilous course than where we’re currently headed.

The Revelator spoke to Gleick about where the “soft path” takes us, what conflicts lie ahead, and how far we’ve already come.

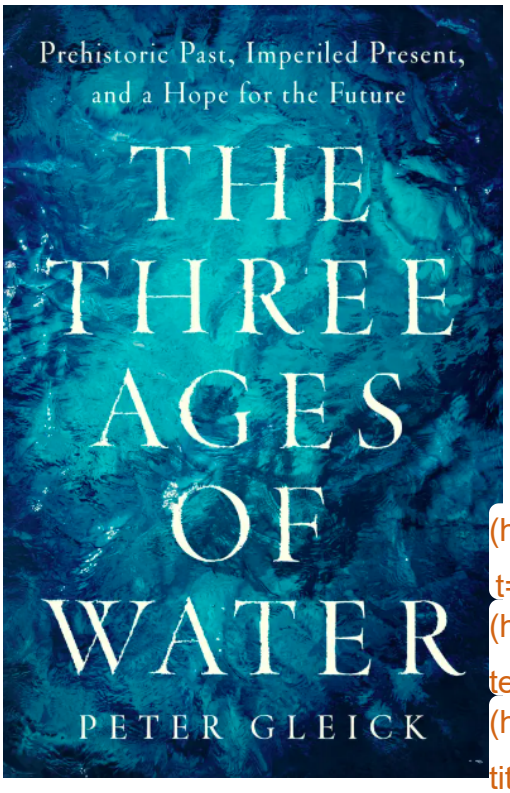
Why this book now?

This book is in many ways a sort of culmination of all of the work I’ve been doing. It’s a synthesis of my thoughts about the role that water has played in human history. It’s also a reflection on the water crisis that we’re facing.

But maybe most importantly, from my point of view, it’s an opportunity to talk about the choices we have today to move forward to a different future, a better future.

I offer an optimistic view, a possible future that’s more sustainable and more equitable than the one [we’re headed to] if we follow our current path. I really think of it as the book I’ve been wanting to write for a long time to address all of those pieces.

What should we learn from earlier people?



We're much more dependent on water than we really understand in general. Many of us, not all of us, take the advantages of the second age of water for granted — the science and technology that developed that permitted us to turn on the taps and flush our toilets and wash our clothes and grow food.

But [earlier civilizations] couldn't really take water for granted in the first age of water. They had to figure out how to manage it in order to survive, to support populations, to maintain the empires that developed over time. In some ways, we've lost that connection to water that I think many of the earlier cultures had to have.

What is the soft path?

I think of what we've been doing in the second age of water as the "hard path." Hard as is in hard infrastructure. Hard as in not-flexible institutions. The hard path ignored ecological values in decisions about water. And so many years ago, I formulated this idea of the soft path for water.

The characteristics are the need to rethink supply. That is, instead of taking more water out of natural systems — more water out of rivers, more overpumping of groundwater, more draining of lakes — we rethink supply. Alternative ways of thinking about supply are recycling and reusing water, capturing more stormwater (https://therevelator.org/stormwater-study-2/), and desalination. These are nontraditional supply options that have the potential to reduce the impacts we have on the hydrologic system.

The second aspect is rethinking demand. In the hard path, demand was something to be met. If there's an assumed demand for water, let's meet it. That's true for resources in general. Populations grow, economies grow. We'll figure out where to get the resources for them. But in the soft path, rethinking demand means a focus on conservation and efficiency. Doing more with the water we already have, that we're already extracting. Grow more food with less water, making semiconductors more efficiently. It's basically an efficiency revolution, and I would argue we're already doing a lot in that area.

The third area of the soft path is ecological values: incorporating the critical needs of ecosystems into our decisions about water policy. In the hard path, we didn't think or didn't care about the environment, but those days ought to be over. And the soft path says ecological values are critically important and need to be integrated into

water policy, planning and management.

The fourth category is economics. The hard path thinks about water as an economic good. The soft path thinks about water as an economic good, but also a human right. The human right to water has largely been ignored. I wrote about the human right to water in the 1990s. And in 2010, the United Nations finally formally declared a human right to water. But we're still not very good about understanding what that really means for water management.

There is an economic value to water, and there's a human right to water. And the soft path says combine them. Think about them together. Part of that means providing basic water and sanitation services for everyone on the planet, independent of economic ability to pay. The ability to pay shouldn't be relevant to whether or not people have access to safe water and sanitation.

Peter Gleick. Photo: Curtis Lomax

The final category in the soft path is rethinking our institutions. Institutional development around water has been very fixed. We have water utilities. We have water management systems. They tend to be old school, very narrow, very disciplinary. And the soft path says we need better institutions that are more decentralized, that integrate water with energy, and water with food, and water with climate. And the institutional structures we have now for water aren't good at that, but the soft path says better institutions would be more interdisciplinary, more integrated, more community focused.

How well are we doing this already?

I argue in the third age of water that what needs to be done isn't magic — and that these things are already happening.

There's a figure in the book that shows economic productivity of water in the United States going way up. It's evidence that we're doing more, even with just the economic things we can measure with the water we're already using. It's direct evidence of the success of efficiency improvements and pieces of the soft path.

There's another graph that shows that our economy is continuing to grow. Our population is continuing to grow, but our total water use has gone down. That's evidence, in my opinion, that this new path is not only possible, but that we're in the transition now. That's why I describe myself as an optimist, because I see some of the things that

are low-hanging fruit actually being captured, and I see success stories and evidence in each of those areas of the soft path where things are being done differently.

Is this path an opportunity to address water and climate solutions together?

It takes a lot of energy to produce and to collect and treat and distribute and use water, and then to collect and treat the wastewater we produce. Anything that we can do to reduce the water footprint of our energy use has the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Some of the cheapest carbon emissions reductions now available turn out not to be energy efficiency policies, but water use efficiency policies, especially things that save hot water. So there's a clear opportunity there for tying water and energy together on the mitigation side.

On the adaptation side, some of the worst impacts of climate change on water resources are changes in demand fo water because of rising temperatures, loss of soil moisture for farmers from higher temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, loss of snowpack in the mountains, faster runoff of snowpack when we do get it because of higher temperatures, more extreme events, and more frequent extreme events. All of those things are happening already.

Tying water and climate together in people's understanding offers us an opportunity to address both problems. If people care about water, if you can explain to them the connection between water and climate, maybe we can help them care about climate.

What are other areas of concern?

Water and conflict. There are a couple of sections in the book about the first water war in Mesopotamia, but also the history in the early west in the United States where there were conflicts over water. And then more recently in the Middle East.

I worry about that. I just think there's a growing risk of conflicts over water. We're seeing more and more of it. To the extent to which we can solve water problems — meet basic human needs for water, restore ecological health — I think is an opportunity to reduce the risk of conflicts as well.

I gave a lot of attention to it in the book, in part because I see it as a worrisome trend, but I also see it as an opportunity. I think the third age of water could not just be one where we've solved our water problems, but where we've reduced conflicts in general.

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Tara Lohan (https://therevelator.org/author/taralohan/) is deputy editor of *The Revelator* and has worked for more than a decade as a digital editor and environmental journalist focused on the intersections of energy, water and climate. Her work has been published by *The Nation*, *American Prospect*, *High Country News*, *Grist*, *Pacific Standard* and others. She is the editor of two books on the global water crisis.
(https://therevelator.org/author/taralohan/)

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Water Wasted to the Sea?

Posted on June 4, 2023 by Andrew Rypel

By James E. Cloern, Jane Kay, Wim Kimmerer, Jeffrey Mount, Peter B. Moyle and Anke Müeller-Solger

South Yuba River, 2017. Phot: K.M. Grow, California Department of Water Resources

Yolo Bypass at Highway 5, April 13, 2019. Photo: Carson Jeffres, UC Davis

This essay is a condensed version of one that appeared in the journal San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science (Vol. 15, Issue 2, Article 1), in July 2017. The complete article with references and author's contact information can be found at:

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2d10g5vp

If we farmed the Central Valley or managed water supplies for San Francisco, San Jose, or Los Angeles, we might think that freshwater flowing from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers through the Delta to San Francisco Bay is "wasted" because it ends up in the Pacific Ocean as an unused resource. However, different perspectives emerge as we follow the downstream movement of river water through the Delta and into San Francisco Bay.

If we were Delta farmers or administered Contra Costa County's water supply, we would value how high flows reduce salt intrusion (Jassby et al. 1995) and protect water quality for drinking, growing crops, and meeting other customer needs.

If we were responsible for protecting at-risk species, we would value river water that flows through the Delta to the Bay and ocean because it stimulates migration and spawning of native Chinook salmon, Delta Smelt, Longfin Smelt, and Sacramento Splittail, while also reducing the potential for colonization and spread of non-native fishes (Brown et al. 2016). River flow reduces toxic selenium concentrations in clams eaten by sturgeon, splittail, and diving ducks (Stewart et al. 2013), and it delivers plankton and detritus to fuel production in downstream food webs (Sobczak et al. 2002).

If we managed a Bay Area storm water district or sewage treatment plant, we would value water that flows from the Delta into the Bay because it dilutes and flushes such urban pollutants as metals, microplastics, and nutrients (McCulloch et al. 1970).

If we directed restoration projects around the Bay, we would value water that flows from the Delta into the Bay because it brings sediment required to sustain marshes that otherwise would be lost to subsidence and sea level rise (Stralberg et al. 2011; Schoellhamer et al. 2016). Sediment supplies from rivers also sustain mudflats (Jaffe et al. 2007) used as habitat and probed for food by more than a million willets, sandpipers, dunlins, and other shorebirds during spring migration (Stenzel et al. 2002).

If we fished the Pacific for a living, we would value river flow into the Bay because it carries cues used by adult salmon to find their home streams and spawn (Dittman and Quinn 1996), it brings young salmon to the sea where they grow and mature, and it creates bottom currents that carry young English Sole, California Halibut, and Dungeness crabs into the Bay (Raimonet and Cloern 2016) where they feed and grow before returning to the ocean.

If we liked to romp along the shore or served on the California Coastal Commission, we would value rivers that flow to the sea because they supply the sand that keeps California's beaches from eroding (Barnard et al. 2017).

Finally, if we were among those who want to conserve California's landscape and biological diversity, we would value river water that flows to the sea because it creates one of the nation's iconic estuaries, and sustains plant and animal communities found only where seawater and freshwater mix (Cloern et al. 2016).

Is the fresh river water that naturally flows through the Delta to San Francisco Bay and on to the Pacific Ocean "wasted?" No. The seaward flow of fresh water is essential to farmers, fishers, conservationists, seashore lovers, and government agencies that manage drinking water supplies, restore wetlands, protect coastlines, and clean up sewage and storm pollution. Wasted water to some is essential water to others.

Travis Hiett of USGS measures high flows on the Cosumnes River, December 31, 2022, from the bridge at Michigan Bar. Flows were estimated at 63,700 cfs.

USGS Photo by Sue Brockner.

Further Reading

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About Andrew Rypel

Andrew L. Rypel is a Professor and the Peter B. Moyle and California Trout Chair of coldwater fish ecology at the University of California, Davis. He is a faculty member in the Department of Wildlife, Fish & Conservation Biology and Director of the Center for Watershed Sciences.

View all posts by Andrew Rypel →

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6 Responses to *Water Wasted to the Sea?*

Tony Buffington *says:*

June 4, 2023 at 7:02 am

Thank you for this important reminder to “first seek to understand”!

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Reply

linda *says:*

June 4, 2023 at 10:28 am

Thank you very much for your excellent compilation of the myriad ways in which this so-called “wasted water” contributes to our environment/society.

I’ve heard the phrase for soooo many years.

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Reply

Francisco José Torres Medina *says:*

June 4, 2023 at 9:29 pm

Excellent publication. I would want to support this outlook with the following article published some years ago: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/http://dgf.uchile.cl/rene/PUBS/Rivers_megadrought_phytoplankton_Masotti_etal201

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Reply

Nick K *says:*

June 5, 2023 at 8:01 am

The folks that always say that don’t care about any of these issues unfortunately. They certainly should, but they really don’t.

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Reply

Thomas Schwertscharf *says:*

June 5, 2023 at 9:26 am

Saying it is wasted to the ocean makes about as much sense as saying dams are what are protecting salmon fisheries.,

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