



Board Report

File #: WRAG 17-241, **Version:** 1

Consider receiving a report “Recommendations to Address the Expansion of Seawater Intrusion in the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin”; and provide direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a report “*Recommendations to Address the Expansion of Seawater Intrusion in the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin*”; and
- b. Provide direction to staff.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

At a Special Joint Meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Monterey County, Board of Supervisors of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency and the Water Resources Agency Board of Directors (Joint Boards) on July 11, 2017 staff presented the 2015 coastal Salinas Valley seawater intrusion contours; and 2015 groundwater elevation contours. The updated extent of seawater intrusion depicted in the seawater intrusion maps along with a discussion of pathways of seawater intrusion demonstrated by the current data prompted a request from the Joint Boards that staff provide recommendations for actions to consider that, if implemented, would slow or halt further expansion of seawater intrusion.

At a meeting of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Board of Directors on October 16, 2017, staff provided those recommendations in the attached report, “*Recommendations to Address the Expansion of Seawater Intrusion in the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin*.” The report provides a discussion of the current knowledge and related background information surrounding seawater intrusion pathways and potential impacts thereof on the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. The report also serves as a body of evidence to catalogue the findings used to support the following six recommendations made to slow or halt seawater intrusion and related impacts. In no order of priority:

1. An immediate moratorium on groundwater extractions from new wells in the pressure 400-Foot Aquifer within an identified Area of Impact (with exemptions).
2. Enhancement and expansion of the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP) Service Area.
3. Following expansion of the CSIP Service Area, termination of all pumping from existing wells within the identified Area of Impact (with exemptions).
4. Initiate and diligently proceed with destruction of selected wells in Agency Zone 2B.
5. An immediate moratorium on groundwater extractions from new wells within the entirety of the Deep Aquifers until such a time as an investigation determines its long-term viability.
6. Initiate and diligently proceed with an investigation to determine the long-term viability of the Deep Aquifers.

Implementation of these recommendations will require close consultation with the County Counsel, and depending on the actions pursued; additional work by Agency staff and cooperation with the County’s Resource Management Agency (RMA) Planning staff to ensure compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and other applicable procedures and policies. Some of the recommendations, such as a moratorium relating to the well ordinance, might require implementation under the Government Code and coordination between

Agency and County staff, and the Board of Supervisors of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency and Board of Supervisors of Monterey County.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

At its October 16, 2017 meeting the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Board of Directors provided the following direction:

1. Develop an online forum to provide access for public comment on the recommendations;
2. Provide scoping and cost of a Deep Aquifers investigation;
3. Make the report and Board of Directors presentation available on line; and
4. Begin outreach to the public on the report's recommendations.

FINANCING:

The Agency's Adopted Budget for FY 2017-18 has no identified funding to implement these recommendations.

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Attachments:

- 1: Report
- 2: Presentation