



County of Santa Cruz
Water Advisory Commission
701 Ocean Street, Room 312 ❖ Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2022 ❖ Fax (831) 454-3128
<https://www.scceh.org/>

AGENDA

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION

Wednesday April 6, 2022, 4pm

[Microsoft Teams Meeting:](#)

Please see information on meeting access and procedures on the page 4 of the Packet.

A. OPENING

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. AB 361 Compliance, authorizing teleconference meeting

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 2, 2022

C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on matters that are within the Commission's area of responsibility, but not on today's agenda.

D. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Opportunity for Commissioners to report on matters that are not on today's agenda.

E. STAFF REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Staff to provide information on the Governor's [Executive Order N-7-22](#)
2. Vice Chair Berry to provide information on [Assembly Bill 2451](#)
3. Vice Chair Berry to provide information on [Assembly Bill 2313](#)
4. Vice Chair Berry to provide information on Low Flow Angling Closure (see link below under Board of Supervisor's Actions from March 8, 2022.)

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS and UPDATES

1. [SB 552 Compliance Subcommittee Update](#)
Receive update and take recommended actions.
Attachments: Staff memo
Blank Application for At-Large Representatives
Proposed Scoring
Notification to Board of Supervisors


2. WAC Work Plan Subcommittee Update
Consider approval of WAC Work Plan 2022-2023 and Process for Revising WAC Work Plan.
Attachments: Draft 2022-2023 Work Plan clean copy
Draft 2022-2023 Work Plan redline
Process for Revising WAC Work Plan
3. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies Update
Oral reports outlining updates from the three GSAs in the County.

H. CORRESPONDENCE

Email from Becky Steinbruner 2/15/2022
Email from Becky Steinbruner 3/23/2022

I. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION ON ITEMS AFFECTING WATER:

February 1, 2022

[DOC-2022-128 : Consider report on the integration of the Public Works and Planning Department to create the Community Development and Infrastructure Department, as outlined in the memorandum of the Deputy CAO/Director of Public Works Accepted \[Unanimous\]](#) 

February 15, 2022

[DOC-2022-149 : Accept and file the Water Advisory Commission report for calendar years 2020 and 2021, and take related actions, as recommended by Chair Koenig](#)

March 8, 2022

[DOC-2022-201 : Direct the Chair to send a letter to the California Fish and Game Commission outlining the County of Santa Cruz's support for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's proposed temporary Low Flow Angling Closure to support Santa Cruz County's local fish habitat, as recommended by Supervisor McPherson](#)

[DOC-2022-212 : Approve agreement with KISTERS North America in the amount of \\$105,229 for the development and support of a Data Management System; authorize the General Services Department to release a Request for Proposal \(RFP\) for administrative and planning services for Groundwater Sustainability Agencies; direct the Health Services Agency to return to the Board with recommendations once the RFP process is completed, as recommended by the Director of Health Services](#)

[DOC-2022-211 : Approve plans, specifications, and engineer's estimate for the Mid-County Monitoring Network Well Installation Project; direct General Services Department to advertise for bids; set bid opening for 3:00 PM on April 12, 2022; authorize Health Services Agency \(HSA\) Director to award the contract to the qualified lowest responsive bidder, and direct HSA to return for ratification of the contract award, and take related actions, as recommended by the Director of Health Services](#)

March 22, 2022

[DOC-2022-273 : Adopt resolution supporting submittal of grant application for Round 1 Sustainable Groundwater Grant Program on behalf of Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency to California Department of Water Resources, as recommended by the Director of Health Services](#)

J. ITEMS OF INTEREST

- [Pajaro River levee rebuild awarded \\$67 million in federal infrastructure funds](#)
- [Santa Cruz bucks statewide trend, has lowest water users in the state](#)
- [Newsom imposes new California water restrictions — but the governor leaves the details to locals](#)
- [State unveils long-awaited standard for drinking water contaminant](#)
- [San Lorenzo Valley Water District delays CZU Complex fire rebuild decision](#)

- [With another drought, water conservation and reclamation projects are vital](#)
- [Drought response group seeks members](#)
- [California drought continues after state has its driest January and February on record](#)
- [Rising sea levels pose perilous threat to California coast as study raises new alarms](#)
- [Western megadrought is worst in 1,200 years, intensified by climate change, study finds](#)
- [Possible SLVWD, Big Basin Water Merger Inches Along](#)
- [PV Water's plans, storage boosted during wet winter](#)

K. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Presentation about the Regional Water Management Foundation.
2. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

L. ADJOURNMENT

PLEASE CONTACT SIERRA RYAN (831) 345-5202, IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THIS MEETING

Commissioner and Public Participation Information and Guidelines

Based on guidance from the California Department of Public Health, the California Governor's Office, and Santa Cruz County Health Officer, in order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, this meeting will be held virtually. You will NOT be able to attend the meeting in person.

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- If you are dialing in by phone, press *9 to raise your hand and *6 to unmute yourself.

Commissioners are expected to join with a video camera. Public attendees may choose to have their cameras on or off.

Please join the meeting a few minutes BEFORE 4:00 pm so that we can start at 4:00 pm. Staff will open the video conference at 3:50 pm. Feel free to chat and say hello before 4:00 pm.

Meeting Roles and Rules:

- All meeting attendees should keep their microphones on mute unless they are speaking.
- Brian Lockwood, Chair, will lead the meeting. Chair Lockwood will announce each agenda item, identify who will be leading an item and introduce discussion and public comment periods.
- Sierra Ryan, staff, will assist with roll call, note taking, and tracking who wants to speak. Please allow time for staff to make notes about any decisions. Sierra will monitor her email during the meeting.
- There will be a public comment period for each item and the Chair will invite the public to participate at the appropriate time.
- During a discussion, if 2 or more people speak at the same time, please defer to the person who speaks first. In any moment where we have some confusion due to multiple people wanting to speak, please pause and let the Chair take the lead. The Chair will call on someone to speak. Also please "raise your hand" to speak by clicking on the hand symbol in the upper right.
- If you are having any trouble joining you can send a message to Sierra (email sierra.ryan@santacruzcounty.us or text 831-345-5202.) There will be a public comment period for each item. You can also contact Sierra on technical issues.



County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency

Water Advisory Commission

701 Ocean Street, Room 312 ❖ Santa Cruz, CA 95060

(831) 454-3133

<https://www.scceh.org/>

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION'S
FINDINGS PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL 361 AUTHORIZING TELECONFERENCE
MEETINGS AS A RESULT OF THE CONTINUING COVID-19 PANDEMIC STATE OF
EMERGENCY AND HEALTH OFFICER RECOMMENDATION FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING**

WHEREAS, The Water Advisory Commission is a legislative body under the Brown Act as defined under Cal. Gov. Code section 54952(b) and Santa Cruz County Code Section 2.38.110; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 361 ("AB 361"), urgency legislation effective immediately, that amended Government Code section 54953 to permit legislative bodies subject to the Brown Act to continue to meet under modified teleconferencing rules provided that they comply with specific requirements set forth in the statute; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to AB 361 and Cal. Gov. Code section 54953(e)(1)(A), a legislative body may meet under the modified teleconferencing rules during a proclaimed state of emergency, and where local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and which remains in effect; and

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2021, Santa Cruz County Public Health Officer Dr. Gail Newel strongly recommended that legislative bodies in Santa Cruz County continue to engage in physical/social distancing by meeting via teleconference as allowed by AB 361 and confirmed that she will regularly review and reconsider this recommendation and notify the public when it is no longer recommended; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to AB 361 and Cal. Gov. Code section 54953(e)(3), within 30 days of the date the legislative body first holding a teleconferenced meeting under the modified rules, and every 30 days thereafter, a legislative body can continue to hold such teleconference meetings provided it has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency and determined either that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person or that local officials continue to recommend measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2022, the Water Advisory Commission held its initial teleconference meeting under AB 361; and

WHEREAS, this the Water Advisory Commission has reconsidered the circumstances of the current state of emergency and finds that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to directly impact the ability of members of the public to participate safely in person and further finds that the Santa Cruz County Public Health Officer continues to recommend measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of public health and safety, and due to the emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, the Water Advisory commission deems it necessary to utilize the modified teleconferencing rules set forth in AB 361;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Water Advisory Commission makings the following findings by a majority vote:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct, and adopted as findings of the Water Advisory Commission.

Section 2. Effective immediately, and for the next 30 days, the Water Advisory Commission will meet via teleconference as authorized under AB 361 and Government Code section 54953(e)(3).

Section 3. No later than thirty (30) days from making today's findings, or at the next scheduled meeting, the Commission will reconsider the circumstances of the COVID-19 state of emergency and, if necessary, adopt subsequent findings to continue holding teleconference meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(3).

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Water Advisory Commission in Santa Cruz, State of California, this 6 day of April , 2022 , by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Chair, Water Advisory Commission

ATTEST:

Department Staff

Approved as to Form:

Office of the County Counsel



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AGENDA

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION

Wednesday February 2, 2022, 4pm

[Microsoft Teams Meeting:](#)

Please see information on meeting access and procedures on the page 3 of the Packet.

A. **OPENING**

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Present: Lego, Pereyra, Wilson, Vice Chair Berry, Chair Lockwood, Largay (arrived 4:18)

Absent with notification: Cheap

Staff: Sierra Ryan

Guests: Melanie Mow Schumacher, Ron Duncan, Rebecca Rubin (Soquel Creek Water Department), Heidi Luckenbach (City of Santa Cruz Water Department)

3. AB 361 Compliance, authorizing teleconference meeting

Staff needs to make a minor change to update the date in the text. Paul Lego motions, Berry seconds.

Unanimous vote.

4. Election of Officers

Wilson nominates Brian Lockwood to continue as chair and Chris Berry to continue as vice chair, Lego seconds. Unanimous (Largay absent).

B. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** **December 1, 2021**

Berry motions, Wilson seconds. Unanimous (Largay absent)

C. **PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on matters that are within the Commission's area of responsibility, but not on today's agenda.

- John Ricker's groundwater levels came up 2 ½ feet as a result of December rains.
- Becky Steinbruner says Loch Lomond at 85% capacity. Santa Cruz County LAFCO is doing a countywide sphere and service review report for all water companies. County status report was excellent.

D. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

Opportunity for Commissioners to report on matters that are not on today's agenda.

Vice Chair Berry: The City of Santa Cruz has stopped pumping from Felton diversion because the river is at a low flow currently. The Anadromous Salmonid HCP has been submitted to wildlife agencies. Water rights EIR went to City Council for approval, and now is at the State Water Board for petitions. Starting the next sanitary survey update shortly.

Commissioner Pereyra: Had a visit to Loch Lomond on January 2nd with Chris Berry. Met with Melanie Mow Schumacher from Soquel Creek as they are a strong link in District 2. Met with Sierra Ryan to discuss role on the commission.

Commissioner Lego: His water company is a member of Cal Mutuals. One of the water companies in Cal Mutuals recently received a letter asking them to consider consolidation with another water company. State did not directly offer any funds.

Commissioner Largay: 5th district slogging through fire rebuild. No landslides and happy to have revegetation. He mentions that anything that can be done to collaboratively solve barriers to conjunctive use in the County would be appreciated.

Chair Lockwood: The PV Water Board approved the 5-year update in December. On December 7th the SWRCB adopted the water right permit on the College Lake project for 3,000 acre-feet. In January, PV Water Board adopted the adaptive management plan, which will help maintain the Basin for water supply and habitat. They have been conducting a lot of monitoring of college lake and are expanding to include botanical surveys as described in the adaptive management plan. They are working through some changes to the SGMA annual report. Lastly, they have been engaged with Mark Strudley regarding Flood MAR and levee setbacks. Dr. Strudley and Dr. Fisher are working together.

E. STAFF REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The County is beginning to provide support for Commission Liaisons from the County, which will help Sierra in her role as WAC administrator.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Creek Water District Water Supply Planning Update

Slides available on the website.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS and UPDATES

1. SB 552 Compliance Subcommittee Update

Berry Motions to form the Drought Response Working Group represented by commissioner Lego, Cheap, and Lockwood as the WAC member. Lego seconds. Unanimous. Staff will draft a letter to notify the BOS and send to the Chair for signature.

Comment from Ms. Steinbruner: Wants to ensure that the meetings will be public. Curious about any funding sources. Request that someone from firesafe counsel be involved in some way.

2. WAC Work Plan Subcommittee Update

The WAC was generally supportive of the Work Plan. Given the short amount of time left for discussion Vice Chair Berry suggested tabling to the next meeting. Staff will add it to April agenda.

Comment from Ms. Steinbruner: Would like to see an addition under drought to consider small managed aquifer recharge projects.

3. WAC Biennial Report
No Discussion

H. **CORRESPONDENCE**

None

I. **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION ON ITEMS AFFECTING WATER:**

J. **ITEMS OF INTEREST**

No Discussion

K. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

No Discussion

L. **ADJOURNMENT 6:04**

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Subject: April 6, 2022 Water Advisory Commission Agenda Item G.1

Title: SB 552 Status Update

Recommended Action:

1. Motion to approve At-Large Representative selection process

Background

On September 23, 2021, SB 552 was signed into law. SB 552 adds Part 2.56 (Drought Planning for Small Water Suppliers, State Small Water Systems, and Domestic Well Communities) to Division 6 of the Water Code. Chapter 3 states that “a county shall establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county’s jurisdiction...” Outside agencies and interested parties must be invited to participate.

At the December 1, 2021 Water Advisory Commission (WAC) meeting, the Commission voted to take on the responsibility for implementing SB 552. On February 2, 2022 the WAC approved the formation of a Drought Response Working Group (Working Group) which will include diverse stakeholders.

Commissioners Lockwood, Lego, and Cheap will participate in the Working Group. Staff subsequently discussed the approach with staff from the Department of Water Resources who were favorable to the approach.

Working Group Selection

The purpose of the Working Group is to develop a plan to assess risks and define the County’s responsibilities to promote resiliency for small water systems and private wells in a drier future, inclusive of all of the components required under SB 552. This Plan will be incorporated as a chapter into the County’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) Update which is currently under development. Once the plan is provided by the Working, it will go to the WAC for approval, and then be incorporated into the CAAP, which will be sent to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

The Working Group is taking shape as follows:

Representative Entity	Person
Water Advisory Commission (Small water systems)	Paul Lego
Water Advisory Commission	Frank Cheap
Water Advisory Commission	Brian Lockwood
Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency	Awaiting final approval
Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency	Jon Kennedy
Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency	Edan Cassidy
RCAC	Amy Keiffer
At-Large Environmental	application

At-Large Domestic Well or SWS Customer	application
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At the February 2, 2022 meeting the WAC approved the approach to fill two at-large positions through an application process. Applications were released March 8th and due March 25th. Advertising was done through a press release that was included in the Sentinel's Coastlines and the County's Facebook page, an email to the WAC distribution list, emails to Friends of the SLVWD, the Valley Women's Club, the Summit Mountain Network, all the Small Water System's in the County, as well as outreach done by Supervisor Koenig's and Coonerty's offices. The Working Group planning committee has recommended that the three WAC members on the Working Group should review the received applications and using the scoring criteria provided, come to a decision about which applicants to select. The planning committee would like WAC approval of this approach.

Schedule and Topics

The following is the anticipated schedule for the process. The Working Group meetings will be held in a hybrid format to accommodate travel and ongoing COVID concerns. The final dates and times will be selected based on the availability of the Working Group members:

May (likely the week of the 8th)

Welcome: introductions, ground rules, background information, schedule, goals.

June (likely the week of the 13th)

Private wells: features of a well mitigation strategy, data collection needs, short-term and long-term services the County should consider.

July (likely the week of the 18th)

Small Water Systems: Vulnerability matrices, upcoming regulatory burdens, approach to facilitating interties and consolidation.

August (likely the week of the 15th)

Next Steps: policy recommendations, planning grant needs, funding sources, emergency response planning.



By: _____
Sierra Ryan
Water Resources Manager



County of Santa Cruz

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<https://scceh.com/Home/Programs/WaterResources/WaterAdvisoryCommission.aspx>

Drought Resilience Working Group Application for Public and Environmental Representatives

On September 23, 2021, Senate Bill 552 (SB 552) was signed into law in California. SB 552 adds Part 2.56 (Drought Planning for Small Water Suppliers, State Small Water Systems, and Domestic Well Communities) to Division 6 of the Water Code. The new law states that “a county shall establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county’s jurisdiction”. The Santa Cruz County Water Advisory Commission voted to take on the responsibility for implementing SB 552 and will form a Drought Response Working Group to incorporate the perspectives of stakeholders. The Working Group will be responsible for developing a plan that includes potential drought and water shortage risk analysis and proposed interim and long-term solutions for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county. The Santa Cruz Water Advisory Commission will be soliciting participants for the Working Group as outlined below. Any person interested in the two at-large positions must submit a completed application by March 25, for review and selection by the Water Advisory Commission. Applicants will be notified of the results of the selection by late April.

Drought Response Working Group

In order to meet the requirements of SB 552 and to achieve the goal of a comprehensive and inclusive plan, the Water Advisory Commission has designated the following composition for the Drought Response Working Group:

- Six (6) Public Agency Positions:
 - Three (3) Water Advisory Commissioners including the at-large Small Water System representative.
 - A representative (1) from Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency.
 - A representative (1) from the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency, with preference given to a Private Well Owner Representative.
 - A representative (1) from the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency, with preference given to a Private Well Owner Representative.
- One (1) environmental justice/ affordability representative.
- Two (2) At-Large Representatives.
 - An at-large environmental community representative (1).
 - An at-large public representative, with priority given to a well owner in an area not covered by a groundwater sustainability agency (1).

The time commitment for the Drought Response Working Group is expected to be a total of 15 -20 hours of meetings. Up to seven (7) 3-hour meetings (approximation) will be scheduled from late April through October 2022 during normal working hours. The meetings will likely be held in-person though a hybrid model is possible.

The Water Advisory Commission is seeking to fill the at-large environmental community and public representative position through the following application .

Applications are due by 5PM on Friday March 25th, 2022

Please email questions and submit applications to Sierra Ryan: sierra.ryan@santacruzcounty.us

Applicant Information:

First Name:	Last Name:
Address:	
City:	Zip Code:
Phone:	
Email Address:	

Application Questions:

<p>1. Which position are you interested in applying for:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> At-Large Public</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> At-Large Environmental Community</p>
<p>2. Do you own, manage, or are served by a private well, or small water system?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I receive all my water from a municipal water supply.</p> <p>If yes, please provide the address or APN of the property and describe the nature of your water supply and role in oversight:</p>
<p>3. Describe your Current or Past Profession and Relevant Educational Training.</p>
<p>4. Please describe the Community Programs or Activities in which you participate.</p>

5. Please describe why you would be a good choice for the position:

6. Describe any relevant experiences working in a group to make decisions or give advice.

7. Describe how you would share the importance of this work and relevant outcomes with the community.

8. What is your reason for applying and what do you hope to achieve?



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Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

March 21, 2022

Re: Formation of a Water Advisory Commission Drought Response Working Group in Response to Senate Bill 552

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

This letter is to notify you of the formation of a subcommittee of the Water Advisory Commission (Commission) pursuant to Section 2.38.230 of the County Code. The subcommittee will be referred to as the Water Advisory Commission Drought Response Working Group.

Background

On September 23, 2021, Senate Bill (SB) 552 was signed into law. SB 552 adds Part 2.56 (Drought Planning for Small Water Suppliers, State Small Water Systems, and Domestic Well Communities) to Division 6 of the Water Code. Chapter 3 states that “a county shall establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county’s jurisdiction...” Outside agencies and interested parties must be invited to participate. At the December 1, 2021 Commission meeting, the Commission voted in favor of taking on the responsibility for implementing SB 552 through a process that includes the formation of a subcommittee, which will include outside agencies and interested parties.

Pursuant to Section 2.38.230 of the County Code, the Board of Supervisors must be notified of the formation of any Commission subcommittee expected to last for more than six months.


Analysis

The Water Advisory Commission will now establish a subcommittee known as the Drought Response Working Group (Working Group). Per the requirements of SB 552, the Working Group will be responsible for developing a plan that includes potential drought and water shortage risk analysis and proposed interim and long-term solutions for state small water systems and domestic wells within the County. The plan will be incorporated as a chapter into the County’s Climate Action Strategy Update which is currently under development.

In order to meet the requirements of SB 552, and to achieve the goal of a comprehensive and inclusive plan, the Water Advisory Commission has designated the following composition for the Drought Response Working Group:

- Six (6) Public Agency Positions:
 - Three (3) Water Advisory Commissioners including the at-large Small Water System representative.
 - A representative (1) from Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency.
 - A representative (1) from the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency, with preference given to a Private Well Owner Representative.
 - A representative (1) from the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency, with preference given to a Private Well Owner Representative.
- One (1) environmental justice/ affordability representative.
- Two (2) At-Large Representatives.
 - An at-large environmental community representative (1).
 - An at-large public representative, with priority given to a well owner in an area not covered by a groundwater sustainability agency (1).

The first meeting of the Working Group likely take place in April or May 2022 to allow time for the selection of at-large and GSA representatives. In order to align with the Climate Adaptation Planning process, the draft plan should be completed by August, with a final plan submitted in December 2022. The participating Water Advisory Commissioners will work with County staff to recruit and select Working Group members, create an outline of meeting topics and expected outcomes, review agendas in advance of meetings, and participate in the writing and editing of the plan itself.

By: 

Brian Lockwood
Chair
Water Advisory Commission



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2022 -2023 Work Plan

DRAFT – January 2022

OVERVIEW

Consistent with its bylaws, the Water Advisory Commission (WAC) will focus on priority water resource related issues, policies and projects, with the intent of taking one or more of the following actions:

- Advise the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on issues related to water resources.
- Work cooperatively with county departments, other county commissions, public and private agencies, and concerned members of the public, to formulate advice to the BOS.
- Serve as an information clearinghouse to the BOS and other County commissions.
- Advise the BOS on potential areas of cooperation with other public and private agencies and organizations.
- Provide a public forum to educate the WAC and the community.
- Support the work of County staff in implementing water resource programs.
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of key policies and programs and advise the BOS as needed.
- Proactively identify water resource issues of concern that are not being addressed by other advisory bodies to the BOS.

BACKGROUND

The Water Advisory Commission (Commission) was established in 1975 to serve as a policy advisory body to the Board of Supervisors (Board) on issues relating to the use and protection of the county's water resources. The Commission consists of seven members, five of whom are concerned citizens appointed by individual supervisors and two that are appointed at large. The two at large positions represent public water purveyors (200 or more connections) and private or mutual water companies (five to 199 connections) in the County. The Environmental Health Services (EHS) Division of the Health Services Agency provides staff support for the Commission. In August 2021, Sierra Ryan, Water Resources Manager, is serving as lead staff.

Staffing, funding, and other resources available to the Commission necessarily limit the duties and responsibilities of the Commission. Therefore, the Commission utilizes discretion in devoting time to those activities that are most important to achieving its overall goal of

enhancing and preserving Santa Cruz County water resources. County departments (Planning, EHS, and Public Works (DPW) will assist the Commission in its work, by including the Commission in water related correspondence, and by having staff provide timely oral reports on pending issues. For more information about the Commission visit its webpage: <https://sceeh.com/Home/Programs/WaterResources/WaterAdvisoryCommission.aspx>

PRIORITY ISSUES

1. SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

Background

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WAC Role

The WAC should maintain a focus on the issues of sustainable groundwater management, support regional supply planning efforts (especially in regard to developing conjunctive use and groundwater recharge opportunities), proactively engage the BOS in advancing support for sustainable regional water supply alternatives as they emerge, and advise the BOS as appropriate. The WAC should receive, review, and potentially accept regular reports from County staff and/or representatives from GSAs and the water purveyors within the County.

2. DROUGHT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON WATER RESOURCES

Background

[California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, Central Coast Region Report](#) (Langridge, 2018) states, *“The Central Coast Region is notable for its extensive natural ecosystems, many of which will be impacted by climate change. Hardwood forests, scrublands, and herbaceous grasslands comprise most of its land cover, with significantly less intensive agriculture and small-to medium-sized cities in the region. There is a strong demand for development in rural areas and agriculture is being developed on lands formerly supporting grazing or natural vegetation. The region continues to reflect an economic and social disconnect between prosperous coastal communities and agricultural areas with many low-income farm workers, inequalities that may result in disadvantaged groups suffering disproportionately from the impacts of climate change.”*

With respect to water resources, the report states that climate changes that will affect the Central Coast include:

- Temperatures, both maximums and minimums, are anticipated to increase through the next century, with greater increases in the inland region.
- Precipitation is expected to increase slightly, but precipitation variability will increase substantially.
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- Fog impacts are uncertain.
- Droughts are predicted to remain a serious challenge to already stressed water supplies.
- Water supply shortages, already common during drought, will be exacerbated.

In 2020, approximately 275,441 people used 51,593 acre-feet of water (including agricultural uses) within the County. Groundwater accounted for 78% of the total supply, surface water accounted for 19%, and recycled water accounted for 3% ([Santa Cruz County Water Resources Report for 2020](#)). Drought conditions lead to less rainfall, and less groundwater recharge, and result in increased water use. Increased groundwater production may lead to lowering of groundwater levels, increased seawater intrusion, groundwater quality degradation, subsidence, and loss of interconnectivity between surface streams and groundwater dependent ecosystems.

WAC Role

The WAC should maintain a focus on drought and climate change impacts on water resources and receive, review, and potentially accept reports from County staff and/or experts in the field. The WAC should proactively engage with the BOS on issues related to climate change impacts on water resources and advise the BOS.

In response to SB 552, signed into law in September 2021, the WAC voted to assume the responsibility of oversight of the County's approach to compliance. The WAC will form a

Drought Response Working Group which will be charged with preparing a plan for drought and water shortage risks and will include the following 5 elements at minimum:

- (1) Consolidations for existing water systems and domestic wells.
- (2) Domestic well drinking water mitigation programs.
- (3) Provision of emergency and interim drinking water solutions.
- (4) An analysis of the steps necessary to implement the plan.
- (5) An analysis of local, state, and federal funding sources available to implement the plan

3. PAJARO RIVER FLOOD PROTECTION PROJECT

Background

The Pajaro Flood Risk Reduction Project was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1966 following overtopping and failure in 1955 of the original Army Corps levees built in 1949. The two local sponsors, the Zone 7 Flood Control District of Santa Cruz County and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, have been working with the Corps since 1966 to develop a preferred alternative and to finalize environmental review on an improved levee system that will more adequately address flooding in the lower Pajaro River system (including Salsipuedes Creek). In 2021, the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency (PRFMA), the “local sponsors,” formed to plan, finance and implement projects and programs to reduce flood risk from the lower Pajaro River and its tributaries in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. The PRFMA is a joint powers authority of the County of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County Flood Control and Water Conservation Zone No. 7, the County of Monterey, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, and the City of Watsonville.

WAC Role

The WAC should keep informed of the ongoing work of the PRFMA; receive, review, and potentially accept reports from County staff and/or PRFMA; and provide a recommendation to the BOS regarding adoption of a final plan/project alternative that supports improved watershed functions as well as provisions of adequate flood protection.

4. KARST PROTECTION ZONE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Background

County codes have not historically provided protection for karst-derived water resources. These resources are disproportionately important for support of both municipal water supply and cold water fisheries (including coho and steelhead) and, due to their unique geology, are both limited in geographic scope and highly subject to degradation by anthropogenic disturbance.

In 2016, the BOS directed County departments to incorporate karst-protective language into future updates of their respective ordinances and policies. Environmental Health Services initiated updates of their onsite wastewater disposal ordinance, with such language in 2018, and Planning incorporated karst-protective standards in the commercial cannabis cultivation and manufacturing policies, also in 2018.

WAC Role

Review of geologic mapping to determine priority focus areas, periodic review of the status of policy and ordinance updates by County departments, review of the specific details of these changes and subsequent follow up with the BOS as appropriate, should be an ongoing focus for the WAC on this issue. Specifically, the WAC may advocate for protection of key karst zones in future General Plan updates.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND CODE COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE

Background

The WAC has been aware that enforcement of County environmental and resource protection codes (Title 16) has been inconsistent. Due to the dynamics of staffing, the pre-existing historic, non-conforming development that dominates most watersheds in the County, population pressure and other challenges, implementation of these codes is challenging. Given the presence of special status listed species (e.g. steelhead and coho) in County streams, effective implementation of these codes is a high priority.

WAC Role

The WAC should continue to support these efforts. Specifically, the WAC may ask Planning to provide an annual update on code compliance program functions, advocate to the District Attorney's office their support for pursuit of prosecution of egregious violations, evaluate the future role of the County in timber harvest review, and consider how they can support implementation of the Riparian Conservation Program (RCP) in the San Lorenzo River watershed as well as other watersheds throughout the County.

6. OTHER ISSUES AS NEEDED (TBD)

Background

The WAC occasionally becomes aware of issues that warrant investigation and interaction with the BOS regarding County policy. While many of these issues fall within broader subject areas already on the WAC agenda, other issues may arise that are outside of the WAC's current scope.

WAC Role

While the County is well supported by knowledgeable policy-makers and other water stakeholder groups that can inform the BOS, the WAC is the only advisory body specifically focused on water resource management, as enabled by County code, and should maintain and strengthen that role with the BOS as much as possible. These somewhat urgent, new issues are not unusual, and maintaining the ability to respond to them in a timely manner is of great importance to the WAC. The meeting frequency of the BOS and WAC often limits the opportunity for timely engagement on new issues, but the WAC should endeavor to maintain involvement in them, nonetheless. Specifically, the WAC should exercise the option to hold emergency meetings to address issues like this as they arise.

7. COORDINATION WITH OTHER COUNTY COMMISSIONS

Background

In 2014, discussion was initiated between three County commissions (Commission on the Environment (COE), Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission (FWAC) and Water Advisory Commission (WAC)) that have significant overlap in their scopes regarding protection of water resources and related environmental issues. The Inter-Commission Coordination Working Group (ICCWG) was formed in an attempt to clarify the distinct and shared areas of focus of each commission.

WAC Role

Developing the three commissions' alignment around positions on water resource management issues and identifying and maintaining discrete roles of the commissions respective to their particular subject matter expertise and bylaws should continue to be the focus of this work. The WAC should continue to participate in the ICCWG and joint commission meetings, focus on resolving joint strategies on issues that require coordination with other commissions, reduce redundancy in effort and find synergies with these other commissions' work where possible. This will ensure that the BOS is kept apprised of significant water resource management issues in a meaningful manner that is inclusive of other related significant issues the County currently faces (fisheries conservation and recovery, climate change adaptation, etc.)



County of Santa Cruz

Water Advisory Commission

701 Ocean Street, Room 312 ❖ Santa Cruz, CA 95060

(831) 454-2022 ❖ Fax (831) 454-3128

<https://sceh.com/Home/Programs/WaterResources/WaterAdvisoryCommission.aspx>

2022 -2023 Work Plan

DRAFT – January 2022

OVERVIEW

Consistent with its by-laws, the Water Advisory Commission (WAC) will focus on priority water resource related issues, policies and projects, with the intent of taking one or more of the following actions:

- Advise the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on issues related to water resources.
- Work cooperatively with county departments, other county commissions, -public and private agencies, and concerned members of the public, to formulate advice to the BOS.
- Serve as an information clearinghouse to the BOS and other County commissions.
- Advise the BOS on potential areas of cooperation with other public and private agencies and organizations.
- Provide a public forum to educate the WAC and the community.
- Support the work of County staff in implementing water resource programs.
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of key policies and programs and advise the BOS as needed.
- Proactively identify water resource issues of concern that are not being addressed by other advisory bodies to the BOS.

BACKGROUND

The Water Advisory Commission (Commission) was established in 1975 to serve as a policy advisory body to the Board of Supervisors (Board) on issues relating to the use and protection of the county's water resources. The Commission consists of seven members, five of whom are concerned citizens appointed by individual supervisors and two that are appointed at large. The two at large positions represent public water purveyors (200 or more connections) and private or mutual water companies (five to 199 connections) in the County. The Environmental Health Services (EHS) Division of the Health Services Agency provides staff support for the Commission. In August 2021, Sierra Ryan, Water Resources Manager, is serving as lead staff.

Staffing, funding, and other resources available to the Commission necessarily limit the duties and responsibilities of the Commission. Therefore, the Commission utilizes discretion in devoting time to those activities that are most important to achieving its overall goal of

enhancing and preserving Santa Cruz County water resources. County departments (Planning, EHS, and Public Works (DPW) will assist the Commission in its work, by including the Commission in water related correspondence, and by having staff provide timely oral reports on pending issues. For more information about the Commission visit its webpage:
<https://scceh.com/Home/Programs/WaterResources/WaterAdvisoryCommission.aspx>

PRIORITY ISSUES

1. SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

Background

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~~which may include WAC Commissioners, outside experts, and potentially others voted to assume the responsibility of oversight of the County's approach to compliance. The WAC will form a Drought Response Working Group. The subcommittee would which will~~ be charged with preparing a plan for drought and water shortage risks and will include the following 5 elements at minimum:

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Process for Revising WAC Work Plan

Purpose and Process:

The Santa Cruz County Water Advisory Commission (WAC) Work Plan should be reviewed annually, and revised biannually to incorporate relevant and emerging issues in order to maintain the Commission's effectiveness as a public forum, as an advisory body to the Board, and as a supporter of County staff efforts.

Given resource constraints of County staff, an individual or party proposing revisions to the Work Plan will be responsible for developing a brief summary on the topic of interest by answering the questions below. This process also applies to the WAC advising the BOS on pending state and federal legislation.

Questions for New Issues/Topics/Pending Legislation:

(1-2 sentence answers are sufficient.)

- (1) Who are the proposing parties? (Example: County Supervisor, WAC Commissioner, County staff or at the request of another advisory body.)
- (2) Provide a brief description of the issue/topic/pending legislation. (Optional - Provide the executive summary and analysis written by the independent state or federal legislative analyst.)
- (3) What is the envisioned action that the proposing party requests from the WAC? (See page two for guidance.)
- (4) Is there another BOS advisory body taking the topic under consideration? If so, how do you envision coordination between the WAC and that advisory body?
- (5) Who will be the primary party handling the detailed research and analysis (if needed) in order for the WAC to discuss and take action?
- (6) How do you propose the WAC fit the topic into the time constraints of six annual WAC meetings given the existing workload?
- (7) Do you have other specific recommendations to make to the WAC?

**Possible WAC Actions/Roles/Points of Influence:
(From the draft Work Plan)**

Consistent with its by-laws, the WAC will focus on priority environmental issues, policies and projects, with the intent of taking one or more of the following actions:

- Advise the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on issues related to water resources.
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- Serve as an information clearinghouse to the BOS and other County commissions.
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- Support the work of County staff in implementing water resource programs.
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of key policies and programs and advise the BOS as needed.
- Proactively identify water resource issues of concern that are not being addressed by other advisory bodies to the BOS.

Draft, January 24, 2022

Sierra Ryan

From: Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 8:49 PM
To: Sierra Ryan; Brian Lockwood
Cc: Becky Steinbruner
Subject: Letter from State Department of Water Resources Offering Financial Incentives for Consolidations

******CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Dear Sierra and Brian,

At the February 2, 2022 Santa Cruz County Water Advisory Commission meeting, one Commissioner mentioned that the small water mutual to which he belongs received a letter from the State Waterboard regarding consolidation.

The Soquel Creek Water District also received a similar letter, which is included in the February 15, 2022 District Board agenda packet on page 28-30:

<https://www.soquelcreekwater.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/02152022-281?packet=true>

The letter, dated January 26, 2022, is from Ms. Guadalupe Gonzalez of the State Water Resources Control Board and is addressed to Ms. Christine Mead, who is the Director of Operations for the District.

The Board did not really discuss the letter during their meeting tonight. However, I did remind them that in the past, members of the Bluff Water Mutual had approached the Board to ask for service connection. The Board did grant those applications.

I felt you and the County Water Advisory Commission would be interested in reviewing the letter sent to the Soquel Creek Water District and comparing content with the letter mentioned by the Commissioner at your last meeting.

Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,
Becky Steinbruner

Sierra Ryan

From: Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 11:03 PM
To: Sierra Ryan
Cc: Brian Lockwood; Becky Steinbruner
Subject: Webinar for Small Water Suppliers SB552 Compliance (Consolidation Issues)

******CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Hi, Sierra,
I am sure you are aware of this Webinar for Small Water Suppliers, but wonder if you could please make sure the County Water Advisory Commission and SB 552 Ad Hoc Committee receives the notice?

https://water.ca.gov/News/Events/2022/April-2022/Water-Shortage-Contingency-Plan-Template-Development-Workshop?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Becky