



Santa Clara Valley Water District

File No.: 22-0091

Agenda Date: 1/11/2022
Item No.: *2.9.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Monthly Drought Emergency Response and Water Supply Update.
PREVIOUSLY LISTED AS ITEM 2.8.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on water supply conditions in Santa Clara County, drought response efforts, drought scenario modeling and planning, and provide feedback on recommended actions.

SUMMARY:

On June 9, 2021, the Board declared a water shortage emergency condition pursuant to California Water Code §350, that called for water use restrictions to conserve 15% of water use compared to 2019 and urged the County to proclaim a local emergency.

Reflecting critically dry conditions across the state, Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) has received drastic reductions in imported water allocations, which comprise about half of Valley Water's typical annual water supply. Furthermore, Valley Water is impacted by the unavailability of Anderson Reservoir as a surface water storage facility for the duration of the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, which is expected to last 10 years. The loss of Anderson Dam storage, lower imported water supplies, and uncertainty over emergency water transfers could result in rapid and significant drops to our groundwater levels, resulting in the potential for subsidence in North County and dry wells throughout the County. In South County, groundwater is the only drinking water supply.

Valley Water has been conducting a wide array of efforts to respond to the drought and the resulting water shortage emergency condition. These efforts along with the latest water supply condition in the County will be described in current month's Water Tracker Report and Drought Response Report. These reports will be added in the 3-day supplemental agenda item.

Drought Adaptive Management

Valley Water's adaptive management approach to address the drought will be presented, along with possible future drought scenarios. Three possible future scenarios were evaluated. The first scenario is a median hydrology condition for 2022, which reflects a substantial improvement from the current

drought conditions. The second scenario is a “critical case” and the third scenario is an “extreme case”. Both the second and third scenarios reflect a continuation of the drought and assume a critically dry 2022 and dry 2023. Staff will discuss efforts to track changing conditions, preparations for continued dry conditions, current recommended actions, and proposed recommended actions based on the analyzed scenarios.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACT:

Valley Water acknowledges that disadvantaged communities are disproportionately impacted by the effects of drought. To address these impacts, Valley Water promotes access to equitable and affordable water supplies (Water Supply Goal 2.6). Valley Water offers the Lawn Busters program to provide water-efficient landscapes to all communities in the County, including disadvantaged communities. Valley Water currently provides the Low-Income Residential Water Rate Assistance Program to help low-income households impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic pay their water bills. To enable meaningful engagement in the decision-making process, staff provides drought and conservation information in multiple languages, answers questions, and accepts feedback through Valley Water’s BeHeard webpage, conservation and drought webpages, Speakers Bureau presentations, media outreach, public outreach presentations, hotlines, and email.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are adequate funds in the Adjusted FY 2021-22 Budget to carry out the operations described in this memo.

CEQA:

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

- *Supplemental Agenda Memo
- *Supplemental Attachment 1: PowerPoint
- *Supplemental Attachment 2: Drought Response Report
- *Supplemental Attachment 3: January 2022 Water Tracker

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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