



# Santa Clara Valley Water District

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**File No.:** 22-0536

**Agenda Date:** 4/12/2022

**Item No.:** \*2.12.

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## BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

### **SUBJECT:**

Monthly Drought Emergency Response and Water Supply Update. (Previously Listed as Item 2.7)

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- A. \*Receive an update on water supply conditions in Santa Clara County and staff's drought response efforts; and
- B. \*Adopt the RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 21-68 RESCINDING RESOLUTION 17-43, DECLARING A WATER SHORTAGE EMERGENCY CONDITION CALLING FOR WATER USE RESTRICTIONS, AND URGING THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA TO PROCLAIM A LOCAL EMERGENCY which includes restricting outdoor watering of lawns and ornamental landscape with potable water to no more than two days.

### **SUMMARY:**

On June 9, 2021, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) Board declared a water shortage emergency condition pursuant to California Water Code §350, called for countywide water use reduction of 15% compared to 2019, and urged Santa Clara County to proclaim a local emergency. The County ratified its proclamation of a drought emergency on June 22, 2021.

Reflecting critically dry conditions across the state, in 2021 Valley Water received drastic reductions in imported water allocations, which comprise about half of Valley Water's typical annual water supply. Valley Water is also 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 in receiving emergency water transfers results in increased risk for subsidence in North County and dry wells, particularly in South 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 the current month's Water Tracker Report and Drought Response Report. These reports will be added in the 3-day supplemental agenda item.

\*In 2022, Santa Clara County and California are in their third year of drought, and experienced the driest January, February and March on record. In 2021 and 2022, Valley Water's Federal and State imported water allocations were drastically reduced to historic lows. On March 28, 2022, Governor

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Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-7-22 to call on local water suppliers to move to Stage 2 of their water shortage contingency plans, at a minimum. Staff will provide additional updates regarding latest drought conditions.

\*On March 21, 2022, the Water Conservation and Demand Management Committee, by roll call and unanimous vote approved staff's recommendation for Board consideration to adopt a new resolution restricting watering to two-days maximum limit that includes ornamental landscaping and lawns. The proposed resolution amends and adds a number of restrictions to those previously adopted under Resolution No. 21-68, including reducing the maximum number of days per week the public may irrigate ornamental landscapes or lawns; prohibiting runoff and irrigation following rainfall; and calling for consistent watering schedules for retailers and jurisdictions who do not have them.

\*Staff also requests amending the resolution to state that Valley Water continues to pursue Stage 3 actions of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan, which have been conducted since Valley Water's Resolution No. 21-68 was adopted on June 9, 2021. These actions include close coordination with the County, cities, retailers, and other water users to implement ordinances and water use restrictions; aggressive and consistent communication efforts to request significant behavioral change of water users; and augmentation of local water supplies. These actions have been conducted since Valley Water's June 9, 2021 Resolution No. 21-68 was passed, and staff will describe ways they are expanding these efforts.

\*Staff will also discuss planning efforts with retailers, cities and other stakeholders to determine feasibility for possible additional drought response actions, including further consistency in irrigation schedules, enforcement actions, prohibitions related to new or existing lawns, and additional short-term and/or permanent water use restrictions. Collaboration with our retailers is essential in ensuring the success of our drought response actions.

\*Due to the time sensitivity, the attachments were not ready at the time of the 10-day posting. The following attachments were added: PowerPoint, Drought Response Report, April 2022 Water Tracker, and Amended Resolution 22-XX.

### **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 low-income, elderly, disabled or veteran homeowners and schools within 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, Valley Water 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:**

- \*Original Agenda Memo
- \*Supplemental Agenda Memo
- \*Supplemental Attachment 1: PowerPoint
- \*Supplemental Attachment 2: Drought Response Report
- \*Supplemental Attachment 3: March Water Tracker
- \*Supplemental Attachment 4: Resolution

**UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:**

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