



# Nipomo Community Services District DISTRICT NEWS

## Supplemental Water: Are We There Yet?

The Nipomo Mesa area has historically had access to inexpensive groundwater as our source of water supply. However, our current demand exceeds the natural recharge and consequently the volume of groundwater above sea level is decreasing. The District is working to reverse this trend to prevent saltwater intrusion. \*To address this issue, the NCSD Board has committed to development of a supplemental water project to bring in an alternate source of supply.

On April 30, 2008, the NCSD Board agreed to proceed with design and construction of a new waterline connecting the Nipomo Mesa to the City of Santa Maria, called the Waterline Intertie Project.

This new waterline would initially deliver 2,000 acre-feet per year (AFY); however, it could ultimately supply as much as 6,200 AFY. By phasing the project, the Board was able to reduce the expected initial cost from \$26million down to \$19million. The first phase is expected to take approximately 3 years to complete and, assuming that permits can be secured by the end of 2009, the new water should be available in 2011.

The proposed project involves construction of about five miles of new pipeline starting at the corner of Blosser and Taylor in Santa Maria, where NCSD would connect to the City of Santa Maria water distribution system. From this point, an 18" main would be constructed in Blosser north to the levee, and a 24" main would be constructed under the levee and the Santa Maria River using a technique called horizontal directional drilling. At the top of the bluff on the north side of the Santa Maria River, a pump station and a 500,000 gallon storage reservoir would be built. The new water would then be connected with NCSD's existing water system at the corner of Orchard Road and Joshua. In addition, the District would construct a new 12" water main in Southland Street from Orchard Road to South Frontage, construct a new 12" main in South Frontage from Southland to Tefft, and install approximately 200 pressure reducing valves in the service

lines of NCSD's water customers living in the area bounded by Story Road, Orchard Road, Southland Street and South Frontage.



The new water will be softer than the groundwater that the District currently serves, thus reducing the need for in-home water softeners. The new water will also use chloramine as its disinfectant as opposed to the sodium hypochlorite that the District has historically used. Chloramine is a safe and proven disinfectant used by most of the water purveyors on the Central Coast. A benefit of chloramine is less chlorine taste in tapwater.

Readers interested in more details can access the "Nipomo Waterline Intertie Project – Preliminary Engineering Memorandum" at NCSD's website — [www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov) (click on NEWS & INFO, then SUPPLEMENTAL WATER) — or contact the NCSD Office at 929-1133.

*\*This information has not been reviewed by the Nipomo Mesa Area Technical Group*

### Board Action on Supplemental Water

The NCSD Board of Directors, on April 30, 2008, initiated environmental review of the proposed project and authorized NCSD staff to secure proposals for project design.

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## Board Action on Supplemental Water

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Regarding environmental review of the project, the Board hired Doug Wood of Douglas Wood and Associates to prepare a Draft and Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Mr. Wood will first circulate a Notice of Preparation in mid-June to ensure interested parties can comment on the contents of the Draft EIR through mid-July. Based on these comments, Mr. Wood will then publish a Draft EIR in Mid-October, which will trigger a 45-day comment period closing at the end of November. Responses to comments received will be prepared, and a Final EIR should be ready for consideration in winter 2009. Parties wishing to comment on the Notice of Preparation or the Draft EIR are encouraged to contact District General Manager, Bruce Buel, at the NCS District office so notices can be provided.

The Board directed staff to solicit proposals for design of the project from consulting engineers. In May, Staff mailed out Requests for Proposal to ten firms with strong experience in designing projects utilizing horizontal directional drill technology. The deadline for submitting proposals is June 10, 2008. At the June 25, 2008 Board Meeting, Staff will review the proposals submitted and recommend retention of one design team.

*✿ Objectives: "...Slow the depletion of the above-sea-level groundwater in storage beneath the Nipomo Mesa Groundwater Management Area (NMMA) of the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin to reduce the potential for seawater intrusion..." ✿*

the groundwater adjudication. The shortest-term project completion is essential because projections have shown seawater intrusion could occur in 12 to 14 years with no new development, and in less than 8 years in a "dry-years" scenario. The conservative goal of this project is to provide at least 2,000 AFY of supplemental water to the NMMA by 2011.

**2.** Comply with the 2005 groundwater adjudication settlement stipulation and judgment dictating the need for active management of the NMMA.

**3.** Assist in stabilizing the groundwater levels in the NMMA by reducing pumping in the NMMA.

**4.** Augment current water supplies available to the NCS District by a phased delivery of supplemental water. Phase I will supply approximately 2,000 acre-feet/year (AFY) by pipeline from Santa Maria following Phase I construction completion. Phase II will supply up to an additional 1,000 AFY by pipeline from Santa Maria (a cumulative total of 3,000 AFY). A third phase (Phase III), if implemented, would supply up to an additional 3,200 AFY (a cumulative total of 6,200 AFY) by pipeline from Santa Maria.

**5.** Augment current water supplies available to the Woodlands and other water purveyors on the Mesa (Golden State and Rural Water) by 1,000 AFY.

**6.** Increase the reliability of the District water supply by providing a diversity of water sources. Avoid the potential use of supplemental water return flows from the District, the Woodlands and the other purveyors, being used to support the water requirements of new development.

**7.** Comply with Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) conditions for securing supplemental water prior to annexation of lands now within the District's Sphere of Influence. This supplemental water for annexations shall be in addition to the 3,000 AFY developed by Phases I and II.

**8.** Avoid multiple waterline crossings of the Santa Maria River and associated environmental impacts by constructing a single pipeline capable of transporting sufficient water for potential NMMA growth consistent with the South County Area Plan (Inland) of San Luis Obispo County's General Plan. The pipeline diameter crossing the Santa Maria River would accommodate a 6,200 AFY capacity.

**9.** Slow the depletion of the above-sea-level groundwater in storage beneath the NMMA by:

## Waterline Intertie Project: The Objectives

The NCS District Board of Directors, on April 30, 2008, adopted the objectives for the Waterline Intertie Project.

The basic objective of the proposed Nipomo Community Services District Waterline Intertie Project is to construct a pipeline connection from the City of Santa Maria water distribution system across the Santa Maria River to the existing water distribution system within the Nipomo Community Services District. The proposed Project will also achieve the following objectives:

**1.** Slow the depletion of the above-sea-level groundwater in storage beneath the Nipomo Mesa Groundwater Management Area (NMMA) of the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin to reduce the potential for seawater intrusion by using supplemental water, consistent with the settlement agreement and the judgment related to

## Waterline Intertie Project Objectives

(Continued from page 2)

- a. Providing supplemental water for new development within the current service area of the District and the Mesa's other water purveyors (Golden State and Rural Water) consistent with the South County Area Plan (Inland);
- b. Facilitating supplemental water delivery for new development within the District's Sphere of Influence consistent with the South County Area Plan (Inland) and the conditions in LAFCo's 2004 Sphere of Influence Update.
- c. Providing the basis for the assessment of impact fees upon development outside the District's Sphere of Influence and the service areas of the Mesa's other water purveyors (Golden State and Rural Water).

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## NCSO Completes New Operations Center

On March 19, 2008, the NCSO Board of Directors cut the ceremonial ribbon to acknowledge completion of the new District Operations Center at the Southland Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Operations Center houses NCSO's field crew and is the nerve center for management of the District's water and sewer systems, including coordination of response to emergency situations.

The Operations Center is located at 509 Southland Street at the corner of South Frontage Road. It is a 3,600 square-foot office that provides the District's employees with improved working conditions.

Interested parties can tour the facility or get more information by contacting NCSO Superintendent Tina Grietens at 929-1133.

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## Salts Management to Protect the Groundwater

Nipomo groundwater by nature is hard; that is, it has high levels of calcium. Hard water can cause problems for residents with scaling in appliances and as a result some residents choose to install water softeners.

There are two principal varieties of water softeners – canister systems and self-regenerative systems.

The canister systems are replenished at a central processing facility and do not discharge salt into the District's wastewater systems. The self-regenerative systems increase the salt discharge into NCSO's sewers from served areas, and directly into the groundwater for homes on septic systems. In both cases, the added salt makes the groundwater harder and for wastewater treatment facilities, it can result in violations of the state's treatment requirements.

The NCSO Board is preparing a Salts Management Plan to address these issues. One component of the plan is to import softer water so that softeners are not needed. Another component is to prohibit the installation of new self-regenerative water softeners. Finally, NCSO is looking at ways to encourage residents with self-regenerative water softeners to either eliminate that softener or to convert to the canister system offered by various private vendors. The NCSO Board is expected to review these options this summer.

*“NCSO is looking at ways to encourage residents with self-regenerative water softeners to either eliminate that softener or to convert to the canister system offered by various private vendors.”*

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## Southland Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade Project

NCSO provides sewer service to a majority of its water customers with one treatment facility on Southland Street serving the “Town” division customers who do not have septic systems. The wastewater treatment system is approaching its hydraulic (flow) capacity and it has periodic problems achieving the quality of treatment required by the State of California. To resolve these problems, the NCSO Board of Directors has researched the upgrade options and has selected a retrofit treatment technology that will increase the facility's hydraulic capacity and its treatment quality.

Before the retrofit can proceed, however, the Board also needs to determine how to dispose of the treated wastewater. Unfortunately, the existing percolation ponds to the south of the facility are not working as designed and NCSO needs to find a substitute disposal site. Although the treated wastewater does percolate into the soil at the existing site, the Santa Maria Valley Fault running down Orchard Road acts as a barrier to the migration of groundwater to the west. As a result, a mound of groundwater is building underneath the site.

On April 30, 2008, the Board retained the firm of Fugro West to investigate the feasibility of disposing



## Southland WWTF Upgrade Project

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the treated wastewater to the west of the Santa Maria Valley Fault. Fugro's report on this option should be available in July 2008 at which time the Board can compare this option with the option of providing the treated wastewater to golf courses, parks and agricultural interests for surface irrigation.



### For More Information

#### Water-Efficient Home and Landscape

- Be Water Wise:** [www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com)
- Santa Barbara Water Page:** [www.sbwater.org](http://www.sbwater.org)
- Water House:** [www.h2ouse.org](http://www.h2ouse.org)
- Water Family Game:** [www.thewaterfamily.co.uk](http://www.thewaterfamily.co.uk)

#### Water-Efficient Irrigation Systems:

- [www.sbwater.org/WeatherTechnology.htm](http://www.sbwater.org/WeatherTechnology.htm)
- Irrigation tutorials:** [www.irrigationtutorials.com](http://www.irrigationtutorials.com)
- Drip Irrigation:** [www.dripirrigation.ca](http://www.dripirrigation.ca)

#### Info on the NCSD Website

(<http://www.ncsd.ca.gov/cm/Resources/Conservation.html>)

- "Reading Your Water Meter"
- "Detecting Leaks"
- "Drip Irrigation"
- "Septic Tank Maintenance"
- "Even You Can Fix a Leaky Faucet"
- "Why Use California Native Plants?"
- "Selected Drought-Tolerant Plants for the Nipomo Area"
- "Frequently Asked Questions about Water Conservation"
- "Tired of Paying a High Price for Your Landscape?"
- "Timing is Everything! You and Your Irrigation Controller"
- "Pharmaceuticals in the Water Supply"
- "Recycling and ReUse Guide"
- "Household Hazardous Waste: Where Do I Put It?"



**Printed copies of these documents (and more!) are available in the lobby at the NCSD Office.**

### NCSD Staff

- Bruce S. Buel, General Manager.
- Lisa S. Bognuda, Assistant General Manager
- Peter Sevcik, District Engineer
- Tina Grietens, Utilities Superintendent
- Celeste Whitlow, Water Conservation Coordinator

### Up-Coming Meetings

#### 6/11/2008, 9:00 AM, Board Meeting

- Spring Groundwater Storage Level Review
- Intent-to-Serve Letters suspension

#### 6/25/2008, 9:00 AM

- Water Conservation Program Review
- Select SM Intertie Project Design Team

**Board Meetings, unless otherwise indicated, are held in the Board Room at the NCSD office at 148 S. Wilson St., Nipomo .**

**Board packets can be downloaded from the NCSD website ([www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov))**



### Water Conservation Update: Conserve Now



Throughout the State of California concerns are mounting over the anticipated water shortage this year. Water rationing and raising water rates to apply pocketbook incentive to water customers are measures being considered by some water suppliers.

The District awaits the information obtained from the Spring groundwater studies, which will be presented at the Board Meeting on 6/11/2008. Further measures to encourage water conservation by District customers may be considered at that time.

Conserving water now will help stretch our supplies until supplemental water arrives at the District: approximately 3 years.