



### **Public Outreach**

The following information is attached to the Manager's Report:

- A summary of outreach and education activities
- Recent outreach materials; Wastewater Supervisor Flyer, Water Supply postcard, Water Resources paid advertisement
- Press Release Log May 2013 to present
- Press releases issue during the period
- News coverage during the period

### **News of Interest (All items attached to this report)**

- July 8, 2013, Draft EIR Notice for Santa Maria Rail Project and Scoping Meeting
- July 23, 2013, Board of Supervisors Agenda
- Department of Water Resources 2013 Notice to surface water diverters and recommendation for irrigation conservation in a dry year.
- July 17, Santa Maria Times report on Cuyama Valley aquifer subsidence
- July 17, Tribune report on Paso use of Nacimiento water

### **Meetings**

*Meetings Attended (telephonically or in person):*

- July 8, 9, & 11, Southland WWTF Tour
- July 10, Regular Board Meeting
- July 10, Supplemental Water Project, Phase 1, Bid Package #1 Pre Construction
- July 11, Santa Maria Valley TG, 2012 Annual Report public meeting
- July 12, NMMA Technical Group
- July 12, Management Coordination
- July 14 – July 16, CSDA Leadership Summit
- July 17, Personnel Manual Update
- July 17, Public Information Coordination

*Meetings Scheduled:*

- July 22, City of Guadalupe Engineer
- July 23, South County Recycled Water
- July 23, Regional Water Management, Sub Regional
- July 24, Regular Board Meeting
- July 25, Management Coordination
- July 26, Water Conservation BMP review
- July 26, SLO County CSD General Managers
- August 1, Black Mountain Software demonstration

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff seeks direction and input from your Honorable Board

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Outreach Materials
- B. July 8, 2013, Draft EIR Notice
- C. July 23, 2013, Board of Supervisors Agenda
- D. 2013 DWR Notice
- E. July 17, Santa Maria Times report
- F. July 17, Tribune report

JULY 24, 2013

ITEM F

ATTACHMENT A

**NCSO Outreach Summary  
July 2013**

<b>Date Started</b>	<b>Outreach</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
5/2/2013	Value of Water Display	Value of Water display for lobby	In Progress	
6/17/2013	Plaque	Creation of copper plaque honoring the District's first Board members	In Progress	
6/24/2013	Ad	Conservation 1/4 page Ad in Adobe, pub date 6/28	Complete	6/25/2013
6/26/2013	Press Release	District Extends Grant to Chamber Providing for Six More Months of Solid Waste Clean Up in Community	Complete	6/26/2013
6/26/2013	Press Release	NMMA Technical Group Release Spring 2013 Groundwater Index	Complete	6/26/2013
3/28/2013	Website Updates	Added Board and GM bios, added hours and phone number to home page, added "Pay My Bill" button, clean-up of "Education" and "Resources," picture under SWWTF and Quick Link, new page for 2013-2014 Board items, general font and spacing clean-up	Complete; Ongoing	7/2/2013
7/2/2013	FOG	Creating page and graphics for website regarding Fats, Oils, and Grease	In Progress	
7/3/2013	District Newsletter	Third quarter newsletter for August 15th distribution	In Progress	
6/28/2013	Recruitment Brochure	Recruitment Brochure and advertising for Wastewater Supervisor, close date 8/2	Complete	7/8/2013
7/1/2013	Groundwater Postcard	Postcard on groundwater issue to be mailed out to District water users	Complete	7/8/2013
7/11/2013	Press Release	Nipomo CSD Board of Directors Authorizes Construction of Additional Disposal Facilities at Wastewater Treatment Plant	Complete	7/11/2013

**NCSO Outreach Summary  
July 2013**

<b>Date Started</b>	<b>Outreach</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
5/29/2013	Lobby Bulletin Board	Update of the District Office's public information bulletin board in the lobby; posted District project photos, news, conservation pieces and community news	Complete; Ongoing	<b>7/12/2013</b>
7/12/2013	Supplemental Water Project Signs	Creation of construction signs for Supplemental Water Project	<b>In Progress</b>	
7/15/2013	Ad	Groundwater 1/4 page ad in Adobe, pub date 7/19	Complete	<b>7/17/2013</b>
7/17/2013	Website Updates	Addition of information on Groundwater issue and resources; Addition of Manager's Column pieces	Complete; Ongoing	<b>7/18/2013</b>
7/18/2013	Manager's Column	Article 6 for Manager's Column in Adobe Press, pub date 7/26	<b>In Progress</b>	

## THE TOWN OF NIPOMO

Nipomo is located in southern San Luis Obispo County on the Central Coast of California approximately halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The area enjoys a mild climate throughout the year with temperatures rarely reaching the 30's or 80's. Highway congestion/commute traffic is virtually unheard of. There is a diversity of property types in the area from standard tract homes, to golf course homes, to homes on acreage with equestrian facilities. There is convenient access to beaches (Pismo Beach, Shell Beach, and the Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreation area are all within 5 miles of Nipomo), hiking trails and other recreational opportunities. There are over seventy holes of golf between the three public courses in the immediate area. Nipomo is



unincorporated and maintains a small town atmosphere. The public school district (Lucia Mar Unified) is highly regarded. Nipomo High School is just ten-years new and recently added a 'New Tech' to its facilities. A full array of youth sports activities are offered through school and independent programs making Nipomo an excellent place to raise your family.

## THE DISTRICT

Nipomo Community Services District is an independent special district formed in 1965. The District is governed by a five-member elected Board of Directors. The District is financially sound with nearly 100% of its income from customer rates and charges and significant reserves. There are 17 staff positions at the District making for a true teamwork-oriented staff where everyone knows everyone and enjoys each other's company on and off the job. The District's elected Board has a track record of supporting staff with competitive compensation and necessary equipment and facilities upgrades making Nipomo Community Services District an outstanding career opportunity.

Nipomo Community Services  
District

148 South Wilson Street  
PO Box 326  
Nipomo, CA  
93444

Phone: 805-929-1133  
Fax: 805-929-1932  
E-mail: [info@ncsd.ca.gov](mailto:info@ncsd.ca.gov)



Nipomo Community  
Services District

*invites you to apply  
for the position of*

**Wastewater  
Supervisor**

**Filing Deadline:  
August 2, 2013  
4:00 PM**



Welcome to  
**NIPOMO CSD**

## WASTEWATER SUPERVISOR

### Salary

\$67,032 to \$81,480 annually + benefits

Non-Exempt position

### About the Position

Under general supervision of the Director of Engineering and Operations, plans, schedules, assigns, and reviews the work of assigned wastewater operations staff within the Engineering and Operations Department. Plans, schedules, assigns, coordinates, monitors, and provides technical input for assigned wastewater system maintenance, construction, and repair projects, and other special programs. Performs a variety of technical tasks relative to the operation, maintenance and repair of District wastewater treatment facilities and wastewater collection systems.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Oversee daily operation and maintenance of 0.9 MGD and 0.2 MGD wastewater treatment facilities and 13 sanitary sewer lift stations.

Ensure regulatory compliance of all wastewater facilities and prepare required regulatory reports.

Develop weekly work schedules and priorities.

## CURRENT PROJECTS

The successful candidate will be afforded the unique opportunity to coordinate operations planning and commissioning of a new \$14 million activated sludge (Parkson Biolac) wastewater treatment and reclamation facility. The project is currently under construction with testing and start-up scheduled for late 2013.



Additionally, the District has recently invested \$350,000 in an upgraded SCADA system, \$200,000 in the purchase of a Vac-Con truck and over \$50,000 in a new utility service vehicle.

Finally, the District is currently updating the Master Plan for its Blacklake Sewer collection, treatment, and reclamation facility and the successful applicant will assist in this work to set forward the priorities for improvements of this system.

## QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience

Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade and four (4) years of progressive field experience in the operation and maintenance of wastewater collection and treatment facilities.

License

Must possess a Grade III Wastewater Treatment Operator Certificate issued by California State Water Resources Control Board.

Must possess a valid California Class "C" driver's license and have and maintain a satisfactory driving record and be insurable to operate District vehicles.

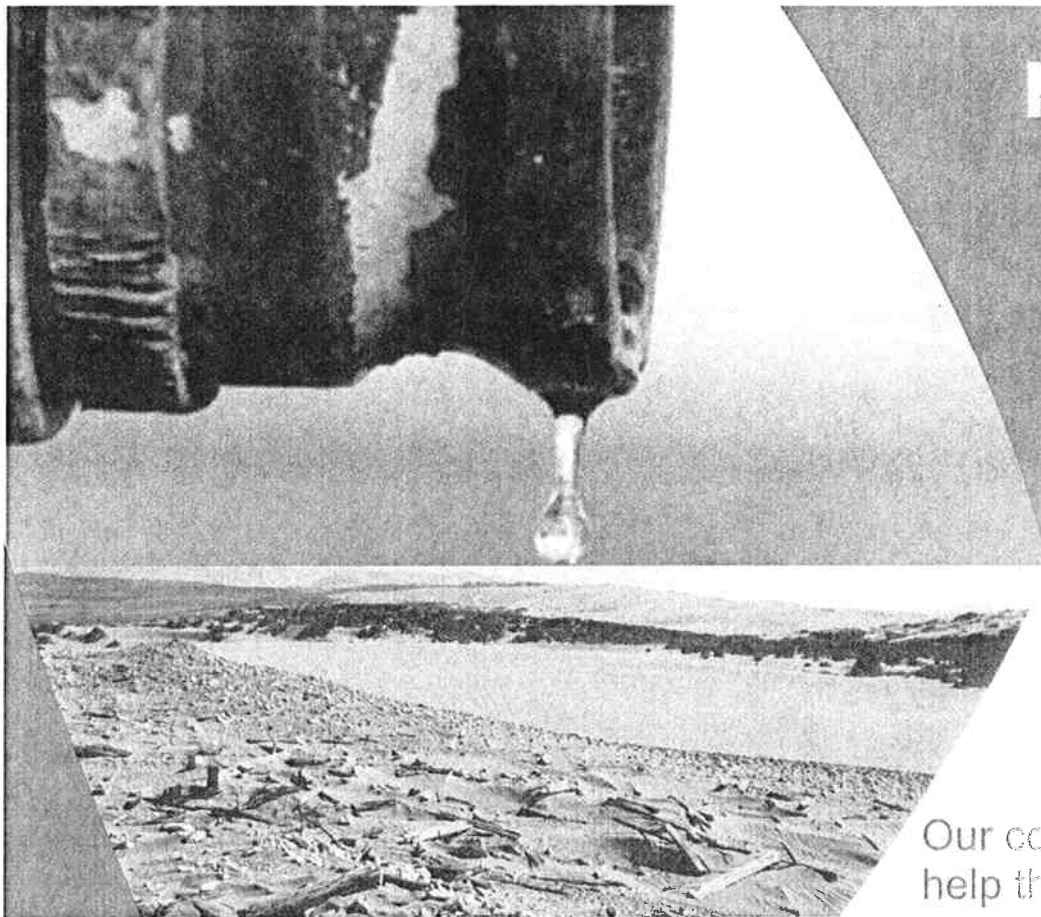
## BENEFITS

- **Health:** District pays 100% of premiums for employee and dependents.
- **Dental and Vision:** District pays 100% of premiums for employee and dependents.
- **CalPERS Retirement:**  
New Member: 2% @ 62, 3 year average final compensation formula. Employee pays 6.5%.  
Classic Member: (Tier II) 3% @ 60, 3 year average final compensation formula. Employee pays 8% contribution.
- **Survivor Benefit:** Employee is required to contribute \$2.00 per month.
- **Section 457 Deferred Compensation Plan** is available. District does not contribute on the employee's behalf.
- **10 days of vacation** first 5 years and increases to 20 days after 10 years.
- **12 paid holidays** per year.
- **Sick leave** accrued at 8 hours per month.

## SELECTION

All applicants are required to complete and submit a District employment application, including a current DMV printout, and California Grade 3 Wastewater Operator Certificate, which must be received at the Nipomo Community Services District Office, 148 South Wilson Street, Nipomo, CA 93444, by 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 2, 2013. Applications are available at the District's Office or at the District's web site at [www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov). The most qualified candidates will be selected to take a written exam and appear before a panel for an oral exam, tentatively scheduled for the week of August 26, 2013.

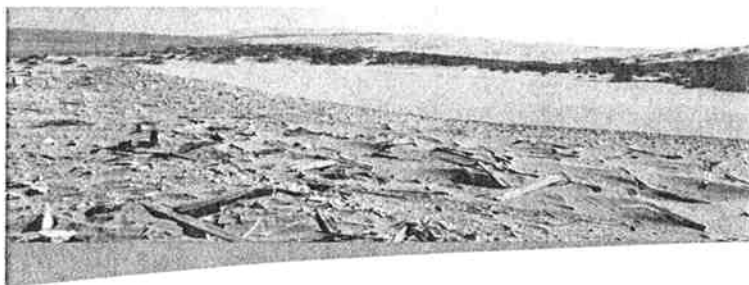




# Nipomo's Water Supply is reaching a critical level

This year's record-low rainfall has limited our water supply.

Our community needs your help this summer.



Nipomo Community Services District

148 S. Wilson  
PO Box 326  
Nipomo, CA 93444

Presorted Standard
US Postage Paid
PRP Companies
93401

## WATER LEVELS IN KEY WELLS ON THE NIPOMO MESA HAVE DECLINED SIGNIFICANTLY.

If groundwater levels fall much further between now and next spring, the District could be ordered to reduce pumping, thereby making less water available to District customers. Since groundwater is currently the District's only source of water, **we are urging all of our customers to use water wisely and to conserve water where possible.** For conservation tips and ideas, visit [ncsd.ca.gov](http://ncsd.ca.gov) and click on the "Save Water, Save Money" quick link.

Construction will soon begin on the first phase of the supplemental water pipeline to Santa Maria. This will be the first source of supplemental water delivered to the Mesa. This initial phase of the project is scheduled to be completed in late 2014, and will help offset any mandatory pumping cut-backs should the decline in groundwater levels continue.

Nipomo Community Services District



(805) 929-1133  
[info@ncsd.ca.gov](mailto:info@ncsd.ca.gov)  
[www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)

Call or visit us on the web for more information >>>



**Nipomo's Water  
supply is reaching  
a CRITICAL LEVEL**

This year's record-low  
rainfall has limited our  
water supply.  
Our community  
needs your help  
this summer.

## **How You Can Help:**

- 1. Check for leaks.** Easy-to-fix leaks could be robbing nearly 1,000 gallons of water per month from your home. Check your faucets, toilets, showerheads and sprinklers.
- 2. Consider an upgrade.** If you're thinking about a bathroom update, now is the time to replace water-wasting fixtures with high-performing, water-saving models.
- 3. Take a sprinkler break.** Grass doesn't have to be bright green year-round. It's natural for your landscape to look a little brown during summer's hottest months. You can cut back on watering and reduce stress on your local water supplies without compromising the health of your lawn. In the future, consider plants that need less water by visiting [www.slowaterwiselandscaping.org](http://www.slowaterwiselandscaping.org)
- 4. Go the extra mile.** If you've done all you can to be water-efficient, you can get creative by reusing water from showers, dish tubs, ice buckets, or pets' water bowls on flowers.

For more conservation tips and  
information on rebates,  
visit NCS D's website at  
[www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov)  
or call 929-1133.



**Press Release Log  
2013**

Date of PR	Title	Date Sent to Media	Date Placed On Website	Media Published	Date PR Published	Media Published	Date PR Published	Media Published	Date PR Published	Media Published	Date PR Published
5/3/2013	Law Suit Challenges District Water Project Financing Plan	5/3/2013	5/7/2013	SM Times	5/4/2013	Tribune	5/5/2013	Sun	5/9/2013	Adobe	5/10/2013
5/9/2013	In Face of Lawsuit Board Delays Approval of Bond Sale and Schedules Special Meeting	5/9/2013	5/9/2013	KCOY On Air	5/10/2013	Sun & New Times	5/15/2013				
5/10/2013	Board Sets June 12, 2013 for Adoption of 2013-2014 Budget and Directs Staff to Increase Budgeted Legal Fees	5/10/2013	5/10/2013	Times Press	6/21/2013						
5/10/2013	Board Approves Supplemental Water Project Alternative Financing Plan	5/10/2013	5/10/2013	SM Times & Central Coast News	5/11/2013	Tribune	5/10/2013	KSBY	5/11/2013	Adobe	5/31/2013
5/24/2013	Nipomo CSD Board of Directors Authorizes Emergency Repair of Well	5/24/2013	5/24/2013	SM Times	6/2/2013						
5/24/2013	Transparency Certificate of Excellence Awarded to Nipomo Community Services District	5/24/2013	5/24/2013	Sun	5/29/2013						
5/24/2013		5/24/2013	5/24/2013	Adobe	6/7/2013						

**Press Release Log  
2013**

<b>Date of PR</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date Sent to Media</b>	<b>Date Placed On Website</b>	<b>Media Published</b>	<b>Date PR Published</b>	<b>Media Published</b>	<b>Date PR Published</b>	<b>Media Published</b>	<b>Date PR Published</b>
6/12/2013	NCSD Board Hears Sobering News Regarding Groundwater Condition	6/12/2013	6/13/2013	Sun	6/19/2013	SM Times	6/22/2013	Tribune	6/21/2013
6/12/2013	Nipomo CSD Board of Directors Authorizes \$10.5M in Bond Sales to Support Pipeline Construction Financing	6/12/2013	6/13/2013	New Times	6/13/2013	SM Times	6/14/2013	Adobe	6/21/2013
6/20/2013	Nipomo CSD Board of Directors approves \$17M in contracts to build Supplemental Water Line	6/20/2013	6/20/2013	Adobe	6/21/2013	SM Times	6/21/2013	Sun	6/26/2013
6/26/2013	District Extends Grant to Chamber Providing for Six More Months of Solid Waste Clean Up in Community	6/26/2013	6/27/2013						
6/26/2013	NMMA Technical Group Release Spring 2013 Groundwater Index	6/26/2013	6/27/2013	SM Times	7/4/2013	Adobe	7/5/2013	CalCoast News	7/7/2013
7/3/2013	Nipomo CSD is Still Looking for a Few Good Operators	7/3/2013	7/5/2013						

**Press Release Log  
2013**

<b>Date of PR</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date Sent to Media</b>	<b>Date Placed On Website</b>	<b>Media Published</b>	<b>Date PR Published</b>	<b>Media Published</b>	<b>Date PR Published</b>	<b>Media Published</b>	<b>Date PR Published</b>
7/11/2013	Nipomo CSD Board of Directors Authorizes Construction of Additional Disposal Facilities at Wastewater Treatment Plant	7/12/2013	7/12/2013						

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: July 11, 2013  
Contact: Michael S. LeBrun, General Manager  
Nipomo Community Services District  
148 S. Wilson St., Nipomo, CA 93444  
Phone: (805) 929-1133 – Email: mlebrun@ncsd.ca.gov



**NIPOMO CSD BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORIZES CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL DISPOSAL FACILITIES AT WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**

On Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, the District's Board held their regular meeting at 9AM and authorized the District's General Manager to approve a change order in the amount of \$876,900 with Cushman Contracting Corporation for the construction of additional disposal facilities as part of the Southland Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility Phase I Improvement Project.

The Improvement Project is currently under construction and when complete will replace the current 0.9 million gallon per day (MGD) pond plant with an advanced new treatment plant which will provide improved plant discharge. Construction is now approximately 50% complete. General Manager, Michael LeBrun stated "We are very pleased with the progress being made on the Project. Our Contractor (Cushman Contracting Corporation) and Construction Management Firm (MNS Engineers, Santa Barbara, CA) are doing an excellent job addressing issues as they arise and keeping the project on budget and on schedule!"

The project's construction contract was awarded to Cushman Contracting Corporation in June 2012 with an initial value of \$10.2M. Project bid documents included an additive alternate bid item for additional on-site disposal facilities. To date, anticipated Project costs are well within budget, allowing the District sufficient funding to construct the additional disposal facilities at the Southland WWTF.

The additional disposal facilities would provide additional surface area for disposal of highly treated plant effluent increasing the onsite disposal capacity by more than 100,000 gallons per year. The expansion will give the District more time to develop off-site disposal facilities to better meet the needs of the Nipomo community.

Next Scheduled Regular Board Meeting: Wednesday, July 24, 2013, 9AM, District Board Room 148 South Wilson, Nipomo

For more information, please contact the Nipomo Community Services District at 929-1133 or visit [www.ncsd.ca.gov](http://www.ncsd.ca.gov).

###

Established in 1965 to meet the health and sanitation needs of the local community, Nipomo Community Services is pleased to provide a wide variety of services throughout its district including the provision of water, sewer, and waste management services as well as lighting and drainage in limited areas. The mission of Nipomo Community Services District is to provide its customers with reliable, quality, and cost-effective services now and in the future.

# Nipomo Mesa water levels plunge

July 7, 2013

The level of water in the Nipomo Mesa plunged 25 percent in one year to its lowest level since 1975, according to a report by the Nipomo Mesa Management Area Technical Group. [AdobePress]



According to the Key Wells Index report released last week, the levels are nearly at the point where voluntary conservation measures implemented in 2007 could become mandatory. The group said it based the report on measurements taken at eight "key wells" across the Mesa.

The reported results are very similar to a Nipomo Community Services District consultant's report released in April that showed the amount of water stored in the basin dropped by 25 percent in a year. The April report noted that the amount of water being pumped from the basin is greater than that returned through rainfall and other sources.

Both reports recommend building a pipeline as soon as possible.

In May 2012, Nipomo-area property owners voted against a plan to fund the construction of a \$26 million pipeline by raising property taxes through an assessment district.

A year later in May 2013, NCSD Board members voted unanimously for a plan to borrow an additional \$4 million for the construction of a water pipeline from Santa Maria, shortly after a lawsuit was filed contesting drawing the money from a reserve fund.

Opponents of drawing money from the reserve for the pipeline claim Nipomo officials are trying to resurrect the same project without approval from ratepayers.



JULY 24, 2013

ITEM F

ATTACHMENT B





# NOTICE OF PREPARATION – DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING  
976 OSOS STREET ♦ ROOM 200 ♦ SAN LUIS OBISPO ♦ CALIFORNIA 93408 ♦ (805) 781-5600  
*Promoting the Wise Use of Land ♦ Helping to Build Great Communities*

**DATE:** July 8, 2013

**TO:** Interested Agencies

**FROM:** Department of Planning and Building  
976 Osos St., Room 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408-2040

**PROJECT TITLE:** Santa Maria Refinery Rail Project

**PROJECT APPLICANT:** Phillips 66 Company

**RESPONSES DUE BY:** August 9, 2013

The County of San Luis Obispo will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the above-referenced project. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

Please provide us the following information at your earliest convenience, but not later than the 30-day comment period, which began with your agency's receipt of the Notice of Preparation (NOP).

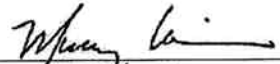
1. NAME OF CONTACT PERSON. (Please include address, e-mail and telephone number)
2. PERMIT(S) or APPROVAL(S) AUTHORITY. Please provide a summary description of these and send a copy of the relevant sections of legislation, regulatory guidance, etc.
3. ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION. What environmental information must be addressed in the EIR to enable your agency to use this documentation as a basis for your permit issuance or approval?
4. PERMIT STIPULATIONS/CONDITIONS. Please provide a list and description of standard stipulations (conditions) that your agency will apply to features of this project. Are there other conditions that have a high likelihood of application to a permit or approval for this project? If so, please list and describe.
5. ALTERNATIVES. What alternatives does your agency recommend be analyzed in the EIR?
6. REASONABLY FORESEEABLE PROJECTS, PROGRAMS or PLANS. Please name any future project, programs or plans that you think may have an overlapping influence with the project as proposed.

7. RELEVANT INFORMATION. Please provide references for any available, appropriate documentation you believe may be useful to the county in preparing the EIR. Reference to and/or inclusion of such documents in an electronic format would be appreciated.
8. FURTHER COMMENTS. Please provide any further comments or information that will help the county to scope the document and determine the appropriate level of environmental assessment.

The project description, location, and the probable environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, **but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice, on or before August 9, 2013.**

Please send your response to Murry Wilson at the address shown above. As requested above, we will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Signature   
Murry Wilson, Project Manager  
Telephone: (805) 788-2352  
E-mail: [mwilson@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:mwilson@co.slo.ca.us)

*Reference: California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 15082*



RECEIVED

San Luis Obispo County

JUL 11 2013

Department of Planning and Building

NIPOMO COMMUNITY  
SERVICES DISTRICT

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCOPING MEETING**  
***SANTA MARIA REFINERY RAIL PROJECT (PHILLIPS 66 COMPANY)***  
***DEVELOPMENT PLAN/COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT***

**DATE:** July 29, 2013  
**TIME:** 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.  
**LOCATION:** Blacklake Golf Resort Banquet Room, 1490 Golf Course Lane, Nipomo

The San Luis Obispo County Planning & Building Department (Planning) has begun environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Santa Maria Refinery Rail (Phillips 66 Company) Development Plan/Coastal Development Permit. SLO County Planning invites you and other interested persons and organizations to comment on environmental issues to be evaluated as we proceed with preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

**SCOPING MEETING** – The scoping meeting discussion will focus on environmental issues, feasible ways in which project impacts may be minimized, and potential alternatives to the project. Additional information about the project and EIR is posted on the SLO Planning website:

[www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning) under “Environmental Impact Reports” then “Environmental Impact Reports and Major Projects...”, under “Santa Maria Refinery Rail Project”. We encourage your participation in this process. Please contact Murry Wilson at (805) 788-2352 or [mwilson@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:mwilson@co.slo.ca.us) for additional information.

The EIR will include evaluation of project and cumulative impacts, mitigation measures and project alternatives. The issues to be analyzed include: Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality/ Greenhouse Gases, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geological Resources, Hazards/ Hazardous Materials, Land Use/Recreation, Noise and Vibration, Population/ Housing, Public Services/ Utilities, Transportation/ Circulation, and Water Resources.



**PROPOSED PROJECT** – The proposed project is comprised of two distinct components: the proposed Rail Spur Extension and a separate and distinct possible provision of vertical Coastal Access through the site. The two project components are summarized below:

**Rail Spur Extension.** The proposed rail spur extension includes a request by Phillips 66 Company for a Development Plan/Coastal Development Permit to allow for the extension of an existing rail spur at the Santa Maria Refinery and construction of a railcar off-loading facility, above-ground conveyance pipeline, restroom facility, and an unpaved emergency vehicle access road from the end of the proposed rail spur to State Route 1. Development of the extension would include approximately 1.3 miles of new rail (with a construction width of 270 feet), 0.7 miles of new above-ground pipeline, and a 0.7-mile-long emergency access road. The rail spur extension would include up to five parallel ladder tracks, each long enough to accommodate a train of approximately 80 tank cars, with associated locomotives and supporting cars. The project would also include work within the existing refinery, connecting and upgrading existing infrastructure. The extension is intended to allow the Santa Maria Refinery to access a wider range of competitively priced crude oil.

The total area of disturbance would be approximately 48.9 acres; however, almost half of the proposed disturbance would occur within the existing refinery or coke storage areas, with the remaining portion being constructed in an area currently used for grazing and other open/undisturbed areas within the existing refinery area. This project component will be analyzed on a project-specific basis in the EIR.

**Coastal Access.** The project also includes a conceptual plan for provision of vertical Coastal Access through the project site located to the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. As part of a separate permit issued for the project site, initiated by Phillips 66 in 2008 and approved by the County Board of Supervisors in February 2013, Phillips 66 may be required to construct vertical public access from State Route 1 to their western property line to comply with the coastal access provisions of the County's Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance. Although the provision of coastal access is not integral to, and has independent utility from, the Rail Spur Extension project, it is appropriate to include an analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the accessway because of the shared environmental setting and regulatory framework of the two adjoining components. The size and alignment of the coastal accessway, as well as the appropriateness of access at this location based on the environmental setting, public safety concerns, and current land uses in the area, is currently under consideration by the California Coastal Commission.

The Coastal Access component of the project will be analyzed in a separate section of the EIR and at a programmatic level to help inform the decision makers on potential impacts associated with development of a public accessway at this location.

The project is located in southwest San Luis Obispo County, approximately 1 mile southwest of State Route 1, and 3.5 miles west of the community of Nipomo, in the South County Coastal planning area. The rail spur extension would be located entirely on the Phillips 66 property lying east of the Union Pacific Railroad and zoned for industrial use, at the site of the existing Santa Maria Refinery. The proposed coastal access trail would cross this portion of the project site and also extend into open space lands west of the railroad.

JULY 24, 2013

ITEM F

ATTACHMENT C

## AGENDA

Dan Buckshi  
County Administrator



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Frank Mecham, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Bruce Gibson, Vice-Chairperson, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Adam Hill, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Vacant, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Debbie Arnold, 5<sup>th</sup> District

Tuesday, July 23, 2013

CONSENT AGENDA

9:00 AM

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

BOARD BUSINESS

CLOSED SESSION

RECESS

AFTERNOON SESSION

1:30 PM

REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION

PRESENTATIONS

BOARD BUSINESS CONTINUED

HEARINGS

ADJOURNMENT

5:00 PM

- The Board of Supervisors' weekly agenda and staff reports are available at the following website: [www.slocounty.ca.gov](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov). Packets are also available at the County Government Center and may be viewed on-line at the Atascadero, Arroyo Grande, Paso Robles, Nipomo, Morro Bay, SLO City/County Libraries and the SLO Law Library.
- All persons desiring to speak on agenda items during Public Comment or prior to Closed Session are asked to fill out a "Board Appearance Request Form" and submit to the Clerk of the Board prior to the start of the Board item. Each individual speaker is limited to a MAXIMUM of three (3) minutes per item during the Consent Agenda, Public Comment period, Public Hearings, Board Business and prior to Closed Session.
- Please refer to the information brochure located in the back and outside of the Board Chambers for additional information regarding accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, supplemental correspondence, and general rules of procedure.

9:00 FLAG SALUTE

### CONSENT AGENDA – REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The items listed on this portion of the agenda are scheduled for consideration as a group. The staff recommendations will be approved as outlined within the staff report. Any Supervisor may request an item be withdrawn from the Consent Agenda to permit discussion or change the recommended course of action for an item.

Bid Opening:

1. Letter transmitting plans and specifications (Clerk's File) for Oklahoma Avenue Sewer Line Replacement, County Operations Center, for Board approval and advertisement for construction bids. The recommended bid opening date is Thursday, August 22, 2013. District 2.
2. Letter transmitting plans and specifications (Clerk's File) for Los Osos Valley Road Widening between Doris Avenue and Pine Avenue in Los Osos, for Board approval and advertisement for construction bids. The recommended bid opening date is Thursday, August 22, 2013. District 2.

Consent Agenda - Administrative Office Items:

3. Request to appoint Gere Sibbach to the San Luis Obispo County Employees Pension Trust Board.
4. Request to approve the recommended responses to the 2012-13 Grand Jury report titled "An Event is An Event – An Impact is An Impact" and forward these responses to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court by August 1, 2013.

Consent Agenda - Board of Supervisors Items:

5. Submittal of a resolution recognizing Jean Hubbard on her 90th birthday and for her many years of service to the community of Arroyo Grande.
6. Request by Supervisor Adam Hill to appoint Eric Meyer as the District 3 representative on the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission.
7. Request to approve three re-appointments to the Children and Families Commission.

Consent Agenda - District Attorney Items:

8. Request to approve a grant agreement for FY 2013-14 to receive funding from the State's Life and Annuity Consumer Protection Program in the amount of \$45,000 and submittal of a resolution authorizing the District Attorney to sign the State agreement and other grant related documents.
9. Request to approve the District Attorney to sign a renewal grant agreement (Clerk's

Filed), on the Board's behalf, with the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA) to receive \$180,950 for the continuing administration of a Victim/Witness Assistance Program for FY 2013-2014.

Consent Agenda - General Services Agency Items:

10. Request to accept bid results and award a construction services contract for Job Order Contracting for FY 2013-14 with T. Simons Co. Inc.

Consent Agenda - Health Agency Items:

11. Request to approve a renewal contract (Clerk's File) with Silvia Ortiz, Ph.D. for FY 2013-14 in the amount of \$120,000 to continue to provide bilingual, bicultural mental health services.

Consent Agenda - Library Items:

12. Submittal of a resolution to amend the Position Allocation List for Fund Center 377 - Library by deleting a 0.50 FTE Supervising Library Assistant, 2.00 FTE Supervising Librarians and 2.00 FTE Library Managers and adding a 0.50 FTE Library Assistant, 3.00 FTE Regional Librarians and a 1.00 FTE Library Support Services Manager.

Consent Agenda - Planning & Building Items:

13. Submittal of a resolution to approve an Avigation Easement from Corral de Piedra Land Company, a California Corporation, to the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport. District 3.

Consent Agenda - Probation:

14. Request to approve a FY 2013-14 contract in the amount of \$151,288, to be paid out of AB 109 realignment funds, for the Superior Court to provide County Public Safety Departments with dedicated legal processing services for 2011 Public Safety Realignment cases.

Consent Agenda - Public Works Items:

15. Submittal of a resolution authorizing the Public Works Director to execute agreements with the Cities of Arroyo Grande and Pismo Beach for the purpose of transferring underground utility allocations (Tariff Rule 20A). All Districts.
16. Submittal of a resolution for the addition of delinquent water and sewer availability charges for County Service Areas Nos. 7-A (Oak Shores), 16 (Shandon), 18 (Country Club Estates) and 23 (Santa Margarita) to the 2013-14 Property Tax Bills. Districts 1, 3, and 5.

Consent Agenda Public Works - Board Sitting as Flood Control District:

17. Request to approve an agreement for professional engineering services with Fugro



Consultants in the amount of \$200,000 for the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin Characterization and Planning Activities. Districts 3 & 4.

18. Request to approve committee appointments of Bill Nicolls and Greg Ray, representing City of Grover Beach, and Kurt Bollinger, as Agricultural At-Large Member, to the Water Resources Advisory Committee of the Flood Control and Water Conservation District. All Districts.

Public Comment Period:

19. Members of the Public wishing to address the Board on matters other than scheduled items may do so when recognized by the Chairperson. Individuals interested in speaking should fill out a "Board Appearance Request Form" located at the back of the Board Chambers and hand it to the Clerk of the Board. Presentations are limited to a MAXIMUM of three minutes per individual.

Board Business:

20. Report to the Board regarding the financial condition of Airport Services.
21. Consideration of a terminal development report and a request for approval of Schematic Design Phase (Phase 2) of Terminal Design/Development Project for the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport (SBP); and a request for authorization to move to third and final phase, Design Development of the project.
22. Report to the Board on results of Airline Guarantee Programs in different communities.
23. Request to approve a contract with Sixel Consulting Group, Inc. for air service development consulting and recruiting air carrier services in an annual amount not to exceed \$25,000. Additional incentive payments for air carrier recruiting services will be based upon the number of new airlines or new routes recruited under the conditions specified in this contract.
24. Request to approve: 1) the Mental Health Services Act Annual Update for Fiscal Year 2013-14; 2) a resolution amending the Position Allocation List to add a 1.0 FTE Mental Health Program Supervisor to Fund Center 166 - Behavioral Health; and 3) a corresponding budget adjustment in the amount of \$128,229 to Fund Center 166.

Closed Session Items:

25. I. PENDING LITIGATION (Government Code, section 54956.9.) It is the intention of the Board to meet in closed session concerning the following items:
- A. Conference with Legal Counsel-Existing Litigation (Government Code, section 54956.9(a).) (Formally initiated) 1. Mountain Cascade, Inc. v. SLO Co. Flood Control & Water Conservation District, et al.; 2. Negranti & Sons v. San Luis Obispo County; 3. Los Osos Community Services District v. County of San Luis Obispo, et al. (Golden State Water).
- B. Conference with Legal Counsel-Anticipated Litigation (Government Code, section 54956.9.) 4. Significant exposure to litigation (Government Code, section 54956.9(b).) No. of cases 2. Facts and circumstances not known to potential plaintiff which indicate significant exposure to litigation. 5. Initiation of litigation (Government Code, section 54956.9(c).) No. of cases 2.
- II. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code ' 54957.6.)
- A. It is the intention of the Board to meet in closed session to have a conference with its Labor Negotiator Tami Douglas-Schatz concerning the following: Name of employee organizations are: 6. SLOCEA-Public Services, Supervisors, Clerical; 7. Deputy Sheriff's Association; 8. DAIA; 9. SLOCPMPOA; 10. DCCA; 11. SLOGAU; 12. Sheriffs' Management; 13. SLOCPPOA.
- B. It is the intention of the Board, sitting as the Governing Board of the San Luis Obispo County In Home Support Services Public Authority, to meet in Closed Session to have a conference with its Labor Negotiator concerning the following: Name of employee organization: 14. United Domestic Workers.

**RECESS****1:30 REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION**Presentations:

26. Submittal of a resolution recognizing Arthur F. Bacon upon his retirement for over 29 years of service to the residents of the County of San Luis Obispo.
27. Submittal of a resolution commending Cindy Couzzi upon her retirement after thirty-one years of service to San Luis Obispo County General Services Agency.
28. Submittal of a resolution recognizing July 21-27, 2013 as "Probation Services Week " in San Luis Obispo County.

Board Business Continued:

29. Update on the implementation of 2011 Public Safety Realignment Act (AB 109) in San Luis Obispo County.

Hearings:

30. Hearing to consider a resolution amending the 2006, 2009, 2011, and 2012 Action Plans to reallocate Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. All Districts.
31. Hearing to consider an Order to Abate Nuisances on the property known as 480 Mesa Grande Drive, Shandon, California, owned by Respondents F. James and Rosann Inguito. District 1.
32. Hearing to consider a resolution authorizing the addition of delinquent service charges for County Service Area 10A (Cayucos), to the 2013-14 Property Tax Bills. District 2.

JULY 24, 2013

ITEM F

ATTACHMENT D



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR



MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ  
SECRETARY FOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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## State Water Resources Control Board

To: Diverters of Surface Water and Interested Persons

### NOTICE OF SURFACE WATER SHORTAGE FOR 2013

For the past two years, much of California has experienced record dry and warm conditions. For 2013, the combined total precipitation for the months of January through May is the driest in about 90 years of record. Reservoir operators reported lower than average storage levels as of the end May and these storage levels will continue to decline as water is released to support municipal, agricultural and water quality needs.

The California water rights system is designed to provide for the orderly allocation of water supplies in the event that there is not enough water to satisfy everyone's needs. When there is insufficient water for all, water diversions are allocated in order of water right priority. Currently, certain water right holders primarily within the Sacramento River watershed are restricted (through a permit condition referred to as "Term 91") from diverting water when the State and Federal Water Projects are releasing stored water to meet Delta water quality standards and in-basin entitlements. The rule of water right priority only extends to natural and abandoned flows. Stored water that is released to meet Delta objectives is neither natural nor abandoned flow. This water therefore cannot be legally taken by riparian and other users. Currently, a substantial portion of Delta inflow is stored water. In the late summer and fall, there will be little or no natural and abandoned flows in the Delta watershed and other stream systems.

In view of the current hydrologic situation, water in the fall for uses such as planting winter crops may only be available to the most senior water right holders. In addition, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) believes that it is important to remind all water right holders that these conditions may continue into the next year. If water supply conditions do not improve, permit, license and registration holders may see their diversions restricted. It may even become necessary in some parts of the state to restrict more senior water rights, such as riparian rights or pre-1914 rights.

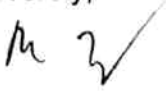
If your water right is restricted due to a lack of surface water or a low priority of right, you are encouraged to implement actions such as: controlling unnecessary conveyance losses, improving coordination with other local diverters to reduce cumulative instantaneous demands, limiting any planned future double cropping, and using available alternative water supplies.

FELICIA MARGUS, CHAIR | THOMAS HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, Ca 95812-0100 | [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov)

As a reminder, conservation efforts, which include sound water delivery methods and more efficient irrigation practices, are consistent with the State Constitution which requires all of us to use water efficiently and reasonably. In view of the current situation, the State Water Board strongly encourages your immediate consideration of the enclosed conservation guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Evoy', with a checkmark-like flourish at the end.

Barbara Evoy  
Deputy Director for Water Rights

Enclosure

### **Water Conservation in Irrigation: Guidelines for a Dry Year**

Here are some of the conservation practices in irrigation that you can implement to cope with water shortages this year.

1. Be realistic. Adjust the planted acreage to the projected water supply, both as to its quality and quantity.
2. Be efficient. Runoff from the lower end of an irrigated field is usually reusable because its quality is only slightly degraded. If the irrigation water is usable, the runoff water should be usable. Tailwater return flow systems will allow recovery of runoff for increased efficiency of irrigation.
3. Careful land grading or smoothing of irrigation checks aids in uniform water application, thus preventing percolation losses below the root zone.
4. Long irrigation runs may cause excessive water application at the upper end and runoff at the lower end. Water can be spread more rapidly and evenly by maintaining and constructing short and narrow irrigation checks and short furrows, combined with return flow systems.
5. Plug leaks in canals, ditches, pipelines, distribution systems, etc. Replace worn orifices in nozzles or sprinkler heads.
6. If present irrigation system is inefficient, consider advantages of upgrading the present system, or changing to a more efficient system.
7. Better uniformity of distribution can be obtained when irrigating by sprinklers if high wind conditions are avoided. In some locations, this can be accomplished by irrigating during night hours.
8. Be especially careful at critical germination period on annual crops. Pre-plant irrigation is probably more essential in a dry year to reduce salinity in the seed area and store water for later use by crops than in more normal years. But do not overdo pre-plant irrigations. Use a soil auger or other moisture meter to check for soil water supply and depth of wetting after an irrigation.
9. Match water applications closely to crop needs. Find out the amount of water to be applied to refill the soil just to the depth of rooting. In some areas, potential evapotranspiration data will be available. These can be used to estimate the rate of water use by any particular crop. Also, the soil capacity for water storage can be estimated. Then, a simplified budget procedure can be followed to determine approximate time of irrigation and amount to be applied without wasting water. Consult your Farm Advisor for specific information on your crop and soil.
10. Keep leaching for salinity control to the minimum dictated by crop tolerance and a realistic yield expectation for the supply of water available. Seldom does average soil salinity of a root zone build up to damaging concentrations during a one- or even two-year period.

11. Select crops and growing seasons that use less water, where possible. By combining planting dates with selected varieties, it is possible to save some water by shortening the growing season and/or avoiding high evaporative demand periods. Small grains and, to some extent, safflower will use significantly less water than summer season field crops.
12. Most crops, if supplied with less than full evapotranspiration requirements will produce less than maximum yields, although in some crops the reduction in yield is less marked than in others. Cotton, sorghum, olives, and wine or raisin grapes are crops relatively insensitive to reduced water supply. Alfalfa, corn, and pasture are examples of crops sensitive to water deficiency.
13. On tree crops and deep-rooted annuals, start the growing season with a fully wet root zone, if at all possible. Use the remaining water supply as needed to maintain crop until the supply is exhausted.
14. Plant the best land. Do not plant marginal land. If future abandonment or pulling of permanent crop acreage is being considered, perhaps now is the time to make the change.



JULY 24, 2013

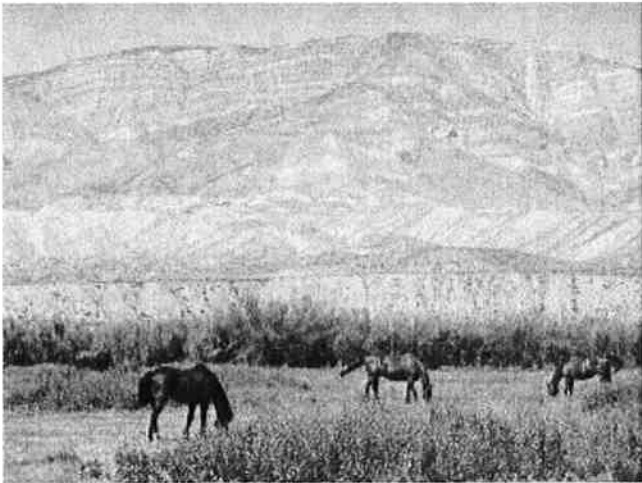
ITEM F

ATTACHMENT E

CUYAMA VALLEY: LEVELS ARE DROPPING

## Rural community sinking because of groundwater use

County agency, USGS release findings of water study



13 HOURS AGO • BRIAN

BULLOCK/BBULLOCK@SANTAMARIATIMES.COM

It doesn't take a genius to know that if people pump more water out of the ground than Mother Nature provides it's going to go dry.

Old-timers in the arid Cuyama Valley have known that has been happening there for the past 40 years.

What does take some genius is to figure out how the valley's water table is structured, how constant pumping is affecting water quantity and

quality and how that's causing the valley floor to sink. Initial findings show the valley has subsided up to 12 millimeters annually where substantial groundwater pumping is occurring.

The U.S. Geological Survey and the Santa Barbara County Water Agency this week released the first two parts of a four-part study of the Cuyama Valley groundwater basin, a four-year study that will be used to develop a new hydrologic model of the valley that can be used to guide future water use.

"It started with concerned residents and users of the groundwater basin who were aware of drops (in the groundwater level) over the past 40 years," said Dennis Gibbs, senior hydrologist with county water agency.

Gibbs said former 5th district county supervisor Joe Centeno got the county started on a new water study because groundwater is the Cuyama Valley's lone source for water. It has no reservoir, no state water pipeline and the Cuyama River is dry 98 percent of the time, Gibbs said.

The county water agency enlisted the USGS and its resources because of the survey's expertise in such studies.

Time for a new study was also "overdue," according to Judy Kidd, who along with her husband John has lived in the valley since 1958. Previous studies were done in 1951 and 1970.

The Kidds moved from Taft to the valley where they both taught school in the Cuyama Valley School District. John also served 19 years as district superintendent before retiring in 1990. They own two properties in the valley, one a 10-acre parcel not far from Cuyama Elementary School, where they worked.

John said when they purchased their property in 1979 their well was at 390 feet. Now it's at 564 feet because of the drop in groundwater level.

"I've only got about another 10 or 12 feet to go. I've only got one more joint of pipe," John said with a chuckle, describing his well pump has struggled.

The Kidds' property is about 2 miles west of where Highway 33 winds its way into the mountains toward Ventura. It's on the south side of Highway 166 surrounded by acreage owned by Bolthouse Farms, one of two large corporate farms that owns much of the valley floor and with it its water supply. The other is Grimmway Farms. Bolthouse, which was purchased by Campbell's Soup Co. in 2012, farms mostly carrots in the Cuyama Valley.

The USGS used the Kidds' well for its study which started in 2008. In all, a dozen monitor wells were drilled and 27 domestic and supply wells, two springs and four surface-water sites were studied.

The first report is a compilation and analysis of the aquifer system water levels, surface-water flows, water quality and geomechanics of the system.

The water quality study showed that 97 percent of the samples tested for dissolved solids, and 95 percent of the samples tested for sulfate, contained concentrations in excess of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's established secondary standards for drinking water. It also showed that 13 percent of samples contained nitrates and

12 percent of samples contained naturally occurring arsenic in excess of EPA drinking water standards.

The second report is an in-depth study of the geologic structure of the aquifer system that shows the valley is not one large basin, but a number of sub-basins that don't allow water to flow freely between them.

The report shows that water quality and quantity varies from basin to basin, which isn't news to either farmers or water authorities.

"We're not real sure about what's happening. It take time to answer those questions," said U.S. Wilson, who has been with the Cuyama Community Services District for the past 20 years. "We're down really about 40 feet from where we normally run at this time of year."

The district has two wells, the larger of which is 1,000 feet deep. Wilson said the lack of rain in the valley the past two winters has something to do with the groundwater level dropping in their aquifer.

The rain gauge at the Cuyama Fire Station captured just 2.54 inches of rain last year — Wilson said he measured closer to 4 inches at his office — and only 5.09 inches fell in 2011-12.

He also said the community services district draws water for its 225 customers from an aquifer he felt was isolated from other valley water users because of its relative stability over the years. Wilson said even during the drought years in the 1990s, the district's groundwater levels stayed consistent.

That's not the case at Santa Barbara Pistachio Company that operates its orchards near Ventucopa, an incorporated area about eight miles south of the intersection of Highways 166 and 33.

The company is one of several organic farms that have found the area perfect for growing their pesticide-free products.

"It varies so dramatically up here," said Tristan Zannon, whose family owns and operates the pistachio company. "But I think it's pretty obvious when I see my neighbors continually having to lower their pumps what's going on."

Zannon said his company, which was started in 1991 by his parents Gene and Gail Zannon, recently drilled a new well to 1,100 feet which is just about as deep as they can go, although they're pumping from around 600 feet right now. He said they sunk the well that deep as a preemptive strike against the dropping groundwater level and to replace a well that had basically worn out.

"The water table is dropping so the pump is having to suck harder to draw the water, so sand gets sucked into the pump," he said.

With the 2010 Census showing just 517 people in the Cuyama Valley, it's not hard to figure out where the water is being used.

"Ag accounts for probably 95 to 98 percent of all the water usage that's out there," Gibbs said. "We're friends of agriculture. We want to support agriculture. One of the reasons we're doing this study is to determine how to best use our water."

The next two parts of the study will be released at the end of the year, Gibbs said. It will contain the hydrologic model that will allow for simulation of a variety of future water-supply scenarios.

"The findings will provide a better understanding of the quality and quantity of groundwater in the Cuyama Valley Basin, where groundwater is the only source for domestic, agricultural and municipal water use," said Randall Hanson, research hydrologist and project chief with the USGS.

Resident John Kidd said something needs to be done about how much water is being used in the valley

"There's going to be a day of reckoning where they're going to get down to 2,000 feet and they're going to get down into the brackish water," he said.

JULY 24, 2013

ITEM F

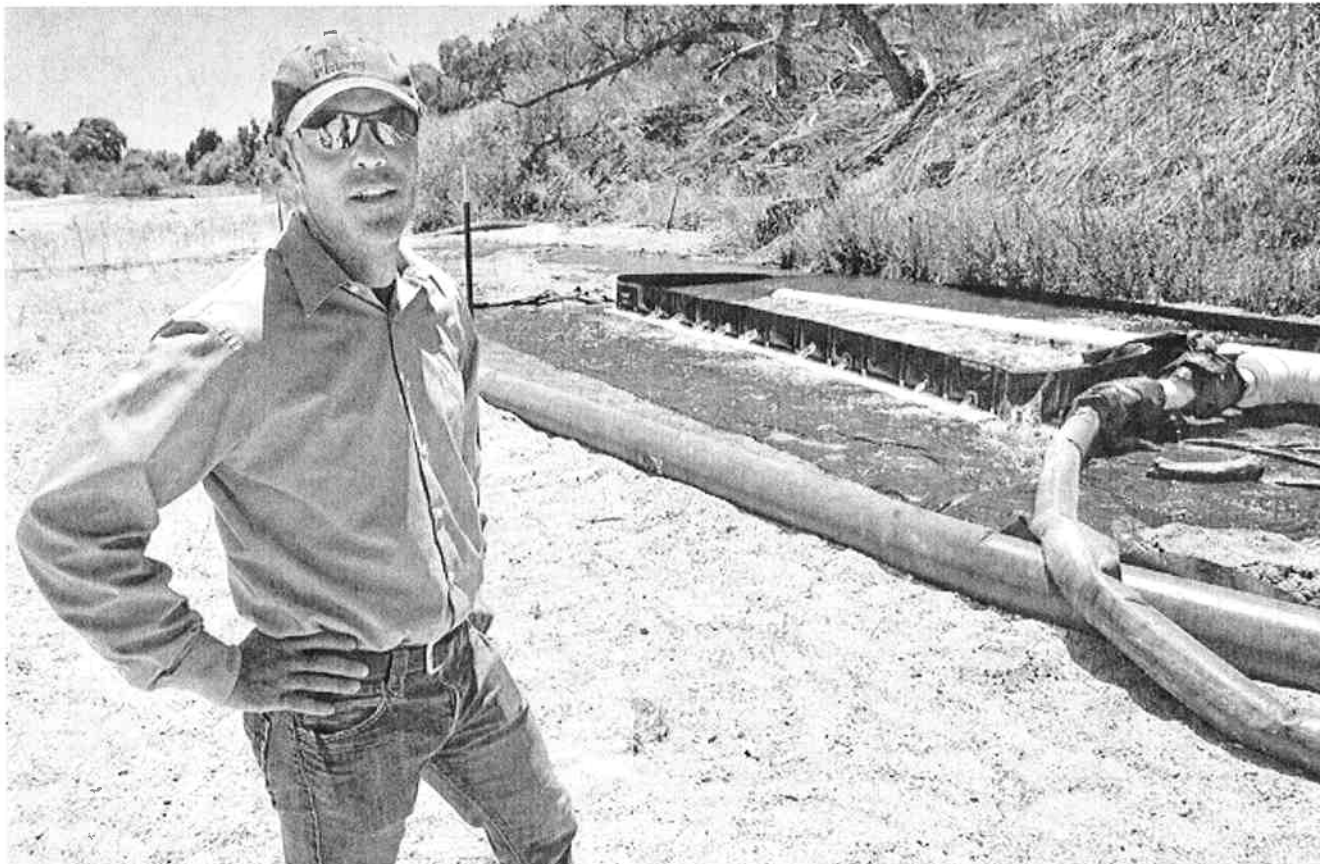
ATTACHMENT F

Next Story >

19 people arrested in North County probation sweep

## Paso sends Nacimiento water to river to help recharge supply

Published: July 17, 2013 Updated 16 hours ago



Christopher Alakel, Paso Robles' water resources manager, looks over the system set up to release Nacimiento water into the Salinas riverbed.

DAVID MIDDLECAMP — [dmiddlecamp@thetribunenews.com](mailto:dmiddlecamp@thetribunenews.com) Buy Photo

City is taking its allocation for the first time and filtering it into a pooling system on the sandy surface of the Salinas riverbed

By Tonya Strickland — [tstrickland@thetribunenews.com](mailto:tstrickland@thetribunenews.com)

For the first time, the city of Paso Robles has turned on the tap to its share of Lake Nacimiento water.

It's doing so by filtering about 2,000 gallons per minute into a new pooling system on top of the bone-dry Salinas riverbed to offset the city's summer shortages.

The new supply comes from the city's annual 4,000-acre-foot share in the Nacimiento Water Project, a 45-mile pipeline that carries millions of gallons from the lake to residents and businesses within San Luis Obispo County.

Paso Robles can't use the full allotment until a treatment plant is operational, which is expected around the end of 2015. Citizen protests led to a delay in the plant's construction.

"The purpose of this is to serve as a drought buffer to recapture water in times of below-normal rainfall," city water resources manager Christopher Alakel said.

The well field area where they've built the new system can't absorb additional water during wet years, he said, so they can't use it year-round.

The new system begins at a well field on Paso Robles' south side near the city's access point to the Nacimiento pipeline. From there, the city connected a short underground pipe along a bluff overlooking the Salinas River, which always has a steady stream of underflow that the city pumps from.

That pipe was outfitted with a connection point sticking out of the ground, to which the city attached a large hose. The hose stretches about 200 feet down the bluff to the riverbed and filters into an aboveground pool where the water can softly overflow and sink into the sandy river bottom.

The idea behind the project, which has been in the works since last year and cost about \$18,000 to build plus additional electricity costs, is to recharge the river's underflow during the hot summer months — and in periods of drought — when the water levels typically fall.

"It's not the best way to use our Nacimiento water. But for a drought buffer, it's fantastic," Alakel said.

As the water sinks into the riverbed, it percolates into the underflow so city wells can recapture some of it and introduce it into the city's overall water supply. If the city continues operating the pooling system through October — a period when the city typically sees little rain — it will have used nearly 14 percent of its annual Nacimiento share, Alakel said.

City officials are often asked why Paso Robles needs a treatment plant — why can't it percolate the lake water into the Salinas River to treat it naturally with the rocks and soils, similar to the new pooling system and to what its neighbors in Atascadero do.

The reason, Alakel said, is, "Due to the geology of the area, we're only able to recapture about 25 percent of the water." That's because the city's wells physically can't capture the water fast enough before it trickles out of reach.

But the amount of water the wells do capture is making a difference, Alakel said.

As of Wednesday, the new system had discharged a total of 44 million gallons into the river since the end of June and noticeably increased production at two of the city's river wells, Alakel said. Groundwater monitoring data also show that the underflow levels in the well field increase when the system is turned on and decrease when it's turned off, he added.

"I think it's going to play a pretty important role for us during drought," he said.

Paso Robles has struggled to keep up with its water customers' summer demands after poor rain years. Conservation has helped, but the hot, dry months have exacerbated the problem.

On Wednesday, afternoon temperatures topped nearly 100 degrees — a typical summer day in Paso Robles.

"Look how fast it soaks it in," Alakel said of the lake water as he moved his hand through the wet, gravelly sand. "It's just a big sponge."

With a five-year permit, the city is looking to continue the pooling process as needed. It may also use it for any extra lake water its treatment plant won't have room for when it's built.

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