

Water District seeks drought proof supply

Written by: Robert McDonald, General Manager

Although 2020 has presented many challenges, Carpinteria Valley Water District (CVWD) staff are social distancing while working hard to keep making progress on many important matters. The development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) has begun and will help to ensure that we can manage the Carpinteria Groundwater Basin (CGB) sustainably, which is an important shared resource for the Carpinteria Valley. In addition, the Carpinteria Advanced Purification Project (CAPP), now under development, will allow us to diversify our water portfolio so that we can be resilient in future periods of drought. A new development at the District is voter division will now be used to elect the five-member Board of Directors in order to comply with the California Voter Rights Act. As a precaution during the pandemic, the District office remains closed to the public, though our staff is available via e-mail and by phone to assist you. In the meantime, we want to provide you with some updates.

Under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the CGB has been designated as a “high-priority” basin, which requires the creation of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and development of a GSP. A Joint Powers Authority (JPA) consisting of CVWD, the City of Carpinteria, Ventura County, and Santa Barbara County Water Agency has been formed and is the exclusive GSA for the basin. The District is working on the GSP and has been awarded a grant for nearly \$2 million from the State SGMA Funding program. This Grant will pay for the preparation of a GSP and a monitoring well.

The District is also working on better understanding the relationship between groundwater levels along the coast and well production within the basin. We are collecting data from three new monitoring wells situated near Santa Claus Lane in order to gain more information about the seawater-freshwater interface. As more data is gathered, more questions arise, but we are getting a better picture of what is occurring in our aquifers. To fill in data gaps, the District will be doing a geophysical survey along the coast soon. This will allow us to see an aerial picture of the seawater-freshwater interface. This new data, in conjunction with the water quality and water level data we have been collecting since 1999, will give us guidance for our GSP and future water resources management.

After years of extreme drought, it has become clear that a drought proof local water supply is critical for Carpinteria Valley. The CAPP project will generate up to 1100 AF per year, or 25% of the water delivered by the District. The project continues to move forward on several fronts. Land acquisition, permitting and funding are the three areas of focus now. However, until we can secure State and/or Federal funding the project final design and construction will be on hold. The project is expected to cost around \$25 Million to complete. If funding is secured in the next year the project will move forward and be completed in 2024.

The Carpinteria Valley Water District is redistricting in order to comply with the California Voting Rights Act. At July’s Board Meeting, the National Demographics Corporation (NDC) provided a presentation about three draft maps of divisions being considered for implementation, all published on the District website. Another public hearing on this matter will occur August 26th, at which time the Board will select one of four maps of divisions to implement for the next election in 2022. We invite the public to participate in this virtual meeting and you are welcome to watch the previous meeting on our website. If you are interested in viewing the four maps being considered, visit cvwd.net, click *Board Information* on the top menu, and then click *District Elections*. Static maps and an interactive web application are available for you to review.

To our customers who were impacted by the emergency shutdowns over the past month, thank you for your patience. For other District updates, please visit our website cvwd.net, follow us on Twitter @CarpWater, or search Carpinteria Valley Water District on Facebook and Nextdoor. Stay healthy, Carpinteria!