

Reflecting on 2020 and Planning for 2021

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Although our doors are closed to the public, we are still working hard to provide safe, reliable water to our customers. Our agency has quickly taken steps to minimize our staff's exposure to the COVID-19 virus and avoid impacts to our workforce. We will continue to remain closed to the public until further notice, but we can assure you that there are no pandemic related impacts that will affect customer service. We encourage you to tune in to our online public Board of Directors meetings to learn more about what is going on here at the District. In 2020, we made great strides on the Carpinteria Advanced Purification Project (CAPP), development of our Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), and modification of our water rates with more progress to come in 2021.

The Carpinteria Advanced Purification Project will provide the Carpinteria Valley with a drought-proof water supply that will add an additional 1,000 acre-feet of water to our existing water supply portfolio. During a drought, our surface water and State water supplies are limited, and groundwater pumping increases. By replenishing our groundwater with purified water, we can continue to meet water demand for our customers during periods of drought. In 2020, we worked toward resolving permit issues with the State, applied for a State Revolving Fund (SRF), and pursued grant funding for the project. Last year we were listed as an agency under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) that was eligible for partial funding for CAPP. We are happy to say that in 2021 we were notified that CAPP was approved for full funding, which is anticipated to be around thirty million dollars. This year we expect to resolve permit issues and enter into a loan agreement with the State. We are also hopeful that in 2021, as the pandemic becomes more controlled, additional grant opportunities will become available. It is our goal to have 50% or fifteen million dollars of the project covered through grants.

Through the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), high- and medium- priority groundwater basins are required to form a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to sustainably manage a groundwater basin. The Carpinteria Groundwater Basin was classified as a high-priority basin in 2019. In 2020, a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) consisting of Carpinteria Valley Water District, the City of Carpinteria, Ventura County, and Santa Barbara County Water Agency, was formed and designated the exclusive GSA for the basin. Last year CVWD was awarded a \$1.9 million SGMA grant to help cover the costs associated with preparing our GSP, which we began working on last July along with updating our groundwater model. In 2021, we will continue monitoring water quality at our sentry wells near Spindrift Lane and will perform an electrical resistivity tomography (ERT) survey along the beach and Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve to help us better understand the saltwater and freshwater interface along the coast in Carpinteria. This year we also will be drilling a nested monitoring well at El Carro Park. The ERT survey, new well, and continued water quality sampling will provide us with a body of information that will help to inform and develop the GSP.

As you may have noticed, a few changes went into effect on our bills at the beginning of 2021. While we adopted new rates including a new Operations and Maintenance charge for our agricultural customers and a reduced drought charge at the beginning of the fiscal year in June 2020, these rate changes were not implemented until the beginning of 2021 due to pandemic concerns. In 2021/22, we expect to modify the rate structure with the assistance of our rate consultant *Raftelis*. We are currently in the process of developing a rate case for Fiscal Year 22 and will have a rate study ready for public review in June of 2021 and look forward to hearing any public comments on the proposed rates and changes.

For District updates, please visit our website cvwd.net, follow us on Twitter @CarpWater, or Carpinteria Valley Water District on Facebook and Nextdoor. For more information on CAPP visit cvwd.net/capp/ and to stay up-to-date on the Carpinteria GSA and GSP development visit carpgsa.org; both websites allow for you to sign up for e-mail updates to monitor project progress. Finally, if you are interested in our rate development process consider attending our Board meetings or Rate and Budget Committee meetings. The dates and times can be found on the District website.