

WATER UPDATE

January 2010

Court Delays Water Cutbacks

After a year of hearings, the State Water Resources Control Board finalized its Cease and Desist Order (CDO)⁽¹⁾ in October 2009. The CDO requires California American Water (Cal-Am), and consequently their customers, to immediately reduce the amount of water taken from the Carmel River by 5 percent each year through 2016, and an additional 35 percent in 2017. It also establishes a moratorium on new water connections.

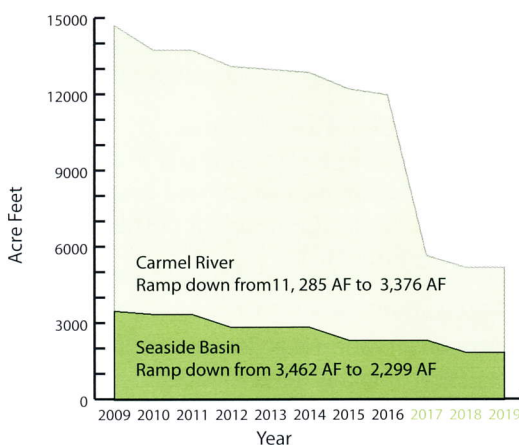
The CDO is not yet in effect. In November 2009, the court delayed enforcement until lawsuits filed against the State Water Board related to the CDO have been resolved. For now, water cutbacks and a water moratorium will not be imposed.

If the courts ultimately determine that the CDO should be enforced, the Water District and Cal-Am are developing joint strategies to minimize the impact of water cutbacks on the community.

The CDO is intended to alleviate degradation of the Carmel River caused by overpumping, and improve habitat for steelhead fish and red-legged frogs. It is linked to an original 1995 order⁽²⁾ by the State Water Board that required Cal-Am to reduce its Carmel River pumping by 20 percent⁽³⁾ until a new water project could be developed. Since the order went into effect, community water use has remained below the limits in 13 out of the past 14 years. However, new water sources have not been developed to allow full compliance with the order.⁽⁴⁾

In court hearings on the CDO, the Water District advised the state that additional reductions in water supply would put our community's public health, safety and welfare in jeopardy.⁽⁵⁾ On October 27, 2009, the Water District and Cal-Am filed lawsuits to permanently prevent the CDO from going into effect. The District also asked the court to delay enforcement of the CDO until litigation is concluded. On November 3, 2009, the court delayed implementation of the CDO.

Drastic Reductions in Water Supply Could Be Ahead



If the CDO is enforced, it would require reductions in Carmel River production from 11,285 AF in 2009 to 3,376 AF in 2017. Another court decision requires reductions in Seaside Basin production from 3,462 AF to 2,299 AF over the same time period. Without a new water supply, only 5,675 AF may be available for community use by 2017.



La versión en español de este boletín está disponible. Para pedir una copia comuníquese al 831-658-5631, o accésela en el sitio web de MPWMD: <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us>. A Spanish language version of this newsletter is available. Call 831-658-5631 to request a copy, or view it on the MPWMD website at <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us>.



Since 1987 many water supply options have been pursued, including three projects that were brought before local voters in 1987, 1993 and 1995. See page 2, Time Line.



The Water District's Aquifer Storage & Recovery Project is ready to provide up to 2,426 AF of water to the community during the summer months. See page 2, Projects to Increase Water Supply.



Since 1995, the community has reduced water use by 20 percent, but court-mandated limits on water production remain in effect. See page 3, Would More Rainfall End Water Cutbacks?



Cash rebates are available from the Water District for replacement of old water fixtures with new, water saving appliances, and for installation of drought tolerant landscapes. See page 4, Remove a Thirsty Lawn and Get Cash Back!

(1) SWRCB Cease and Desist Order at <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us/CDO/FinalCDOPage.htm>
(2) SWRCB Order WR 95-10 at <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us/order9510/order9510.htm>
(3) Reduced to 11,285 acre-feet per year
(4) See page 2, Projects to Increase Water Supply
(5) MPWMD Petition to SWRCB at <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us/CDO/FinalCDOPage.htm>

Time Line

- 1978 Local voters approve formation of MPWMD.
- ◆ 1987 Local voters authorize MPWMD to pursue plans for 24,000 AF New San Clemente Dam & Reservoir on Carmel River.
- 1991 Federal and State agencies decide 24,000 AF New San Clemente Dam should be cancelled due to concerns re location of dam. Proposed alternative is a 24,000 AF New Los Padres Dam and Reservoir.
- ◆ 1993 Local voters reject ballot measure to fund construction of MPWMD sponsored 3 MGD seawater desalination plant.
- July 1995 State Water Resources Control Board issues Order 95-10. Cal-Am must reduce pumping from the Carmel River by 10,730 AF, and immediately reduce production by 20%.
- ◆ Nov. 1995 Local voters reject ballot measure to fund construction of MPWMD sponsored 24,000 AF New Los Padres Dam & Reservoir.
- 1998 State adopts AB1182. Requires Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and Cal-Am to develop a water supply contingency plan, an alternative to a Carmel River dam project, identified as "Plan B."
- Mar. 2002 MPWMD investigates non-dam alternatives, including a desalination project in Sand City.
- July 2002 PUC publishes *Carmel River Dam Contingency Plan, Plan B Project Report*, a 10,730 AF project with seawater desalination in Moss Landing, and Seaside Basin ASR. Cal-Am agreed to pursue this project. MPWMD halts its studies on desalination in Sand City in December 2003.
- 2007 MPWMD begins operation of Phase 1 ASR Project -- up to 2,426 AF of Carmel River water stored underground in the Seaside Basin each year.
- 2008 MPWMD initiates engineering and environmental studies for a desalination project in the southern portion of former Fort Ord and Highway 1.
- Jan. 2009 City of Sand City begins construction of 300 AF per year brackish water desalination plant in Sand City.
- Dec. 2009 PUC certifies EIR on Cal-Am's Coastal Water Project that includes an analysis of the Monterey Regional Water Supply Project.

Projects to Increase Water Supply

To reduce dependence on the Carmel River and protect the Seaside Groundwater Basin from seawater intrusion, the Water District has been actively engaged in expanding and preserving local water resources, primarily through its aquifer storage and recovery (ASR), and water conservation programs. Investigations into the feasibility of constructing a local desalination plant were also completed.

On a regional level, the Water District is participating in discussions regarding a plan to address the county-wide water supply situation. In the meantime, the District is aggressively pursuing development of ASR and water conservation programs.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery

The Water District's Phase 1 ASR Project is designed to use the Seaside Groundwater Basin to store up to 2,426 acre-feet of water per year (equivalent to the annual water use of 7,500 houses).⁽¹⁾ During the winter months when Carmel River streamflow is abundant, excess river water is pumped into the Seaside basin, where it is stored for use in the summer months. This helps meet customer water demand in the summer, and reduces diversions from the Carmel River during dry periods to sustain streamflow for fish and wildlife.

Since planning and testing for the project began in 1998, approximately 2,100 acre-feet of Carmel River water have been diverted for storage in the Seaside Basin. The Phase 1 ASR project should be operating at full capacity by early 2010. Planning is also underway for an expanded Phase 2 ASR Project, which could provide an additional 1,000 acre-feet of water per year. The Phase 1 ASR Project is a component of the proposed Monterey Regional Water Supply Project.

Seawater Desalination

- ◆ Water District sponsored MPWMD 95-10 Desalination Project – Estimated production between 2,800 and 4,500 acre-feet of water per year.⁽²⁾
- ◆ Cal-Am sponsored seawater desalination plant in Moss Landing – Estimated production 10,500 acre-feet per year.⁽³⁾
- ◆ Marina Coast Water District sponsored brackish and seawater desalination project in Marina – Estimated production 10,500 acre-feet per year. Component of the proposed Monterey Regional Water Supply Project.⁽⁴⁾

Purified Recycled Water Proposal

- ◆ Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency sponsored Groundwater Replenishment Project – Estimated production 2,000 acre-feet per year. Component of the proposed Monterey Regional Water Supply Project.⁽⁴⁾

Water Conservation

Water conservation is an important part of the water supply solution. The Monterey Peninsula has been a leader in conservation for over 25 years. An aggressive rebate program; limits on water available for new construction and remodels; and extensive requirements for installation of water saving devices in residential and commercial buildings contribute to local savings. Water District staff are certified in landscape auditing and water conservation methods, and regularly assist the public to identify ways they can save water. We fund demonstration gardens, and support rainwater and graywater reuse and other innovative technology. The Water District and the Monterey Peninsula have become a model for water conservation and management of a limited water supply.

⁽¹⁾See http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us/Mbay_IRWM/ASR/Proj_Sum_1.pdf

⁽²⁾See <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us/desalination-projects/desalination-projects.htm>

⁽³⁾See http://www.cwp-eir.com/downloads/Vol1_FEIR/3_proj_description.pdf

⁽⁴⁾See http://www.cwp-eir.com/downloads/Vol2_FEIR/5_regional_proj_description.pdf



Good to Know



Would
More
Rainfall
End
Water
Cutbacks?

Even if rainfall is normal this year, court-mandated water reductions will continue.

In 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger proclaimed a statewide drought emergency and called for immediate water conservation. In our Water District, the challenge is not new; it's a way of life. Since 1995, the community has reduced water use by more than 20 percent through admirable conservation measures.

Last year, our rainfall was 15 percent below average. We have enough water to meet future needs if we continue to conserve and reduce water waste. We are not affected by cutbacks in water deliveries from other parts of the state because our water comes exclusively from the Carmel River, the Seaside Groundwater Basin and other local sources. However, we are affected by court-mandated water limits on the local water supply.

Even if rainfall is normal this year, court-mandated water reductions will continue. In 1995, due to declining environmental conditions on the Carmel River, the state set limits on how much water could be taken from the river and required cutbacks. The community lowered its water use. In 2006, pumping from the Seaside Groundwater Basin was also reduced by the courts to prevent seawater intrusion, and we again met our obligations. In 2009, the state issued a Cease and Desist Order (CDO)⁽¹⁾ calling for more stringent water reductions. (The CDO is not yet in effect.) The Water District has a seven-stage water conservation and rationing program in place to fairly address the need for water reductions.

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If new water supplies are developed and conservation increases, we can meet water reduction targets. In the past 15 years, many water supply options have been pursued. Measures such as a local desalination project or erecting a new dam were rejected by voters as either environmentally unsustainable or too costly. However, the Water District has successfully developed new underground water storage through its Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project;⁽²⁾ conducted additional investigations into the feasibility of seawater desalination;⁽²⁾ participated in development of plans for a regional water supply project;⁽²⁾ and continues to implement effective water conservation programs.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ See page 1, Court Delays Water Cutbacks.

⁽²⁾ See page 2, Projects to Increase Water Supply.



In 2009, Water District staff reared 12,759 fish at the Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility in Carmel Valley. Staff rescued the fish from drying portions of the Carmel River, reared them at the facility, and later released them back to the river or lagoon when river flow had improved and they could continue their migratory life cycle. Since 1996, staff has reared 193,281 rescued fish at the Sleepy Hollow facility.



The Water District monitors water quality in the Carmel River and Seaside Groundwater Basins. Streamflow and groundwater levels are also measured and analyzed by staff. In 2009, no seawater intrusion was detected in Carmel Valley wells or the two principal aquifers of the Seaside Groundwater Basin.



CONTACT US!!
Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday thru Friday. The office is located at 5 Harris Court, Building G in the Ryan Ranch business park, Monterey. General Information: 831-658-5600
Water Permit/Conservation: 831-658-5601
Website: <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us>



The Monterey Peninsula Water Management District Board of Directors meets once a month in the District office. The public is encouraged to attend. Upcoming meetings are set for 7 p.m. on:

- ✓ January 28
- ✓ February 25
- ✓ March 15
- ✓ April 19

Contact the District office or check our website for a complete list of meeting dates. Meetings are televised on Comcast channels 25 & 28. See your local listings for broadcast dates and times. Call 831-658-5611 to request notice of monthly meetings by mail or email.



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An acre-foot of water is equal to 325,851 gallons of water, or enough to supply about four Monterey Peninsula homes with water for a year.



Remove a Thirsty Lawn and Get Cash Back!

Cash rebates are available! Retrofit a wide variety of residential and commercial water using fixtures, or replace a lawn with drought tolerant landscaping.

Receive cash for replacing your lawn with drought-tolerant plants or synthetic turf while saving money on your water bill. Also, consider replacing your washing machine with a high-efficiency model to get a cash rebate. Own a business? Get a rebate by replacing your water-cooled ice machine with an air-cooled one, or install a high-efficiency toilet or smart irrigation system controller.

The Water District's residential and commercial rebate program encompasses a wide range of water using fixtures and appliances, such as high-efficiency toilets and urinals, ultra-low consumption dishwashers, instant-access hot water heaters and cooling-tower conductivity controllers. Rebates also are offered for installation of cistern water tanks and outdoor irrigation equipment.

Since 1997, the Water District's rebate program has saved approximately 235 acre-feet of water.

The list of devices that qualify for rebates has recently expanded, and the rebate amounts have been increased for some fixtures. Water saving devices that are required to be installed upon construction or resale of a property do not qualify for a rebate. Contact the Water District at 831-658-5601 for a complete list of qualifying devices.

Since 1997, the Water District's rebate program has saved approximately 235 acre-feet of water. Funding for the rebate program is supported by California American Water and the Seaside Municipal Water System.



SAVE WATER! SAVE MONEY!

Find tips on how to save water in your house, apartment or business and reduce your water bill at these websites.

<http://www.montereywaterinfo.org>

<http://www.h2ouse.org>

<http://www.waterawareness.org>

<http://www.monterey.watersavingplants.com/monterey.php>

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Good to Know

Beautiful drought tolerant landscapes now on display at Del Monte Shopping Center



The Water District and the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency invited landscapers to compete in a design competition. The winning landscapes were installed at three sites in the Del Monte Shopping Center in Monterey.



View hundreds of photos of drought tolerant plants and landscapes at the *Water Wise Gardening for Monterey County* link on the Water

District's web site at <http://www.monterey.watersavingplants.com/monterey.php>. The interactive software lets you select plants you like and then print a shopping list.

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