



Presented by staff at
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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Proposed water fee passes majority protest vote

MONTEREY, Calif. – The Monterey Peninsula Water Management District took one more step toward securing a lasting water supply when protests fell short of the majority needed to defeat a proposed annual water use fee. The Board of Directors will now consider options for using the fee to fund water supply projects necessary to avoid rationing and possible fines on the consumers in 2017 when the State drastically reduces the legal amount of withdrawals from the Carmel River. The new fee is dedicated solely to water supply.

“Time is of the essence,” said Jeanne Byrne, Division 4 Director and chair of the MPWMD Public Outreach Committee. “In order to proceed with less expensive water projects within the time constraints, required funding must be secured.”

The District received 10,343 eligible protests from a potential of 30,509 eligible properties. In total, 15,709 letters were received; however, that number included 3,252 ineligible protest letters and 2,114 duplicate protests. A majority protest to defeat the fee would have required 15,255 eligible protest letters.

Ineligible protests included improperly filled out forms or letters (e.g. blank form, no signature, no address), and letters for properties that were found to be outside of the jurisdiction or affected area (e.g. Salinas, Marina, residents of Hidden Hills, Bishop, Seaside Municipal Water, etc., or unincorporated well-owners not receiving Cal Am service).

An examination of the protests also revealed that approximately 8,300 property owners filed all 10,343 protests due to multiple property ownership. Additionally, approximately 1,700 protests were received from property owners with mailing addresses outside the Peninsula.

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Under Proposition 218 law, affected property owners were notified of the proposed fee and given 45 days to submit one protest for each property owned. A public hearing on the matter was held June 12 where the District Board heard from the public and closed the period for submitting protests against the fee. The meeting was continued to June 19 to allow counting of the large number of protests delivered during the hearing.

Community groups, including the Monterey County Association of Realtors, were offered the opportunity to attend the counting process, but only representatives from the League of Women Voters chose to do so. Over the course of two days, these representatives were shown the tabulation process and viewed the opening, sorting and counting of protests submitted the night of the hearing.

About Monterey Peninsula Water Management District

Founded in 1978, the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District is a public agency charged with managing, augmenting and protecting water resources for the communities of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Seaside, Sand City, Monterey Peninsula Airport District and portions of Unincorporated Monterey County, including Pebble Beach and Carmel Valley.

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