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Item 15
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Board Meeting

Building bridges to water

By Robert MacLean, Special to The Herald/ 06/13/15

Officials from the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, California American Water, California Department of Health, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Monterey Peninsula Regional Water Authority and the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency recently led Tam Dudoc of the State Water Resources Control Board on a tour of water projects in Monterey County. The event was significant because the board is the most influential agency in California when it comes to Monterey County's water future.

Dudoc was generous with her time, devoting a full day to learn more about the breadth of inter-agency cooperation on water in Monterey County. I was very proud to be part of the tour and to help showcase the impressive projects that are planned — or operating — to sustainably address long-term water needs.

Stops on the tour included the Salinas Valley Water Project, the Monterey County Water Resource Agency's program to reduce the spread of seawater intrusion in the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin, and the Sand City Desalination Facility. Mayor Dave Pendergrass joined the tour in Sand City to help showcase the city's vision and leadership in delivering this successful source of new water.

Dudoc was also introduced to the aquifer storage and recovery partnership program between Cal Am and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, which stores winter river flows underground for use in the summer, and the San Clemente Dam Removal Project. The tour also visited Pacific Grove's planned recycled water project where City Manager Tom Frutchev and Mayor Kampe updated the group on the steady progress being made.

We visited Cal Am's new test slant well for the Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project at the Lapis Sand Mine site in Marina and met with MRWPCA leadership for an update on the Pure Water Monterey groundwater replenishment project.

Lastly, the group met with County Supervisor Dave Potter to review inter-agency cooperation and visited Monterey's turf removal project on Del Monte Avenue, which was funded through a grant by Cal Am.

Special thanks are owed to Dave Stoldt of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District who took the lead on tour logistics. Stoldt and his team did a wonderful job highlighting the Peninsula's leading water conservation achievements and demonstrating their commitment to restoration of the Carmel River.

I also want to thank all of the Cal Am employees who assisted on the tour stops and demonstrated their professionalism and commitment to your utility service. These dedicated men and women are the unsung heroes who make sure you have clean and reliable water around the clock.

Tours like this go a long way toward ensuring the unique water issues in Monterey County are better known at the state level and that local and state water policy is formed on a basis of mutual cooperation and understanding.

Robert MacLean is president of California American Water.