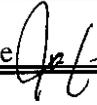




Meeting Date: 03/03/2009

ACTION	TYPE OF ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Info/Consent
<input type="checkbox"/> Ord. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Res. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing (Info/consent)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Study Session

Prepared By: Anthony Emmert  Agenda Item No. R-1
 Reviewed By: City Manager  City Attorney  Finance  Public Works 

DATE: February 19, 2009

TO: City Council

FROM: Mark Norris, Assistant Public Works Director
Public Works Department, Utilities Services Branch 

SUBJECT: Water Supply Outlook and Update on GREAT Program and Conservation Program

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council consider a presentation from the Public Works Director on the current status of statewide, regional and local water supplies, potential implications for City water customers, and the status of the City's Groundwater Recovery Enhancement and Treatment (GREAT) and Conservation Programs.

DISCUSSION

The City of Oxnard currently receives its drinking water supplies from three sources: 1) Northern California rainfall and snowmelt runoff derived from the State Water Project (SWP) and purchased from the Calleguas Municipal Water District (CMWD), a member agency of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWDSC); 2) local groundwater purchased from the United Water Conservation District (UWCD), derived from Santa Clara River diversions and the operation of the Freeman Diversion, El Rio Spreading Basins and Wellfield, and Oxnard-Hueneme Pipeline System; and 3) local groundwater pumped from City-owned wells.

The imported water purchased from CMWD has historically made up approximately 50% of the City's total water supply, is low in dissolved minerals, and is the most expensive per unit. Water purchased from UWCD has historically made up approximately 25% of the City's water supply, is high in dissolved minerals, and is less expensive per unit than the Northern California water. The groundwater pumped from City wells has historically made up approximately 25% of the City's total water supply, is high in dissolved minerals, and is the least expensive water per unit. The City blends these three water sources through five blending stations, to provide a safe and reliable supply to its 39,000 customers.

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Several issues have created some stress on water supplies throughout the State. These include:

- Lower than average precipitation over the last 3 years. 2008 was one of the lowest precipitation years in history. Currently, statewide surface water storage and snowpack are approaching historic lows.
- Federal and State efforts to aid recovery of several endangered species in the San Francisco Bay-Sacramento San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta) have impacted operations of the SWP.
- Attempts to protect the endangered Steelhead Trout may impact UWCD's operations on the Santa Clara River.
- The Bay-Delta fresh water system is dependent on the integrity of a complex system of levees. The Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel recently recommended extensive changes to the Bay-Delta system that would take many years and billions of dollars to implement.
- Since the 1970s, very few new dams and reservoirs have been built in the State. The Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel has recommended the construction of new reservoirs south of the Bay-Delta; however, it is likely to take many years until any new reservoirs are constructed and available for storage.
- Local groundwater resources are plentiful, but in some areas pumping exceeds natural recharge. All local groundwater users (municipal and agricultural) have implemented significant conservation measures. The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) has implemented regulatory practices that will further aid in maintaining the long-term integrity of local water resources. UWCD's operation of the Freeman Diversion has also significantly augmented local water supplies. However, the general regional consensus is that some additional efficiency improvements can be made and that recycled water use should be expanded. The City's GREAT Program is one of the most significant regional projects that will expand recycled water use, and is supported in the FCGMA's Groundwater Management Plan.

In response to these issues, the City is actively working on programs to increase its water use efficiency, cooperating in the development of regional supplies, and most importantly, continuing its implementation of the GREAT Program. The City's work on its water conservation program includes developing a Water Conservation Master Plan, updating the City Code regarding water waste and implementing all of the Best Management Practices (BMPs) of the California Urban Water Conservation Council.

The City also continues to work with other regional entities to improve access to local supplies, such as the Municipal and Industrial Supplemental Water Program (M&I Supplemental Program). The M&I Supplemental Program utilizes treated wastewater from the City of Thousand Oaks for the irrigation of agricultural crops in the Camarillo area. The irrigators are thus able to avoid pumping their groundwater wells, and transfer groundwater pumping credits to UWCD which is able to provide additional water to the City.

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In the long-term, the City is working to meet the needs of its existing and future water customers through the GREAT Program. The GREAT Program develops a new recycled water source that can be used for landscape irrigation, industrial processes, agricultural irrigation and groundwater injection. This new water source will either directly replace the use of potable water or will generate new groundwater pumping credits for the City. The first phase of the GREAT Program's recycled water system is sized to make up for the FCGMA groundwater pumping cutbacks over the last 20 years to meet the needs of existing water customers. Subsequent phases of the recycled water system will generate new groundwater pumping credits to meet new demands for approved development projects. According to the City's General Plan and its Urban Water Management Plan, staff analyzes all proposed development projects for their long-term water needs. Staff has analyzed all recent development projects, including RiverPark, Seabridge, The Village, Casden's Vineyard-Ventura Homes Project and Ventura Townhomes Project, El Camino and Victoria Estates. Full implementation of the GREAT Program is both necessary and sufficient to meet the long-term water needs of these projects.

The City will be able to meet its long-term water needs if it continues to actively pursue increased water use efficiency, regional cooperation and implementation of the GREAT Program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None.

(AAE:joh)