

CF/70-704-2 Storage Pond and Recycled Water Project

December 1, 2011

RE: Occidental Storage Pond and Recycled Water Project Near Graton Road

Dear Property Owner,

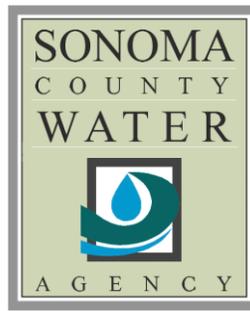
The Occidental County Sanitation District (District), managed by the Sonoma County Water Agency, is pleased to have received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to begin the preliminary work of designing a recycled water storage and irrigation project near Graton Road. This letter is to inform the District's customers and nearby residents as to what may be occurring in this area over the months ahead.

As you may know, the District was ordered by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) to stop discharges of treated, disinfected effluent to Dutch Bill Creek that on occasion have not complied with the District's discharge permit. Such discharges have occurred in association with permit limitations for pH and chlorine residual, or during the summer discharge prohibition period due to storm events. According to the Order, the District must come into compliance by addressing storage capacity, treatment, and operation of the treatment facility. While the District is currently permitted to discharge treated, disinfected effluent during the winter, it is anticipated that any future discharge permits will have significantly more stringent requirements for the quality of water that would be discharged.

For several years, the District has been working to identify a solution to this problem that works within the limited financial resources of the District. After pursuing prior initiatives that proved financially infeasible for District ratepayers, the District has determined that the most feasible and cost effective approach would be to: 1) reduce the amount of flow into the treatment plant by maximizing water savings through conservation measures; and 2) eliminate discharges to Dutch Bill Creek by beneficially reusing all water the treatment plant takes in during the year. Such an approach would include expanding the District's existing storage and irrigation capacity for the purposes of beneficial agricultural irrigation during the summer.

This plan has been developed in conjunction with the Occidental Working Group, a citizens' advisory committee, who find the plan consistent with their goals of minimizing costs to the customers, creating a zero discharge facility, and developing beneficial reuse. By converting to a zero discharge facility, the District will save significant long term costs related to operational permitting as well as contribute to the long term health of Dutch Bill Creek. The Regional Board has also expressed initial support for this plan.

Currently, the District is utilizing the above mentioned grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



(EPA) to evaluate project options and potential locations. The District has requested permission from some property owners near the District's existing storage pond to enter their property in order to perform preliminary environmental fieldwork, including evaluation of potential biological, cultural, aesthetic, geological, and hydrological resources. In some cases we may seek an agreement to perform more extensive geological work, which may include drilling to investigate seismic and other geological characteristics of the area.

The purpose of this preliminary fieldwork is to identify a viable project and to evaluate which environmental documents would be required for the project. Pending the availability of future funding, the District would complete the required environmental documentation to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act and/or the National Environmental Policy Act, complete the project design, and procure any necessary permits and right-of-way needs. A defined schedule for construction of the project will be known only after the final project design is completed, environmental documents are finalized, permits are acquired, and additional funding is secured.

The District has created a project web page hosted on the Sonoma County Water Agency's web site. You can access this web page at <http://www.scwa.ca.gov/OSPRWP/> to get current information about this project. Should you have any questions regarding this project or the preliminary investigations, please contact me at 707-547-1952 or doug.messenger@scwa.ca.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Messenger".

Doug Messenger
W.A. Engineer II