



# Santa Cruz County Sanitation District

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JOHN J. PRESLEIGH, DISTRICT ENGINEER

RECEIVED

AUGUST 11, 2016

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S.C.W.D.

MR. RON DUNCAN, GENERAL MANAGER  
SOQUEL CREEK WATER DISTRICT  
PO BOX 1550  
CAPITOLA, CA 95010

SUBJECT: WASTEWATER FROM THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

Dear Mr. Duncan,

The Santa Cruz County Sanitation District (SCCSD) is pleased to work with Soquel Creek Water District (SqCWD) who is developing a reliable supplemental water supply to help replenish the critically overdrafted Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin. Since 2015, SCCSD staff has worked with SqCWD on providing information to support your Groundwater Replenishment Feasibility Study. In fact, on September 1, 2015, the SCCSD and the SqCWD entered into a cooperative agreement for evaluating the purification of wastewater for improved resource management.

We recognize multiple benefits to the beneficial reuse of this valuable resource, including:

- Compliance with Potential Legislation  
Although the recently proposed Senate Bill 163 (Hertzberg) mandating reduction of sending treated wastewater effluent to the Bay was not carried through this year, there is a strong indication that regulatory changes may occur in the future which would limit wastewater discharges to the ocean. Legislators and regulators are embracing treated wastewater effluent as a resource rather than just disposing of it.
- Promoting Environmental Stewardship and Regional Partnerships  
Reusing wastewater that would otherwise be discharged to the ocean demonstrates our commitment to environmental stewardship and enhances our attractiveness for tourism, both core values of Santa Cruz. Also, this would help minimize potential overflow issues at our Lode Street facility. In addition, as the wastewater generated in this mid-county area and collected by SCCSD comes primarily from water customers served by the SqCWD, our two agencies can more holistically partner in beneficially reusing water and recognizing it is a limited resource.

- Replenishes and Recharges the Groundwater Basin

Groundwater injection of purified recycled water can restore the critically overdrafted basin that provides water to the SCCSD and SqCWD customers, and thousands of others that rely on groundwater as a source of supply. This injection also will stop seawater intrusion from moving inland, which can contaminate drinking water wells. It could also support the efforts of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency in addressing requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

As we understand it, SqCWD's proposed Groundwater Replenishment Project's (Project) current conceptual design is to produce up to 1.6 million gallons per day (MGD) of purified water from either secondary effluent treated at Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility or raw wastewater from SCCSD. Both options are currently under evaluation as potential alternatives. The volume that SqCWD requests for raw wastewater from SCCSD (approximately 2 MGD) was determined as part of SqCWD's Feasibility Study that we participated in and we confirmed is available within our SCCSD's conveyance system.

This letter shall serve as statement of SCCSD's interest and willingness to make available to SqCWD raw wastewater that is collected by SCCSD to aid in the replenishment of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin as long as it does not negatively impact our operations and agreement with the City of Santa Cruz. We understand that knowing that this type of source water is available for the Project will help facilitate (1) inquiries by the State Water Resources Control Board and (2) state and/or federal grant opportunities.

We look forward to working with SqCWD and further exploring the possibilities of this beneficial reuse project. Our expectation is that any and all costs with the Project and its impacts on SCCSD's collection system would have to be cost neutral to wastewater rate payers. As the Project moves forward, close coordination between the agencies will be necessary to further discuss technical, operational, environmental, and financial considerations, but we recognize that working together is the best way to solve our groundwater shortage issue and serve our community.

Yours truly,



JOHN J. PRESLEIGH  
District Engineer