



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION

701 OCEAN STREET, ROOM 312, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060  
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### SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION 2014-2015 BI-ANNUAL REPORT

This report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of the Santa Cruz County Water Advisory Commission (Commission) during 2014 and 2015.

#### ROLES OF THE WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Commission was established in 1975 to serve as a policy advisory body to the Board of Supervisors (Board) on issues relating to the use and protection of the county's water resources. The roles of the Commission, as outlined in its bylaws, are as follows:

1. Advise the Board on all policy issues impacting water resources in Santa Cruz County, including but not limited to the following categories:

- a. Water quality and conservation.
- b. Water supply development, storage and distribution.
- c. Forestry and watershed management.
- d. Preservation of fish, wildlife, and riparian habitat.
- e. Groundwater extraction.
- f. On-site sewage disposal systems.
- g. Recreation.
- h. Water reclamation.
- i. Public health and safety.
- j. Monterey Bay preservation.
- k. Local agency water management plans.
  - l. Water resource development proposals.
- m. Santa Cruz County Water Master Plan/General Plan.
- n. County ordinances, and departmental policies and regulations.

2. Staffing, funding, and other resources available to the Commission necessarily limit the duties and responsibilities outlined above. Therefore, the Commission will utilize discretion in devoting time to those activities that are most important to achieving its overall goal of enhancing and preserving Santa Cruz County water resources. County departments (Planning, HSA-Environmental Health (EH), and Public Works (DPW)) will assist the Commission in its work, by including the Commission in water related correspondence, and by having staff provide timely oral reports on pending issues.

#### MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATION

Starting in fiscal year 2010-2011, commission meetings were reduced from monthly to quarterly (March, June, September and December). In 2014-15, meetings were generally held at 4-6 pm on the first Wednesday of even numbered months, with meetings cancelled or rescheduled depending on special circumstances. Meetings are generally held in the County Governmental Center at 701 Ocean Street in the fifth floor Conference Room. Other rooms are used for special meetings. Agendas are posted at least five days in advance of meetings, and are

distributed electronically to local water districts and interested persons. Agendas and attachments are posted on the County website: <http://sccch.com/Home/Programs/WaterResources/WaterAdvisoryCommission.aspx>

#### COMMISSION STRUCTURE

The Commission consists of seven members, five of whom are concerned citizens appointed by individual supervisors and two that are appointed at-large. The two at-large positions represent public water purveyors and private or mutual water companies in the county. From March 2012 through September 2013, Ned Spencer served as the Commission Chair and Matt Johnston served as Vice-Chair. At the Commission September 2013 meeting Chris Berry was elected to serve as the new Commission Chair and Antonio Gregorio was elected to serve as the Vice-Chair.

Membership during 2012-2013 was as follows:

- 1st District: Ned Spencer
- 2nd District: Carol Hamilton-Monkerud
- 3rd District: Linda Wilson
- 4th District: Antonio Gregorio
- 5th District: Matt Johnston (Feb 2014); Mark Edgemon (June 2014>)
- Public Water: Chris Berry-City of Santa Cruz Water Dept.
- Mutual Water: Gerald (Skip) Fehr, San Andreas Mutual Water Company

#### COMMISSION STAFF

John Ricker, the Water Resources Division Director in the EH division of the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency, served as administrative secretary to the Commission throughout 2014 and 2015, and attends most meetings.

#### ATTENDANCE

Attendance by Commission members is shown on the following roster

2014-15 ATTENDANCE ROSTER								
	1ST DISTRICT	2ND DISTRICT	3RD DISTRICT	4TH DISTRICT	5TH DISTRICT	5TH DISTRICT	PUBLIC WATER	SMALL SYSTEMS
	SPENCER	HAMILTON-MONKERUD	WILSON	GREGORIO	JOHNSTON	EDGEMON	BERRY	FEHR
Feb 5, 2014	P	P	P	P	A		P	E
Apr 2, 2014	P	P	P	P	Resigned		P	P
Jun 4, 2014	P	P	P	A		P	P	P
July 16, 2014 Spec. Mtg.	A	P	P	P		P	P	A
Aug 6, 2014	P	P	P	P		P	P	E
Oct 1, 2014	P	P	P	A		A	P	P
Dec 16, 2014	P	P	P	P		P	E	E
Feb 11, 2015	P	P	P	P		A	P	E
Apr 29, 2015	P	P	P	P		A	P	P
May 27, 2015	P	E	P	P		A	P	A
Oct 14, 2015	P	E	P	A		P	P	E
Dec 9, 2015	P	P	P	A		P	P	A

P – Indicates attendance at that meeting, E – Excused from Meeting, A – Absent from meeting

## GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All information regarding the Commission activities is available on the internet. The website facilitates data access and makes the Commission's work more available to the public. The Commission website address is:

<http://scceh.com/Home/Programs/WaterResources/WaterAdvisoryCommission.aspx>

In addition to preparing an agenda and minutes from the previous meeting, staff regularly includes pertinent water related articles in the Commission agenda packets to stimulate discussion on related topics.

Listed below are the principal issues and events that were discussed by the Commission during the past two years:

### 1. **Pajaro Valley Groundwater Management Issues**

- The Pajaro River flood control project
- Ag conservation practices
- Basin management Plan Update
- Pinto Lake pollution

### 2. **Santa Margarita Groundwater Issues**

- Possible merger of the SLVWD and Lompico County water district
- Proceedings of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee meetings
- Recycled water usage and/or groundwater injection
- Recycled water for use at Pasatiempo Golf Course
- Stormwater Recharge Projects
- Governance and Basin Boundary Modification for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
- Santa Margarita Groundwater Model
- Possible Hanson quarry recharge project

### 3. **Water Conservation Efforts, Countywide**

- ACTION: Approved conservation ordinance update in concept
- ACTION: Support adoption of the County Landscape Ordinance

### 4. **Update on County Water Resources Management Efforts**

- Annual Water Resources Reports to Board of Supervisors
- ACTION: Recommend Board Adopt the 2014 Update of the IRWM Plan:
- Integrated Regional Water Management Projects
- ACTION: Support Board Adoption of Steelhead and Coho Salmon Conservation Strategy

### 5. **Mid-County Water Issues**

- Potential County participation in AB 3030 management group
- ACTION: Recommend that the Board of Supervisors Approve County Joining of the Basin Implementation Group
- Joint meeting of County Board members and Soquel Board members
- Effect of new groundwater legislation
- Ongoing mid-county stakeholder meetings
- Soquel-Aptos Groundwater model
- Groundwater management efforts

### 6. **Commission on the Environment**

- Subcommittee to discuss coordination of effort with COE and Fish and Game Advisory Commission
- Joint meeting with COE and FGAC
- Healthy Lands & Healthy Economies presentation by Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County Executive Director Chris Coburn

## **7. Update on Conjunctive Use**

- Prop 84 work plan for continued evaluation of conjunctive use
- Water sharing proposal with City of Santa Cruz and Soquel Water District

## **8. Karst Protection Zone Proposal**

- Proposal to study and protect karst areas
- ACTION: Wrote letter to Board supporting the study of and adoption of karst protection measures

## **9. Environmental Code Compliance**

- Discussed various instances of water resources being protected by Code Compliance
- Cannabis Cultivation Choices Committee

## **10. Desalination/water supply planning**

- City Water Supply Advisory Committee Recommendations

## **11. County-wide Drought response**

- Outreach to smaller water systems
- ACTION: Recommend that the Board Adopt an Ordinance Amendment to Restrict Outdoor Watering
- ACTION: Recommend that the Board explore requiring reporting of water production by small public water systems
- Water rights compliance/enforcement
- Metering of small public water systems

## **12. Water Advisory Commission Role and Work Program**

- ACTION: Motion to form a subcommittee to look at projects and priorities for the Commission and report back to the Commission.

## **13. Sustainable Groundwater management**

- Potential County role in Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

### **Additional Significant Items**

In addition to the list of principle issues discussed above, the Commission also discussed or followed the progress of the following issues and ongoing projects:

- Flood management
- How to change attitudes about turf
- New Drinking Water NPDES Permit
- Public Water Forum, January 2016
- Commissioners were regularly updated on actions taken by the Board on items that affect water supply, water quality, fisheries and riparian habitat protection, groundwater recharge, flood control, drainage, reclaimed wastewater and other related issues.

### **FUTURE GOALS**

In the coming year the Commission will be following-up on current endeavors. These endeavors include commenting on and providing recommendations to the Board on County Water Resource efforts and staying abreast of IRWMP projects. The Commission intends to continue its trend of soliciting information from various individuals and agencies as this information relates to water resources in the county. As always, the Commission will continue to evaluate important issues affecting the County's water resources, respond to requests by the Board and the public, and make timely recommendations on both policy and other appropriate matters.

Prepared by:

John Ricker

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