



# County of Santa Cruz

## Water Advisory Commission

701 Ocean Street, Room 312, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 454-2022 TDD/TTY -Call 711 [www.scceh.com](http://www.scceh.com)  
[EnvironmentalHealth@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:EnvironmentalHealth@santacruzcounty.us)



### AGENDA

#### SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION

**Wednesday August 2, 2023, 4pm**

This meeting will be held in hybrid format. Commissioners are expected to attend in person.

In-Person: 701 Ocean Street; Third Floor Training Room (directly above the stairs)

Remote: [Click here to join the meeting](#) Meeting ID: 288 660 293 859 Passcode: c8dXXG

**A. OPENING**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call

**B. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Opportunity for the public to comment on items under the purview of the Water Advisory Commission but not on today's agenda.

**C. CONSENT AGENDA**

Items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine in nature and will be acted upon in one motion. Specific items may be removed by members of the advisory body or public for separate consideration and discussion. Routine items that will be found on the consent agenda are meeting minutes, drought response updates, and Groundwater Sustainability Agency updates.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes for April 5, 2023 and June 7, 2023
2. Update on County Drought Response

**D. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

Opportunity for Commissioners to provide brief updates

**E. STAFF REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Opportunity for staff to provide brief updates

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Sustainable Groundwater Management Background and Status  
Presentation by Rob Swartz, Regional Water Management Foundation, and Brian Lockwood, PV Water.
2. Chromium VI MCL update  
Presentation by Paul Lego
3. Discussion of Commission Agenda Efficiency  
Limit Commissioner Report times, move regular updates to written memos under consent.

**G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS and UPDATES**

1. Well Ordinance Update Process  
See attached materials.

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**I. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION ON ITEMS AFFECTING WATER:**

None

**J. ITEMS OF INTEREST**

1. <https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2023/07/27/college-lake-pipeline-construction-moving-along/>
2. <https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2023/07/17/state-files-lawsuit-against-big-basin-water-co/>
3. <https://lookout.co/santacruz/community-voices/opinion-from-community-voices/story/2023-07-13/water-crisis-infrastructure-investment-affordability-rosemary-menard-santa-cruz-water-director-senate-testimony>
4. <https://www.acwa.com/news/state-water-board-releases-notice-of-proposed-rulemaking-for-chromium-6-mcl/>
5. [Pajaro Valley winter flood victims file claims against local governments – Santa Cruz Sentinel](#)

**K. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

1. Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

**L. ADJOURNMENT**



**County of Santa Cruz**  
Water Advisory Commission  
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**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday April 5, 2023, 4pm**

**MEETING MINUTES**

This meeting was in hybrid format (in person and via Zoom). Commissioners attended in person at 701 Ocean Street; Third Floor Training Room

**A. OPENING**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call.

Commissioners present: Cheap, Largay, Lego, Pereyra, Wilson  
Chair Lockwood is absent with notification  
Public Utilities Representative seat is vacant

Staff: Sierra Ryan, Kristen Kittleson, Erin McCarthy, Sean Abbey  
Public: David McNair, Nate Gillespie

3. Election of Officers

Nominations for chair: Commissioner Lockwood nominated

Unanimous approval

Nominations for vice chair: Lego nominated

Unanimous approval

4. Administration of Oaths of Office for existing members of the Water Advisory Commission

Oaths of Office were taken by the Commissioners present.

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 1, 2023**

Move to approve by Commissioner Lego, second by Commissioner Cheap  
All in favor

**C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**D. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

Pereyra – comments about storm damage; idea of County leasing land that floods, instead of pumping it out, could lease land and leave water to infiltrate

Wilson – some places will infiltrate better than others; Dr. Fisher did a study; would be good for wildfire

Largay – District 5 got hit hard this winter, lots of damage, challenging from water supply perspective, infrastructure damage, SLVWD still trying to catch up from fire damage and now flood damage; LTSCC farms in Pajaro Valley, near sloughs, restored to retain flood water and restore wildlife habitat; water quality and habitat benefits, provide water quality treatment for upland farms.

Cheap – our small water company continues to be concerned about changes in MCLs for PFAS and chrom6; the levels that will be set put us out of compliance, but been pumping same water for 75 years; other small water companies may be in same position; we are located between ocean and strawberries fields near Manresa and San Andreas Rd.

Cheap – assistance from state for small water systems?

Lego- yes but not available to all systems

Ryan – any water system near landfill is required to monitor

Wilson – will miss Chris Berry; he contributed a lot and was valuable

Ryan –he is also on Fish & Wildlife Advisory Commission

Lego – we can do something to acknowledge his contribution

Ryan – add to June agenda to do a recognition of his contribution

Lego – would like to do that

**E. STAFF REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

[Drought Resilience Interagency and Partnership Collaborative](#)

Ryan – Ryan was selected to serve on this collaborative to represent local government; along with others from the state; only rep from the Central Coast; focus on how Counties can help small water systems and domestic well owners

Pereyra – want to acknowledge your effort

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

1. [Streamwood Program and Storm Response](#)

Presentation by Kristen Kittleson, Fisheries Resource Planner.

Kittleson – streamwood is also called large woody debris; creates habitat for steelhead (federal threatened listing) and coho salmon (federal endangered listing);

also habitat for birds, reptiles and amphibians; helps retain sediment; can help protect banks; can provide flood benefits; we leave wood unless immediate threat to property, infrastructure or habitat

Pereyra – what was process before this program? Kittleson – we mostly used to chop it up

Kittleson – more wood is left in place as a result of program; building buy-in with communities; desire for channel capacity tends to outweigh benefits to leaving wood in place; lots of success during 14 years of program; lots of wood left in streams and it generally lasts 4-5 years; build support from residents when we make decisions; have outreach materials developed; Flood capacity – lots of rain in a short period of time; a ton of wood mobilized, especially in early January; wood in San Lorenzo mainstem tended to move out; a lot of wood was cut to minimize damage to roads.

Cheap – question about clean up and wood storage. Kittleson – influenced by FEMA rules

Kittleson – normally all of the large wood would have been great, but in a year like this it presented a problem; this year was overall really big challenge for our streamwood program, modified wood at more than half the sites; now that big storms have passed we will be encouraging residents to leave wood in place; new app used to document sites; many challenges and reasons wood had to get cut; successes also, e.g., large redwood was left in Aptos Creek and did not cause a problem; lots of bank erosion; plan to re-visit wood sites

Cheap – seems role for your team now is to educate property owners

Kittleson – previous study showed that cleared wood led to damage

Lego – net effect of this season on steelhead and salmon?

Kittleson – we don't know yet

Largay – typically would expect a year like this to result in flood; we don't flood very often; we have many streams that had really high flows but water level was still 10-15 feet below top of bank; problems may be more about bank erosion than about flooding.

Kittleson – that is correct; many of the sites just created a risky situation; in many cases property owners were losing portions of their backyards; can't see result yet but likely net input of wood

Pereyra – What is process for public works rebuilding bridges?

Kittleson – bridges are supposed to accommodate 100yr flood; designing some bridges now

Largay – normally need a riparian exception permit and CDFW 1600 permit to remove a tree; same for dead trees? Kittleson – County does have those permits; property owners can use our program to get permit coverage but they have to agree to letting us direct the job.

## 2. Well Ordinance Update Process

Discussion to kick off to the process of updating County Code Chapter 7.70: Water Wells

attachment: Staff Report

attachment: Technical Memorandum

attachment: Well Ordinance Update Process

Ryan – Well Ordinance hasn't been updated since 2009 and a lot has changed since then; SGMA, drought/SB552, surface water – groundwater connectivity; Memorandum in meeting packet summarizes some of the changes that an updated Ordinance should address; groundwater emergency section doesn't refer to GSPs; costs of permits – more work required for each permit evaluation could lead to higher permitting costs; for lots of reasons we would like to begin the process of updating the Well Ordinance; would set up a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Largay – 2 acre-feet (AF) threshold – would policy apply to only small or large wells?

Ryan – will apply to all wells but can set requirements that only apply to certain size wells (e.g., de minimis or non-de minimis); also need to address soil borings;

Pereyra – leak detection, technology to monitor for leaks

Ryan – that's a reason we might want to address metering; after a well is completed we have no way to follow up on compliance

Cheap – but County does have ability to manage the resources

Ryan – new Executive Order now requires that non de minimis well permits do have to include analysis of impacts to nearby wells

Cheap – property owners would be willing to do some things if County were to pay for it; some people believe they have water rights and can use what they want; most want to do the right thing; is tremendous opportunity to do education to well owners, all types of wells

Lego – opportunity to do education during change of ownership; might be a way to get data

Largay – metering wells and self-reporting seems like a basic thing that could be done at low cost–burden to county staff; consumption and water level would be the 2 important numbers; if this was an instream diversion a lot would be required

(reporting) but really the only difference between surface and groundwater supply is geology

Lego – when will bring this back to WAC?

Ryan – ideally June but maybe August meeting. More info to be provided and we will need to start identifying TAC members; need WAC members to talk to and gain support from Supervisors; metering was controversial last time it was updated;

Cheap – metering, monitoring (well soundings) and education can all be taken advantage of

Ryan – we could just require meters for wells that pump 2AF or more, doesn't have to be retroactive; GSAs will be requiring metering; wildlife agencies are pushing for higher levels of review in some cases

Cheap – County needs to manage and protect resource

Ryan – have had frequent drought years in recent past

### 3. Brown Act Compliance Changes

Discussion about the end of the COVID emergency and the new Brown Act alternative, AB 2449.

Ryan – summary from Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (attached) is good summary of changes to Act; hope is that people will come in person when possible; notify Sierra a week ahead of time if not going to attend meeting in person (supposed to provide location and post agenda).

## **G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS and UPDATES**

### 1. Drought Response Update

Discussion of the status of the DROP implementation

attachment: Staff Report

attachment: Implementation Timeline

Abbey – building web pages for state small water systems and domestic well owners; lots of resources available; developing process to apply for hauled water and water treatment devices through grant-funding; just found out state is offering well testing over the summer; will be doing in-house well testing, we are working out details; identifying requirements for point of use treatment systems; web pages will go live in May; by end of summer hope to be ready to do outreach to domestic well owners to notify them of web page and will do in person events; hope to be a repository of info; educational value – e.g., benefits to well owner of metering your well; hope to do presentation to Board of Supervisors in Sept. and that may be opportunity to publicize resources; another grant opportunity coming that could expand eligibility for the program.

Lego – size limit for state smalls?

Abbey – State small water systems serve 24 people or fewer for 60 days in the year/ up to 15 connections

Largay – education and outreach is important; a friend found well water was being contaminated from septic system so they stopped using septic system and then the well went dry.

Ryan – State offering grant to implement SB552, does not limit assistance to DACs; testing is expensive; that grant is due in Dec.

Lego – tests are expensive, help would be good

Ryan – we are getting equipment to test for metals but will still need to contract out for PFAS

## 2. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies Update

Oral reports outlining updates from the three GSAs in the County.

Pajaro Valley Basin – no update; Chair Lockwood is not in attendance

Santa Margarita – contact for well monitoring throughout the basin; focus on areas with lots of wells or in areas with surface-groundwater connections

Santa Margarita and Mid-County – contracts in place for stream gage monitoring; unfortunately many gages got removed/damaged in storms; added reestablishment of stream gages to contracts: Santa Margarita – CEBEC; Mid-County – Trout Unlimited

Waiting to find out about grant for work in Santa Margarita

Mid County – about to roll out metering plan; has been challenging;

Santa Margarita and Mid-County – maintaining Brown Act compliance meetings, and GSA meeting requirements is challenging; Ryan belongs to Coalition of small GSAs and have been looking to get help with costs of administering these agencies (especially for small GSAs).

Cheap – Financial report for Santa Margarita indicated that a lot went to administration costs; consultants are expensive

Ryan – County Water Resources pays 10% of budget for Santa Margarita and Mid-County; that is a big part of our budget; need to figure out how these agencies will be paid for long-term; encourage Supervisors to continue supporting Water Resources budgets.

## H. CORRESPONDENCE



1. Packet of communications from customers of Big Basin Water Company.

Ryan – Company served 500 households and this is their only water supplier; one wastewater system that is leaking raw sewage to Boulder Creek; state is regulator; we've notified the state many times; privately owned, for profit company; under-resourced for a long time; drinking water and wastewater system violations; SLVWD has done a lot to help but they had to stop; County is not regulator, County cannot take over the system due to private ownership; less options available because is not a disadvantaged community; being referred to Attorney General to send to courts and to undergo receiver process.

Largay – concerned they will sell land if that is only value; would be grateful for opportunity to express to state the importance of them utilizing the power of the law to resolve this

**I. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION ON ITEMS AFFECTING WATER:**

None

**J. ITEMS OF INTEREST**

No discussion

**K. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

1. City of Santa Cruz Water Department Sanitary Survey (June 2023)

**L. ADJOURNMENT**



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**Water Advisory Commission**  
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**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WATER ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday June 7, 2023, 4pm**

**LIVE MEETING MINUTES**

This meeting was in hybrid format (in person and via Zoom). Commissioners attended in person at 701 Ocean Street; Third Floor Training Room

**A. OPENING**

1. Call to Order at 4:01 pm
2. Roll Call

Commissioners present: Cheap, Pereyra, Wilson, Lego (appearing remotely pursuant to the just cause provision under AB 2449, Largay (15 minute late with notice)

Commissioner Lockwood absent with notification (attending GSA Summit)

Public Utilities Representative seat is vacant, appointment of Nate Gillespie (SVWD) takes place at the Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting on June 13, 2023

Staff: Erin McCarthy, Sean Abbey

Guest speaker: Zeke Bean, City of Santa Cruz

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 5, 2023**

**Defer to August meeting; minutes were not included in the agenda packet**

Move to approve by Commissioner Pereyra, second by Commissioner Lego

All in favor, (Commissioner Largay not yet present)

**C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Chris Berry: representing FWAC (Fish & Wildlife Advisory Committee) regarding ICCWG (Inter-commission working group). Chris will contact a few of the Commissioners and staff regarding a renewed effort of this group. A number of items to consider including CAAP, STO, houselessness in riparian corridor, homes in flood plain, and a meeting in July with COE. Commissioner Wilson is WAC representative.

Steinbruner: Headlines on 6/6 Mercury saw good recovery in groundwater levels in Santa Clara Valley. Has continued filing public records act requests regarding Purewater Soquel against SqCWD.

**D. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

Pereyra: Took a tour of Soquel Purewater project and was very interested. Have a basement to catch any potential runoff and double containment on holding tanks, despite it being treated water. Very helpful for SqCWD to provide those tours.

Lego: Continue to monitor the Chrome 6 and PFAS regulations for water systems. At some point would like to have an item on the agenda.

**E. STAFF REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**McCarthy:** Nate Gillespie will be filling current vacancy in the public utility seat. Kristen Kittleson is retiring and will receive a proclamation from BOS on June 13. Vacancy announcement for Water Resources Planner position is now closed. Will provide an update at August meeting. New vacancy for Water Quality Specialist. Hope to use recent hiring list but may need to re-do that job announcement.

Big Basin Water Company (BBWC) update: Drinking water system had a break last week with a systemwide boil water notice, lifted yesterday. Receivership is still being pursued by the State Division of Drinking Water. They will hold a public meeting in July regarding the receivership.

The BBWC wastewater treatment system has entered into agreement with a certified operator. It is undergoing repairs and not yet operational. There were recent (April) sewage overflows and mosquito larvae were present and treated by Mosquito Abatement. Building permits will not move forward until the system is operating. CDI hosted a meeting for residents last month about the option of Public Works taking ownership of the system. Between the repair costs and CSA 7 costs, that option is expensive (over \$500/month) compared to current costs.

Nate Gillespie: Introduces himself, Operations Manager at Scotts Valley Water District.

Berry: Concern regarding yellow fever from Supervisor Koenig. Was this part of the consideration for Big Basin mosquito issue?

Ryan: Mosquito Abatement is actively treating it now and once up and running the ponds will no longer be habitat

Steinbruner: What is the process for the state assuming receivership?

Ryan: Two components, one for drinking water one for wastewater. State Division of Drinking Water will create a case against BBWC and has referred to the Attorney General

to make a determination regarding next steps. Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a similar letter regarding the wastewater system. State will not provide us with detailed updates because this is an active case.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Proclamation for Chris Berry honoring 19 years of exemplary service on the Water Advisory Commission

Commissioner Wilson reads proclamation.

The Commissioners expressed appreciation for Chris's work and accomplishments over the years. City of Santa Cruz is on the forefront of watershed management, in large part due to Chris's efforts.

Steinbruner: Always appreciated Chris's respect for the public, broad knowledge, welcoming attitude. Learned from him.

Ryan: Leaned on Chris when took over the Commission. Very fortunate that she will still be able to reach out on these items. The meetings will not be the same without Chris.

Chris: commented on the challenges facing our watersheds, many good people working on these issues, and will still be involved and available.

2. City of Santa Cruz Water Department and San Lorenzo Valley Water District Sanitary Survey Results: Presentation by Zeke Bean of the City of Santa Cruz

Cheap: How does joint City and SLVWD address failing septic systems? County role in enforcement. Do not track when systems are pumped. Is there a program that tries to remediate failing systems? Enhanced treatment systems are very expensive.

Zeke: Informally it is communications with County. City and SLVWD don't have authority to fine somebody. Have to follow up with authorities that do regulate OWTS.

Largay: SLV septic issues; acknowledge purpose of report is provision of drinking water. Treatment is highly effective, along with a clean watershed. The data collected is highly impressive, kudos to Chris. Still have hotspots of coliform in some areas. Recommend broadly sharing these fecal coliform data, including peak concentrations rather than just geometric mean. People swim in the river.

Ricker: City has been a great partner in managing the watershed. Still engaged with the adoption of the LAMP. Now any system that is new or replaced systems will need to include enhanced nitrate reduction treatment. Though systems are very expensive, and some may be doing work without permits. Increase education of buyers of homes on

septic to hopefully encourage sellers to correct problems at time of sale. Annual fees with septic systems have increased to support increased testing and management. County offered low interest loans in the past, not heavily utilized.

Berry: Code compliance and lack of inspections on the systems that currently exist. Very important that buyers be aware of the issues with septic systems. Very important that county be able to enforce the code that it puts in place to protect many different valuable water resources. Coordination between County and City has been difficult in some riparian areas, and Riparian Conservation Program would allow city employees to enforce in all riparian areas. Riparian mitigation is often required, beneficial to develop mitigation banks, and then need to find project locations. Will be making bigger use of winter water to offset other sources. Must be able to be flexible in usage. City of Santa Cruz makes great efforts to increase flows for other uses, but can be offset by poor water quality.

Steinbruner: Where are the sampling points on the river? Likes comment about when highest detections occur. Recommends incentives be made available to those that are having failing systems. Like riparian mitigation banks idea with private property owners. Promotes the Komodo fire suppression material.

Zeke: used monitoring data from City, SLVWD, and County

Berry: Monitoring is very labor intensive and it is very difficult to get true peak data. In addition, the data is labor intensive to manage and review.

## **G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS and UPDATES**

### 1. Drought Response Update

Abbey – Provides a tour of the completed Drought Response webpages, which include sub-pages to support both Small Water Systems and Private Well Owners. <https://scceh.com/NewHome/Programs/WaterResources/droughtresponse.aspx>

Steinbruner: metering in Mid-County should be discussed; RCAC is largely about consolidation

### 2. Well Ordinance Update Process

Environmental health staff moving forward with process to update the Well Ordinance. Met with other County agencies yesterday. Outlined and discussed process. Summary information was included in April 5 meeting packet. Will soon form a TAC and expect to discuss that at next Water Advisory Commission meeting.

3. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies Update

Oral reports outlining updates from the three GSAs in the County.

Santa Margarita Groundwater Management Agency:

- Santa Margarita GSP approved by DWR
- Grant application recently submitted to DWR was not advanced for funding
- In process of installing 7 monitoring wells (groundwater elevations)

Mid-County Groundwater Agency:

- Trout Unlimited under contract for monitoring of stream gages and one well; stream gages that were lost/damaged this winter are now replaced

Steinbruner: MidCounty GW Agency is looking for new Private Well owner representatives

PV Water:

- Groundbreaking Ceremony - College Lake Project - on June 9;  
[www.pvwater.org/construction](http://www.pvwater.org/construction)
- 34.8 Inches of rainfall through 5/15/2023 (avg. is 22 inches)
- Median Water Levels are up 4.22 feet from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023
- Average water use (& groundwater pumping) is down
- Visual aids were shown
- Presenting at statewide SGMA Summit on 6/7

Largay: Intrigued by plant based fire compound, Cal Fire strategic plan was released for review 2 days ago

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

NONE

**I. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION ON ITEMS AFFECTING WATER:**

NONE

**J. ITEMS OF INTEREST**

No Discussion

**K. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

PFAS and chrome 6 regulations at some point  
April 5, 2023 meeting minutes

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

Cheap motions to adjourn, Pereyra motions for Second; all in favor



# County of Santa Cruz

## Water Advisory Commission

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**Subject:** August 2, 2023 Water Advisory Commission Consent Agenda

**Title:** Drought Response & Outreach Plan Update

### Background

On September 23, 2021, Senate Bill (SB) 552 was signed into law. SB 552 requires that “a county shall establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county’s jurisdiction”. The Water Advisory Commission voted to adopt the responsibility for implementing SB 552 and receives quarterly updates on the progress of implementation.

[Senate Bill 552 Compliance \(scceh.org\)](http://scceh.org)

### Updates:

- County Staff is preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for what we are calling Water Quality Assistance Services. The intention of this RFP will be to assist private well owners and state small waters systems with known water quality problems install treatment devices. Specifically, the RFP will request the services of contractors that can install under-sink Reverse Osmosis (RO) units that can remove common contaminants in our area like nitrate, arsenic, and chromium. We will also be providing approved applicants with bottled water until the RO unit can be installed and confirmed to be removing the contaminant of concern. The funding source for this RFP limits the applicants to income limited individuals.
- County staff is working with the CA Department of Water Resources and our internal GIS mapping team to update the existing well layer so that we have a better understanding of where wells are located and evaluate construction data.
- County staff continues to update the support webpages for both [Private Well Owners](#) and [Small Water Systems](#), which includes a link to the states “Be Well Prepared” webpage. Much of the guidance from the state is similar to the county’s and supports the recommendations we provide.
- Sierra Ryan continues to represent interests of local government at the State [Drought Response Interagency Partnership \(DRIP\) Collaborative](#).

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Sean Abbey  
Water Quality Specialist III

<b>System Name</b>	<b>System Type</b>	<b>Connections</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Disadvantaged Community?</b>	<b>Chromium-6 Detection Level/Range (ppb)</b>
Alianza Charter School/Watsonville Charter School of the Arts	Nontransient-Noncommunity	N/A	115 Casserly Rd, Watsonville	Yes	0.82-11
Aptos High School	Nontransient-Noncommunity	N/A	100 Mariner Way, Aptos	Yes (Potentially)	9.5
Aptos Ridge Mutual Water Company	Community	16	Aptos Ridge Circle, Watsonville	No	28-32
Buena Vista Migrant Center	Community	135	113 Tierra Alta Dr, Watsonville	Yes	12-16
Cassin Ranch (Driscoll's)	Nontransient-Noncommunity	N/A	151 Silliman Rd, Watsonville	No	14-18
Crestwood Heights Water Association	Community	45	Kingston Dr, Watsonville	Yes	9.4
Monterey Bay Academy	Community	48	783 San Andreas Rd, Watsonville	No	16-22
Renaissance High School	Nontransient-Noncommunity	N/A	11 Spring Valley Dr, Watsonville	Yes	21
San Andreas Mutual Water Company	Community	135	166 Palm View Ln, Watsonville	No	10-19 (3 wells)





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**Subject:** August 2, 2023 Water Advisory Commission Item G1

**Title:** Well Ordinance Update Status

### **Recommended Action:**

1. Direct staff to establish a Technical Advisory Committee to assist with the update to Chapter 7.70 of the County Code.
2. Appoint up to two representatives from the Water Advisory Commission to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee

### **Background**

At the April 5, 2023 Water Advisory Commission meeting, staff presented a report on the necessity of updating the Water Wells section of the County Code, Chapter 7.70. Since the last update of Chapter 7.70 in 2009, policy changes at the State including the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and Senate Bill 552 have gone into effect. Case law has added a greater emphasis on protection of public trust values. Locally, the County has adopted the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, the Drought Response and Outreach Plan, and concerns were raised by the National Marine Fisheries Service about interconnected surface waters in the County.

### **Updates:**

Since the April Commission meeting, staff have met internally within the Environmental Health Department and also with staff from CDI to discuss the update process and how staff from other County departments should participate. On July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, staff met with staff from the California Coastal Commission to inform them of our intention to update a section of the code which is included in the County's Local Coastal Plan. John Ricker has been brought on to assist staff with the update process.

### **Technical Advisory Committee Formation:**

As discussed in April, staff intends to create a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to provide guidance on parts of the update likely to be challenging or controversial. A

Well TAC was also created during the last update in 2009. Proposed representation on the TAC is as follows, for a total of 13 people:

<b>Representative Group</b>
Disadvantaged Community
Small farmers
Working lands/Agriculture
Well Driller
Well Driller
Water Advisory Commission
Water Advisory Commission
Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
PV Water
Biotic resources -NMFS
Biotic resources -CDFW
Public utilities/Soquel Creek
Department of Water Resources

While the timing of the meetings depends on availability of the TAC members, staff anticipates 5-6 TAC meetings over the next year covering the following topics.

<b>Meeting Number</b>	<b>Meeting Topics</b>
<b>Meeting 1</b>	1) Introductions, ground rules, goal, expectations. 2) Intro to well ordinance, review reasons for update, 3) buy-in on staff proposing language (for some/all of the areas of change), 4) Agreement on topics for focused meetings.
<b>Meeting 2</b>	Focused meeting on groundwater impacts: 1) SGMA/GSAs/GSPs 2) GW emergencies 3) Metering 4) Impacts to surrounding wells 5) Areas of declining GW

<b>Meeting 3</b>	Public Trust Value Protections: 1) Identify where wells may impact Public Trust values (fish and seawater intrusion) 2) Review existing protections 3) Determine when additional evaluation and/or protections are needed
<b>Meeting 4</b>	Provide draft language and review of impacts of the proposal to staffing, permit turnaround time, and fees.
<b>Public Workshop</b>	
<b>Meeting 5</b>	Review final language, recommend the WAC review at their next meeting, to then bring to the Planning Commission, Coastal Commission, and Board of Supervisors.
<b>Optional Meeting 6</b>	Final review after changes from Planning Commission, Coastal Commission, Board of Sups are incorporated

**Recommended Action:**

1. Direct staff to establish a Technical Advisory Committee to assist with the update to Chapter 7.70 of the County Code.
2. Appoint up to two representatives from the Water Advisory Commission to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee

Presented by: Sierra Ryan

Water Resources Program Manager