

From: Rudy Fischer [<mailto:rudyfischer@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, July 12, 2016 10:05 PM
To: Quint, Matthew@Waterboards
Subject: Staff proposal on Monterey County water

Matthew Quint;

The State Regional Water Control Board staff recently made some new proposals on how to manage the Monterey Peninsula's water supply while a permanent supply is being worked on. One would actually lower the amount of water available at an already restricted time. Another (paragraph 3) would restrict water use at properties to only what has been used in an average of recent years – not historically as has always been the case.

I believe that some of the extremely negative practical aspects of that proposal have not been sufficiently considered. For instance: one project in our city is designed to replace an older, very low use outlet mall with a hotel which would use only existing historic water availability. This will be a LEED Platinum project that will showcase our coast and help to restore our city's much depleted tax base. If their water use is restricted now due to diminished water use based a bad period of business, the agency will have effectively diminished the utility and worth of that property.

This could also affect several projects which are finally going to restore our city to it's economic status prior to the most recent financial downturn. This includes the Holman Condo project and two underutilized and partially abandoned buildings in our downtown. In the case of the Holman building, the Water District had exact records of historical uses within the building – by department! These are properties that for years were not used as they were originally built and operated and, if the last five years of time is used as a basis of water available, the SWRCB has basically eliminated existing property.

Another example is two houses in one of our neighborhoods at the corner of Seaview Avenue and Prescott Avenue up on Forest Hill. One is a former "meth lab house" which has been abandoned for over six years. The other is a house next door that was just un-lived in for a period of several years. Because of that, the amount of water used in both of those properties declined not because of good conservation practices, but because of legal or financial issues that kept them from being used. Under the new proposal both properties would be rendered virtually worthless.

In Pacific Grove we also have a 16 room bed and breakfast hotel that struggled for years. It finally went out of business about a year ago and is now for sale. Whether as a hotel under new management, as an apartment complex, or as townhomes; the historical water allocation would allow the conversion of such a property. Restricting the property to only recent water use skews the economic value of that property – and changes what it could become.

It seems to me bad enough that we can't add water to properties of record so that the owners can build infill housing. But never before has it been suggested that water can be taken away from existing properties due to non or lower use. This may have seemed a good idea for some staffers who don't understand the business aspects of property, but it is – in reality – a terrible idea.

Please revisit this aspect of staff's proposal and return to the original agreement that had been worked out with Cal Am and our Water District.

Thank you,

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