REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT

APRIL 9, 2025

ITEM NO. 5

SUBJECT

Santa Margarita Water District's (SMWD) and Moulton Niguel Water District's (MNWD) Updates on Water Supply Diversification Projects. (Brandon Bushnell)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Informational item only; no staff recommendation.

KEY ISSUES

This item is an opportunity for the San Diego Water Board and members of the public to learn about key projects being proposed by SMWD and MNWD that will help diversify the water supply portfolio of both agencies. The projects proposed by SMWD and MNWD are consistent with California's Water Supply Strategy's statewide recycled water goals.[1]

PRACTICAL VISION

Chapter 6 of the San Diego Water Board's Practical Vision includes strategies to achieve resilient local water supplies.[2] These strategies call for the San Diego Water Board to protect, restore, and regulate water resources in a manner that contributes to a sustainable local water supply and protects beneficial uses for current and future generations. The projects proposed by SMWD and MNWD, if implemented, will expand and diversify the local water supply in the San Diego region.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this item is to provide the Board with information on two proposed projects in South Orange County that are part of SMWD and MNWD's overall efforts to increase water recycling and develop sustainable local sources of water. The water supply needs for SMWD and MNWD are currently met by a combination of imported

---

[1] California's Water Supply Strategy is available at: https://resources.ca.gov/-/media/CNRA-Website/Files/Initiatives/Water-Resilience/CA-Water-Supply-Strategy.pdf

[2] Practical Vision: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/practical_vision/

potable water and locally treated recycled water. Imported water represents approximately 75% of the community's total water supply, while recycled water provides the remaining 25%. Imported water is sourced from two principal systems: the Colorado River via the Colorado River Aqueduct and the Feather River Watershed and Lake Oroville in Northern California via the State Water Project. Therefore, water resilience and reliability planning are critical to ensuring both districts' customers have access to water supplies available when needed, while making cost-effective investments in water supply reliability projects.

To achieve this goal, MNWD is developing the Optimized Adaptive Sustainable Integrated Supply (OASIS) Water Resource Center Program.[3] The OASIS Program will include: 1) an advanced water treatment plant which will provide a new potable water source (direct potable reuse), 2) an urban runoff diversion and natural treatment system which will divert and treat stormwater to supplement MNWD's recycled water system, 3) continued use of tertiary treated recycled water for non-potable uses, and 4) a proposed watershed education center. MNWD is also refining its water reuse goals to achieve the following:

- Maximize wastewater reuse for water recycling;
- Reduce ocean discharges of treated wastewater;
- Optimize wastewater treatment operations and capacities;
- Identify opportunities for regional collaboration to further mutual wastewater efficiency and recycling goals; and
- Improve water reliability and watershed health via demand management actions and runoff diversions.

Similarly, SMWD is looking to expand and diversify local water supplies. The SMWD Rienda Infiltration Basin Project is in Rancho Mission Viejo within the Middle San Juan Hydrologic Subarea. SMWD plans to use the Rienda spreading basins to infiltrate recycled water for groundwater recharge during the dry season (between July and September). SMWD's also plans to capture and treat stormwater during the wet season (between October and May). The stormwater treatment will consist of settling basins, vegetative nutrient removal, aeration, and disc filters. Prolonged dry periods during the wet season may provide an additional opportunity to recharge recycled water. The groundwater will be pumped and treated at SMWD's new Ranch Water Filtration facility prior to distribution as potable water.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The agenda notice for today's meeting was posted on the San Diego Water Board's website and sent to subscribers to the email list for Board meetings. This satisfies the

[3] Link to MNWD's OASIS webpage: https://www.mnwd.com/oasis/

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act requirements to publish the meeting notice and agenda.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

None.