

# **Water Resources Advisory Committee 2011 Annual Report to the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors**

Honorable Sirs,

This brief report is submitted to your Board to summarize the highlights of the activities of your Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) for the calendar year 2011.

As introduction I'd like to make several comments:

The WRAC serves as an advisory committee for your Board. It is composed of 33 Members and their Alternates: 5 representing the Supervisorial Districts, 7 for the incorporated Cities, 8 independent Community Services Districts, 2 large water companies (Golden State and Atascadero Mutual), 2 Resource Conservation Districts, 3 Environmental at-Large, 3 representing Agriculture, 1 for Development, and 2 other institutions (Camp SLO and Cuesta College). On average, 30 Members and Alternates are in attendance at any meeting, with another 5-6 staff from other agencies.

Every meeting involves the sharing of water resource information and news among Members and guests. In addition there is always sharing and discussion about rainfall and reservoir status in various parts of the county. Changes in State and Federal law and regulation are noted as well, with informal discussion about their implications.

Your staff are exemplary in their support and expertise. The WRAC functions for the Board in your role as the Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Public Works Director Paavo Ogren tasked Courtney Howard as the WRAC's primary staff contact, ably supported by Syllas Cranor earlier in the year, and then by Carolyn Berg later. Mr. Ogren and Dean Benedix were there when we needed them.

On occasion we were informed by staff from other departments: James Caruso and Mike Wulkan from Planning; Rich Lichtenfels and Leslie Terry from Public Health; and Michael Isensee, later Lynda Auchinache, from the Ag Commissioner's Office.

What might not be readily apparent is the great commitment by WRAC Members in the weeks between regular monthly meetings. The Board faces serious staffing challenges, and we make every effort to work independently. All of the Members and their Alternates give of their time and knowledge, making the WRAC a deep repository of knowledge about water and its associated policies. Further, much of the intensive preliminary work is done in subcommittees, which in 2011 were chaired by Sue Luft (Vice Chair of the WRAC and Environmental at-Large Member), Steve Sinton (Past Chair of the WRAC and District 1 Representative), Lowell Zelinski (Ag at-Large Representative), and Della Barrett (District 5 Representative). Finally, this report would be incomplete without noting the unfailing energies and commitment of Environmental at-Large Member Eric Greening and Members

Jackie Crabb and Joy Fitzhugh from the Farm Bureau. We could not have functioned without them.

### **Highlights:**

- JAN** Heard a report on the Prop 84 IRWM grant application.  
Heard a report on the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Resource Capacity Study (RCS).  
Formed an ad hoc subcommittee to review the WRAC Vision Statement to include a Development at-Large Member.  
Recommended Stephnie Wald to the Board as Environmental at-Large Alternate for marine/coastal issues.  
Recommended the Board modify WRAC bylaws to elect its officers in March each year, after most nominations have been accepted.  
Heard a presentation by SunPower about a proposed solar facility in California Valley--with focus on water use and wastewater impacts.  
Ad hoc subcommittee reported on the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and its draft Ag Order.
- FEB** Formed an ad hoc subcommittee to review the Resource Management Survey (RMS) and its Annual Summary Report (ASR) for 2010.  
Heard a report on LOS III the Board certified for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin, with LOS I for the Atascadero sub-basin.  
Heard a report on the County's Emergency Water Program, with a one-time delivery of 1,500 acre/feet (af) to Lopez Reservoir for Zone 3, for a water emergency or to mitigate seawater intrusion.  
Recommended the Board add a Development at-Large Representative, and Alternate, to the WRAC membership.
- MAR** Received a report on the Shandon Community Plan update, and presented recommendations to the Planning Commission on it.  
Formed an ad hoc subcommittee to review the draft Master Water Plan for the entire County.  
Reviewed ad hoc study results and made recommendations to the Board about the 2010 Annual Summary Report for the RMS.  
Received a report on the Los Osos Wastewater Project's Recycled Water Management Plan.
- APR** Discussed efforts to develop a County Emergency Water Program Agreement.  
Received a progress report on the County's Biosolid Ordinance update.  
Continued discussions of concerns about the RWQCB's draft Ag Order update.  
Heard a report on a Groundwater Management Plan, which will implement some of the recommendations in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin RCS.
- MAY** Concluded subcommittee review and approved recommendations to the Board concerning the draft SEIR for the Santa Margarita Drought Reliability Project.

Continued review of the draft Master Water Plan.  
Discussed the Board's approval of the 2010 RMS ASR, including Board direction for staff to implement the recommendations in the ASR and to consider changes in the reporting process.  
Discussed the North County (Paso Basin) stakeholder meetings to be held in June.

JUN Heard an update on the County Stormwater Management Program.  
Reviewed the County EnergyWise Plan (Climate Action Plan) update.

[The WRAC does not usually meet in July and August.]

SEP Reviewed applications for the Environmental at-Large Alternate, and recommended (former SLO City Councilperson and long-time WRAC Member) Christine Mulholland to the Board.  
Formed an ad hoc subcommittee to review draft language for ordinances concerning land use actions in the County overlying the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin.  
Discussed upcoming Integrated Regional Water Management Program activities.

OCT Heard an initial report on revising the RMS ASR.  
DWR awarded \$10.4M of Prop 84 monies to SLO County's IRWM region (Los Osos Wastewater Project, Waterway Management Program in Zone 1/1A, and Nipomo Supplemental Water Project), and \$2.8M of Prop 1E monies to the Flood Control and Water Conservation District for the Waterway Management Program in Zone 1/1A.

NOV Heard an initial report on a two-phase effort to update the Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE).  
Heard a brief report from the ad hoc subcommittee to review Ag Waivers, regarding fees, monitoring, and State funding.  
Concluded an extensive two-year review of the draft Master Water Plan, and adopted comments to the Board in support of its adoption.

DEC Began the IRWM Planning Grants application process.  
Began reviewing draft ordinance language for County Land Use actions in the unincorporated County overlying the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Winn  
WRAC Chairperson

April 2012