



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

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TO: Sustainability & Infrastructure Commission

FROM: Azalea Mitch

PREPARED BY: Public Works Department

MEETING DATE: March 10, 2021

SUBJECT:
Update from the California Water Service Company

RECOMMENDATION:
Receive informational update from the California Water Service Company.

BACKGROUND:

The California Water Service Company (Cal Water) will be providing information regarding (1) its progress in preparing its 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), (2) impacts of potential water supply reductions associated with the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan), and (3) its efforts to address climate change through its Water Resource Monitoring and Adaptation Plan.

2020 Urban Water Management Plan

UWMPs are prepared by urban water suppliers every five years and support the suppliers' long-term resource planning to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future water needs. The requirements for UWMPs are found in two sections of California Water Code (Water Code), §10610-10656 and §10608. Per the Water Code, every urban water supplier providing over 3,000 acre-feet of water annually or serving more than 3,000 urban connections is required to submit an UWMP. Amongst other requirements for UWMPs, urban water suppliers must:

- Assess the reliability of water sources over a 20-year time frame,
- Describe water demand management measures and water shortage contingency plans,
- Report progress toward meeting a targeted 20 percent reduction in per-capita (per-person) urban water consumption by the year 2020, and
- Discuss the use and planned use of recycled water.

The State of California Legislature (Legislature) has passed legislation requiring 2020 UWMPs to include numerous additional provisions when compared to 2015 UWMPs. The new or expanded requirements are summarized below.

- Five Consecutive Dry-Year Water Reliability Assessment. This statutory change requires suppliers to analyze the reliability of its water supplies to meet its water use over an extended drought period. The Legislature modified the dry-year water reliability planning from a "multiyear" time period to a "drought lasting five consecutive water years."
- Drought Risk Assessment. The Legislature created a new UWMP requirement for a Drought Risk Assessment in part because of the significant duration of recent California droughts and potential hydrological variability attributable to climate change. The Drought Risk Assessment must assess water supply reliability over a five-year period from 2021 to 2025 to examine water supplies, water uses, and the resulting water supply reliability under a reasonable prediction for five consecutive dry years.

- Seismic Risk. The Water Code now requires suppliers to specifically address in their UWMPs the seismic risk to various water system facilities and to have a mitigation plan.
- Water Shortage Contingency Plan. In 2018, the Legislature modified the UWMP laws to require a Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) with specific elements. The WSCP is a document that provides a supplier with an action plan for a drought or catastrophic water supply shortage. Although the new requirements are more prescriptive than previous versions, many of these elements have historically been included in WSCPs, other sections of UWMPs, or as part of a supplier’s standard procedures and response actions.
- Groundwater Supplies Coordination. In 2014, the Legislature enacted the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act to address groundwater conditions throughout California. The Water Code now requires suppliers’ 2020 UWMPs to be consistent with Groundwater Sustainability Plans, in areas where those plans have been completed by Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA). While there are several groundwater basins within San Mateo County, there is currently no requirement that a GSA be formed within San Mateo County.
- Lay Description. The Legislature included a new statutory requirement for suppliers to include a lay description of the fundamental determinations of the UWMP, especially regarding water service reliability, challenges ahead, and strategies for managing reliability risks.

Bay-Delta Plan Update

On December 12, 2018, through State Water Resources Control Board adopted the updated *Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary* (Resolution No. 2018-0059; “Bay-Delta Plan Update”). On February 25, 2019, the Office of Administrative Law approved the Bay-Delta Plan Update, which is now in effect. As adopted, the Lower San Joaquin River flow proposal contained in the Bay-Delta Plan Update would provide a range of 30 to 50 percent of unimpaired flow from February through June in the Merced, Tuolumne, and Stanislaus rivers. According to the State Water Board, a 40 percent unimpaired flow proposal would result, on average, in a 14 percent reduction in surface water supply for human uses like agriculture and drinking water, and an average 26 percent increase in instream flows on the Merced, Tuolumne, and Stanislaus rivers.

Cal Water purchases water from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), which relies on flows from the Tuolumne River for approximately 85 percent of its drinking water supplies. There is concern among urban water suppliers that the Bay-Delta Plan Update will significantly affect the reliability of SFPUC water supplies, particularly during dry years when in-river flows must be maintained resulting in severe water supply shortages and necessitating significant cutbacks in water consumption. SFPUC’s hydrological modeling has forecast that, given the Bay-Delta Plan restrictions, its water supplies may decrease by as much as 50 percent during a future drought.

Cal Water Water Resource Monitoring and Adaptation Plan

In 2020, Cal Water began updating and expanding their previous climate change analysis through the development of a detailed and comprehensive Water Resources Monitoring and Adaptation Plan. This multi-phase initiative includes identifying and prioritizing climate-related risks to facilities, operations, and water supply portfolios; understanding climate-related impacts to demand forecasts; and developing mitigation and adaptation strategies. The output of this work will form the foundation for the development of more sophisticated adaptation strategies to increase system resiliency and reduce climate change impacts.

BUDGET IMPACT:

There is no budget impact associated with receiving this informational update.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

This informational update is not a project subject to CEQA, because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).)

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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