

Santa Ynez River

WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

JULY 2021 NEWSLETTER

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Groundwater Charge Rates

At the June 2021 meeting, the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District (SYRWCD) Board of Directors approved a nominal 3% increase to the groundwater charge rates for the 2021-22 fiscal year. These **new rates** will be reflected on the **December 2021 statements** (for groundwater production beginning July 1, 2021):

Agricultural Water:	\$ 7.40 / Acre-Foot
Special Irrigation:	\$14.80 / Acre-Foot
Other Water (Non-Ag):	\$26.00 / Acre-Foot

Managing Water Supplies for User Benefit

Cachuma Reservoir last spilled in 2011. During spill years, groundwater aquifers along the river are recharged, including the Lompoc Plain. During dry periods, such as the 10 years since 2011, the SYRWCD makes releases of stored water from the reservoir that are earmarked for water users below Bradbury Dam. During this extended dry year period, releases to the river have occurred every summer since 2013, with the exception of 2019. With river aquifers still at low levels due to prolonged dry conditions, the SYRWCD will call for a water-rights release from the Lake Cachuma Reservoir this summer. A total of about 10,000 acre-feet will be released.

State Water Rights Order

The State of California Water Resources Control Board (State Board) has adopted changes to the permits granted to the United States Bureau of Reclamation which allow for the diversion of water from the Santa Ynez River out of the basin. These permits also protect downstream users of groundwater and surface water. The changes to the permit require that significantly more water is released to promote recovery of the endangered sea-going Rainbow Trout, also known as Steelhead. The permit also requires several new studies regarding the operations of Bradbury Dam and Lake Cachuma. The SYRWCD is involved in this process and will continue to be involved in the future to ensure that downstream water rights are not infringed upon.

Beneficial Use and Users of Water

The State Board is required to balance the competing interests of water for fish and water for people. The SYRWCD continues the cooperative effort with all

State and Federal agencies to protect and safeguard water rights by working toward a balance of water resource allocations for all use and users of water in the Basin.

Protecting Your Water Rights

The SYRWCD was formed in 1939 in response to a third new large dam on the Santa Ynez River designed to store and divert flow out of the river to the communities of the south coast. At that time users of the river were concerned about preserving and protecting the historic and potential future uses of water within the watershed.

Since 1939 and continuing today, the SYRWCD advocates for and is an active protector of your water rights in the Santa Ynez and Lompoc Valleys.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) is intended to be implemented at the most local level. Local governments and water agencies within the Santa Ynez River Valley Groundwater Basin are required to prepare a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (Plan) by January 30, 2022. Eight local governmental agencies in the Basin formed three Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), one for each of three management areas. The GSAs regularly meet quarterly. The three GSAs are currently working on sections of the Plan, which are available for public review and input. Each GSA has formed a Citizen Advisory Group to provide focused public input. Public participation is encouraged and appreciated.

For information about documents for review, CAG meetings, on-going GSP activities and the SGMA process, please visit SantaYnezWater.org or call Bill Buelow at the District office at 805-693-1156.

Office Location

Our office is located at 3669 Sagunto Street, Suite 101, Santa Ynez, CA 93460.

Water users in the Santa Ynez - Solvang - Los Olivos area should not confuse this District with the Improvement District No. 1 (ID1) by the same name. ID1 is a separate District formed many years ago to acquire and serve water in the aforementioned area.

We appreciate any comments or suggestions you may have. If you have any questions regarding District activities, please contact Kevin Walsh, General Manager, at 805-693-1156.