

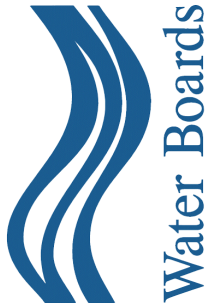


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California Water News

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STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS AND MONTEREY COUNTY WATER RESOURCES AGENCY PREPARE TO WRAP UP SALINAS VALLEY SUCCESS STORY

Sacramento—The State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Water Rights (Division of Water Rights) has issued the final permit for the Salinas Valley Water Project (SVWP). The SVWP is a project of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA), and is expected to stop further saltwater intrusion of Salinas Valley groundwater aquifers between Salinas and Monterey Bay. The final permit issued today clears the way for installation of a rubber dam on the Salinas River to collect and divert what would essentially be flood water for use by water customers in the area who might otherwise pump groundwater.

Completion of the final permitting process also represents the successful, 50 year collaboration between the MCWRA and the Division of Water Rights. The Division of Water Rights has worked closely with MCWRA to adjust water rights so it can aggressively use excess flows from the Salinas River and re-use treated wastewater to supply the needs of customers who might otherwise pump groundwater out of area aquifers. Limiting such pumping is expected to keep enough pressure within the aquifers to hold out intrusive saltwater. The SVWP is also expected to provide tangible habitat enhancements in the Salinas River system for the threatened central coast steelhead trout population.

This project compliments one completed during the 1990's in the lower Salinas Valley. That project uses recycled water from the regional wastewater treatment plant to reduce overall groundwater pumping by the area's \$3 billion agricultural industry.

"MCWRA has provided a great example of the kind of result we consider most successful", said State Water Board Executive Director, Dorothy Rice. "The best solutions often come about when a local agency takes the lead in solving problems for its own area."

Said MCWRA General Manager Curtis Weeks, "It's rare and noteworthy when state and local agencies can work together to find this kind of solution. We'd like to thank the Board and its water rights division staff for their help and cooperation. Those things have helped us craft a success story for Monterey County water users."

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) has also been involved in the SVWP. It's role has been evaluation and certification of the SVWP and recommending components to be included in the project.

Monterey County Water Resources Agency manages, protects and enhances the quantity and quality of water and provides specified flood control services for present and future generations of Monterey County.

The State Water Resources Control Board and its nine Regional Boards preserve, enhance and restore California's water resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

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