

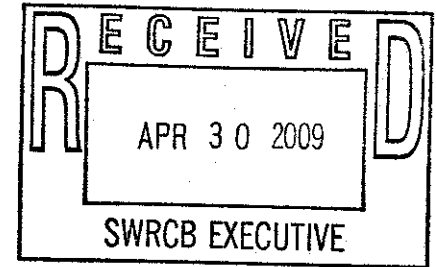


Services

Office of Administrative

April 29, 2009

Jeanine Townsend  
Clerk To The Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814



Re: Sonoma County Water Agency's Petition For Temporary Urgency Change

The purpose of this letter is to express the Sonoma County Junior College District's concerns regarding the proposed Sonoma County Water Agency's Petition for Temporary Urgency Change Regarding Certain Permits and Applications 12919A, 15736, 15737 and 19351.

The Sonoma County Junior College District clearly understands both the sense of urgency regarding the projected water shortages and the need to adopt restrictions on the use of water. However, it appears that the Sonoma County Water Agency's proposed mandate does not adequately take into consideration a number of public and private entities' efforts to both reduce and monitor the use of water during this critical period.

For example, at Santa Rosa Junior College, a current water use reduction project converting significant acreage from hydrated grass to artificial turf will, by itself, reduce water usage in excess of 25% and along with other cooperative measures with the City of Santa Rosa and other municipalities containing the Petaluma Campus, the Public Safety Training Center, etc., will exceed a 35% reduction in water usage during 2008-2009. The College has taken these measures without any mandates nor suggested restrictions by any other public entity within Sonoma County. However, as the Sonoma County Water Agency proposal is written, the College could yet be penalized by the County mandating no use of water on its historic greenbelt vista containing significant numbers of landmark heritage trees which the College has worked hard at protecting and preserving during its 90 year existence. This 7 acre parcel serves not only as an instructional space, it also is a passive community park and a frequent host to community events. Also, under this site, the College is in the process of completing a closed loop geothermal field which will provide a green solution to the energy usage for a new 78,000 square foot facility located next to the greenbelt. The SCWA seems not to have given adequate review and reflection upon the negative impacts of turf reduction near or adjacent to instructional facilities which benefit in kind by using a lesser volume of cooling during hot summer months as well. Mechanical engineers are concerned about the increased energy demands for such cooling systems should the loss of shade trees and turf become a reality.

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The District continues to expand the use of a central control irrigation system based on on-site ET values at its three largest campuses. This has substantially increased the efficiency of our irrigation practices. The District will continue to increase the use of low water use native and drought tolerant plants which use either drip irrigation or no supplemental irrigation at all throughout our district. This year, due to the drought, the District has initiated irrigation water audits that analyze watering efficiency at many of our largest turf areas. This has led to the replacement of many old inefficient sprinklers with new heads.

The District feels confident that it can reach the particular water conservation goals as expressed by the Sonoma County Water Agency and believes that the proposed harsh measures are unnecessary if public and private entities are allowed to meet those water reduction goals through measures of which they are both responsible and in control.

Sincerely,

Dr. Curtis L. Groninga  
Vice President  
Administrative Services

cc: Robert F. Agrella  
Tony Ichsan  
Carl Dobson