

# Zayante Dam Project Gets An Extension

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The state Division of Water Rights has granted the city of Santa Cruz an extra year in which to complete its environmental impact report on the long-proposed and highly controversial Zayante dam and reservoir project.

The city was under a requirement to complete the report by July 31, 1983, in  
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order to support its application for Zayante Creek water rights.

The new deadline is July 31, 1984, as requested by Mayor Michael Rotkin and the Santa Cruz City Council.

The deadline extension is a victory for the City Council's liberal majority that is seeking to develop a feasible alternative to the Zayante project in conjunction with the county and the San Lorenzo Valley Water District.

Led by Councilmember John Laird, the council liberals have questioned a city need for the project and have asserted that if there is a regional need for a huge new water source then this source should be developed jointly with other interested jurisdictions.

However, the city appeared under the gun to complete the report by July 31, 1983, and there was a question that if this deadline were not met the city would be able to keep its priority position in the quest for Zayante Creek water rights.

The SLV Water District also has applied for these water rights.

The deadline extension safeguards the city's priority position and at the same time gives the City Council the opportunity to explore with others a possible alternative to the Zayante dam and reservoir.

Raymond Walsh, chief of the state Division of Water Rights, noted in a letter to Rotkin that "a cooperative approach is being developed by the various water supply agencies in northern Santa Cruz County in planning and developing necessary new water sources."

He noted also that this approach was presented to members of the state Water Resources Control Board for review and comment and that no opposition to extending the deadline to enable the cooperative approach had been expressed.

Walsh pointed out it is "possible that the present projects proposed by the city and the SLV Water District would not be the best project for all concerned.

In granting the deadline extension, Walsh required that the city file with his office by Sept. 1 a progress report covering the status of a proposed joint powers agency, a schedule of the proposed additional studies and a schedule for preparing and adopting necessary environmental documents, including a final report.

Morris Allen, Santa Cruz water director, told the city Water Commission this morning, "While we do have an extension, it gives us only a few months to decide on alternatives to the Zayante project."

Allen said also that the state will not accept a nebulous project, that "the state

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