

# Sewers will create new problems

**BOULDER CREEK** — New sewers worth \$24 million may clean up sanitation in San Lorenzo Valley, but will create a new problem: more development.

The sewers — if and when they are built — will mean as many as 600 new buildable lots in the San Lorenzo Valley, according to a report of the San Lorenzo Valley Water District.

At a meeting Thursday night, water district directors, under pressure from a government funding deadline, must decide whether to certify the environmental impact report for the sewer project and thus smooth the way for its construction.

A key issue is the growth impact of the new sewers in the San Lorenzo Valley, which is said to now have the largest number of septic tanks per acre in California. The new sewers are planned for 2,000 lots along the San Lorenzo River banks in Felton, Ben Lomond, Boulder Creek and Kings Creek, where leaky septic tanks cause severe sanitation problems.

Thursday, directors will decide

whether to tie the sewer project to a growth management plan to be developed in cooperation with the county.

The county has jurisdiction over building permits and water district directors fear development of the newly-buildable lots could be a planner's nightmare if a sound management program is not in effect at the time the sewers are built.

Another problem has come to light: increased water use once the new sewers are built. Today, residents with shaky septic systems are forced to conserve water. Directors will consider requiring residents to install water-saving devices or penalize high-water users once the sewers have been built.

The construction of sewers could also mean fewer trees. Directors will consider passing a resolution to remove trees where the installation of sewer trenches would mean disturbing tree roots. Wherever possible, it is proposed trenching near roots be avoided.

The building of the new sewers still

hinges on the outcome of an election to be held by the water district over whether propertyowners are willing to pay their share of the construction costs. That share has been estimated at \$25 per month.

In the meantime, the district is under order from the state Water Resources Control Board to eliminate septic tank discharges by 1986. Sewer construction is slated for September 1984 for the district to be eligible for government Clean Water Act grants.

If the sewers are not built, officials say residents would be required to install holding tanks to be pumped out at a cost of \$100 to \$300 per month.

Even after years of study over the proposed sanitation system, water directors will also decide Thursday whether to order more environmental study.

In areas where septic tanks are environmentally acceptable, there is a plan for stricter controls on the use of septic tanks.

Water district directors meet at 7:30 p.m. at 13060 Central Ave., Boulder Creek.