

Where will we get water?

City considers ways to meet growing need

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SANTA CRUZ — New reservoirs, higher dams and deeper wells all are being considered by city officials to meet the community's growing water needs into the next century.

"The city can't just be blind to the fact that there will be population growth," said Water Commissioner Toby Goddard. "They have to respond to it."

City Water Department Director Bill Kocher says the number of customers will increase from 80,000 to about 105,000 by the year 2005, increasing water demand from 4.2 billion to 5.1 billion gallons each year.

The department supplies water to customers between Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, 41st Avenue in Capitola and Davenport.

Several years ago a city-sponsored study concluded that the city could meet its growing needs through a combination of conservation, improving the current system and finding new sources.

Under current plans, about 10 percent of the projected needs would be met through short-term rationing. Another 5 percent would be met through conservation, and the final 10-12 percent, or 600 million to 700 million gallons a year, must come from new sources, says Kocher.

This fall, Walnut Creek-based consultants Camp Dresser McKee is expected to conclude a \$250,000, two-year engineering study which examines yields, cost and dependability of seven new potential sources. That information, and recommendations, is expected to be brought to the Santa Cruz City Council by this November, said Kocher.

Friday, a city water advisory group will be joined by several city commission and council members to hear an overview of the various potential projects.

Councilwoman Katherine Beiers, who serves on that advisory group, said city officials already have decided changes are necessary to meet the area's water needs.

"Clearly we're saying it can't be status quo," she said. "We have to do something."

Kocher said the projects proba-



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Reclaimed waste water could be used to keep golf courses such as Pasatiempo green.

bly will be a combination of the proposed reservoirs, wells, reclamation, and dam work.

"By themselves, some of these would not be very big projects, but all of them would help," he said.

For example, Kocher said, reclaiming 300,000 gallons a day of waste water running off from Scotts Valley would be enough to sustain the Pasatiempo Golf Course and Oddfellows Cemetery.

Another option, filling in one of RMC Lonestar cement company's two limestone quarries in the county, could yield 6.5 million to 13 million gallons a day.

Satish Sheth, Lonestar's vice president of cement operations, said his company has pitched the plan to the city. But Sheth said it will be "many years" before the firm would be willing to give up the quarries where limestone deposits are collected to manufacture cement.

"Right now both quarries are in operation, but it seems like it's a good idea for when we get done with them," he said.

Goddard, who also works as a county resource planner, said he is pleased with the current slate of proposed sources because they represent a wide range of choic-

Water alternatives

By the year 2005 Santa Cruz will need an additional 2 million gallons of water per day between the months of April and October. Here are options under consideration.

Locate ground water wells in Harvey West area and Thurber Lane area in Live Oak.	13 million
Potential yield: 325,000 gallons/day for both areas	
Reclaim Scotts Valley wastewater for use at Pasatiempo Golf Course and Odd Fellows Cemetery.	
Potential yield: 300,000 gallons/day	
Enlarge Loch Lomond reservoir by raising the dam 4 to 14 feet.	Gallons of water
Potential yield: 700,000 gallons for 4 feet raised	
Potential yield: 2.8 million gallons for 14 feet raised	6.5 million
Build a new reservoir at either 1. Upper San Lorenzo River near Waterman's Gap. 2. RMC Lonestar's Bonny Doon Quarry off Liddell Creek. 3. RMC Lonestar's Olympia Quarry off Zayante Creek.	3.5 million
Potential yield: 6.5 to 13 million gallons/day	
Desalinization for two brackish/saline water wells on the North Coast.	300,000 0
Potential yield: both wells would yield 3.7 million gallons/day	

Source: Santa Cruz Water Department

Chris Carothers/Sentinel

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es, from regional cooperation with other districts to tapping into the ground water.

However, Goddard stressed that "everything on that list is going to be very expensive."

When it comes time to make the tough choices, Goddard said, the two key issues are going to be the costs and environmental impacts of the various projects.

Kocher says he has held back on preparing a financial analysis of the proposals, because he didn't want to see anything ruled out too early.

However, consultants are completing a "fatal flaw report" to see if there is anything about any of the projects that would make them unbuildable.

The city's Water Supply Alternative Study Advisory Group is scheduled to meet Friday at 10 a.m. at Loudon Nelson Community Center.