

# San Lorenzo Valley Water District approves Lompico merger

Deal would strengthen community, board says

✓ Water Supply  
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**BEN LOMOND** » A merger between Lompico's and San Lorenzo Valley's water districts, in process for four years, passed a major hurdle Thursday.

The San Lorenzo Valley Water District board unanimously approved the merger application, bringing the district one step closer to annexing Lompico in January 2015.

Board member Larry Prather said the merger makes sense, since San Lorenzo Valley's district sur-

rounds Lompico's.

"It makes us stronger — not only as a community, but as a water district," Prather said. "We have 500 more ratepayers. It makes us more survivable in times of emergency."

Assuming LAFCO, the boundary commission overseeing the process, approves the application following an August public hearing, the decision will be left to Lompico residents who will have the opportunity to protest in November. More than a 50 percent protest precludes the merger.

A two-thirds vote by Lompico residents is also required

to approve a \$2.75 million bond to pay for capital improvement, a condition of the merger.

Ben Lomond resident Nick Naccari, one of about 20 community members in attendance Thursday night, said he's concerned that the merger would distract San Lorenzo Valley staff from focusing on its own deferred maintenance, such as leaking redwood tanks.

Board member Randall Brown echoed those concerns.

"Maybe we won't be able to replace all six (Lompico) tanks before we replace some of ours," said Brown. "I hope we have that kind of flexibility."

Felton resident Mark Mes-

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simer, said he's concerned about the unknown costs of annexing an aging system. The completion of the emergency pipeline buys time to make more detailed cost estimates, he said.

"We don't have to be fear-based. We can be fact based," Messimer said.

Lois Henry, president of Lompico water district's board, held her head in her hands at the announcement of the approval.

"It's a step forward," Henry said. "I'm very excited."