

Soquel Creek ground water study planned

Does the Soquel Creek really provide water for the underground aquifers that supply drinking water for the Midcounty?

The Soquel Creek water district will spend \$3,500 this summer and hire a consultant that will provide the answers.

The water district's board of director approved a contract with Lindsay, Kraeger and Associates of Aptos to measure the stream flows across suspected groundwater recharge areas and find out if, as some geologists suspect, stream water is

actually percolating into the underground aquifers at those points.

If the water is, District General Manager Bob Johnson said, the district can take steps to protect those areas and may also consider measures that would increase the amount of water flowing into the aquifer — steps that might include ponding or injection wells.

The water board also approved spending about \$1,200 to reopen a 40-year-old Seacliff area water well whose casing has collapsed. Called the

Hillcrest well, the old well will be abandoned in the next year or so once a new well is drilled in the area, but in the meantime, its water is needed this summer for the Seacliff, Aptos Terrace and Vienna Woods areas.

The district's Madeline well, which also serves the area, is out of service now. A new well is being drilled and the district hopes to have the well back in operation by June 1, Johnson said. In the meantime, the area is receiving its water

from the Aptos Creek well near Aptos Village and can also get water in emergencies from the Maplethorpe well on the west side of Park Avenue in Soquel.

Johnson said the directors had already approved installing a new pump in the Hillcrest well but when workmen attempted to lower the pump into the supposedly 380 foot deep well, they found it blocked at 200 feet.

A well driller will use the old "cable tool" technique to literally pound a new hole into the ground below the point where the well had collapsed, Johnson said.

The board also approved the installation of an 8-inch water main from the Crown Center in Aptos to the proposed 140-unit Seacliff Inn near the KMFO radio towers.

The district has also agreed to serve a nine unit office building that is being proposed for the vacant lot at 45th Avenue and Capitola Road.

Johnson was also instructed to draft a resolution supporting the Pacific Gas and Electric's bid to get some of its Sierra Nevada hydroelectric plants relicensed by the Federal Power Commission.

Several Northern California municipal utilities had asked for the water district's support in an attempt to get the federal government to reassign PG&E's operating permits for the old hydroelectric stations to the publicly-owned systems.

The water board also decided that such an action would result in PG&E burning more fossil fuels and electric rates would increase for PG&E customers, including the water district.