

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Supervisor Debbie Arnold, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
August 6, 2013

1) Dry Wells: Our top priority must be assisting those residents with dry wells.

- a) *If wells weren't dry, the decline of the basin would be a **problem**, not a crisis.*
- b) *Urgency is required because wells are going dry, and therefore urgency actions should focus first and foremost on dealing with the dry wells.*
- c) *Each year this county has purchased the right to approximately 25,000 acre-feet of state water. However, we only take roughly 8,500 acre-feet and sell the balance of water that our residents have paid for. Rather than that water coming into our county, the profits from the sale of that water goes into a reserve account held here at the county by the Flood Control District (estimated \$4.5 million).*

## *DIRECTION TO STAFF:*

1. *Prepare a staff report detailing options for how the Flood Control District's reserve fund could be used to assist those residents whose wells have gone dry. Include a discussion of options for both financial assistance as well as supplemental water, such as, but not limited to:*
  - a. *How could the county Flood Control District provide low interest loans to affected residents?*
  - b. *How could the county Flood Control District use this reserve to help fund inspections of wells in order to advise residents regarding options (e.g. a failed pump vs. the need for a new well)?*
  - c. *How could the county Flood Control District use this reserve to help secure immediate supplemental water for the hardest hit regions of the basin (e.g. including targeted recharge)?*
  - d. *How could the county Flood Control District use this reserve to help fund the infrastructure necessary to procure supplemental water?*

2) Stop Waste: *Waste is occurring today, and is something we can stop immediately.*

- a) *Other counties have focused on eliminating waste because it is simple, has immediate impact, and does not produce unintended consequences.*
- b) *Conservation strategies that engage all basin users equally increase the county's ability to raise the public's awareness about the water issue and make all basin users part of the solution.*

*DIRECTION TO STAFF:*

- 1. *Identify additional urgency ordinance language targeting water waste and conservation strategies.*
  - a. *Look at Los Angeles County's urgency conservation ordinance as an example.*

3) Manage Demand: *Urgency restrictions should be targeted and careful to avoid unintended consequences.*

- a) *Our economy is just beginning to slowly recover.*
- b) *We must exercise extreme care and caution to avoid actions that cost people across this county their property values, jobs or small businesses.*
  - (1) *Our actions should make the situation in the North County better – not make a bad situation worse by adopting ordinances that fail to impact the problem, but then do damage to people's property values and the local economy.*
- c) *The current staff report is a list of ordinances, but does not provide any data quantifying the benefits or impacts of any of the itemized options.*
  - (1) *Without specific data, our Board is left to simply close our eyes, reach into the bag and arbitrarily draw out a restrictive ordinance.*

*(2) We have a public duty to take informed action, not arbitrary action.*

*d) Let me be clear – nothing in this staff report is inherently unsupportable. If the situation and data supported any of these options as best for the overall needs of our community, I could support any of these items.*

*i) But right now, I don't have enough information to analyze, evaluate or compare any of these options. It is just a list.*

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

*1. Update the staff report to include:*

*a. For each of the urgency land use ordinances listed, identify the number of properties and projects that would currently meet the criteria identified in the staff report. For example:*

*i. How many projects are currently in the 'pipeline' using the various criteria identified in the staff report*

*ii. How many properties subject to each of the various proposals currently have financial or other contractual obligations that would be affected by any of the proposed ordinances?*

*1. What are the legal implications of adopting an ordinance that adversely impacts an existing contract?*

*b. How much water would be saved by adopting each of the proposed ordinances?*

*i. Provide the supporting data that would allow the board to identify high-impact regions.*

*c. The economic impact of each of the proposed ordinances, including*

*i. Impacts to the land owners directly subject to each of the proposed ordinances*

*ii. Impacts to industries related to and dependent upon the properties targeted for restricts (e.g. restaurants, hotels, tourist serving small businesses, agricultural manufacturing, labor, etc)*

4) Public Process: *The staff report raises the issue of public process and the significant interest amongst stakeholders to be involved in these decisions.*

a) *When we are talking about people's ability to access water on their property, their investments, their property values, their jobs and livelihoods, we must make time to listen and make sure we understand the full impacts of the decisions that we are making.*

b) *But this doesn't need to be a new process that requires additional time.*

c) *The Blue Ribbon Committee created by this board has that diverse stakeholder representation.*

*REQUEST OF BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE:*

1. *I would like to request that the Blue Ribbon Committee prepare a response to the various urgency ordinances identified in this staff report.*

a. *Include a discussion of the various points of view represented on the committee, or the Solutions Sub-committee.*

b. *Does the Committee or Solutions Sub-committee recommend any of these urgency ordinances, and if so, which do they believe will provide the greatest benefit?*