



AGENCY: City Council
MEETING DATE: August 10, 2020
DEPARTMENT: City Manager/Public Works
PRESENTED BY: T. Miller/J. Smith
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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

TITLE:

Receive Report and Consider Adoption of City Council Resolution Recommending and Encouraging Voluntary Implementation of Stage 1 Water Conservation Measures

ISSUE:

The City of Fort Bragg Municipal Code Chapter 14.06, Water Conservation, sets forth the parameters for the City to declare a water emergency and implement mandatory water conservation consistent with the Stage or level of the emergency. However, staff has determined that the parameters as set forth in the Code occur too late in a water shortage for water conservation to be truly effective in managing a water emergency. Action is necessary before the City crosses those thresholds and not after.

The City has not met any of the thresholds required to declare a water emergency and implement water conservation measures, but staff feels it prudent to ask our residents and water customers to target a Stage 1 conservation goal which is to reduce normal water usage by 10% for this time of year.

ANALYSIS:

Fort Bragg Municipal Code Chapter 14.06, Water Conservation, section 14.06.020 was most recently updated on January 25, 2016 and sets forth the three independent triggers that measure the City's ability to replenish water storage. The City does not currently meet any one of those requirements. However, the City is currently experience both drought conditions and King Tides that could, but have not yet, increase the salinity levels in the Noyo River to a level that impacts the City's ability to pump from this water source.

The City of Fort Bragg's water supply system relies solely on three surface water sources: Waterfall Gulch (tributary to Hare Creek), Newman Gulch (tributary to Noyo River), and the Noyo River (diversion is at Madsen Hole). In 2015, the City's water supply system could only store small amounts of water that provided enough to maintain proper water system pressure and to provide a safety margin for fire-fighting flows. Five years later, the City has made great progress with water storage by including an additional 1.5 million gallon finished water storage tank and the Summers Lane Reservoir with a raw water capacity of 14.7 million gallons. This brings our total water storage capacity to 22.6 million gallons.

Current water production from the three City sources is:

- Waterfall Gulch, 116 gallons per minute (gpm)
- Newman Gulch, 150 gpm
- Noyo River pumping, 300-400 gpm, on average (as needed)

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During the winter and spring, pumping of the Noyo River is used only to supplement the Waterfall Gulch and Newman Gulch sources. The two tributary sources generally provide a higher quality of raw water and they gravity-feed to the water treatment plant, whereas water from the City's Noyo River diversion must be pumped. As summer progresses and the flows in the tributary streams diminish, the Noyo River diversion is used more frequently and in greater quantities.

Currently, the Noyo River is flowing at 2.0 cubic feet per second (cfs). This flow level mirrors the 2015 low flows. With this in mind, we expect to be nearing the 1.0 cfs level in mid-September. Our average water demand is 750,000 gallons per day. Currently, sources are providing 1.23 million gallons per day. The challenges we confronted in 2015 have been mitigated by the increased storage capacity. While this provides a great deal of confidence in our system, moving forward with caution is only prudent.

By making small reductions in our water usage today, we may avoid the need to enter a Stage 2, 3, or 4 Water Emergency. Under the current Municipal Code, the City cannot mandate a Stage 1 level of water conservation without meeting one of the three thresholds in section 14.06.020 or after conducting a public hearing with proper notice and making appropriate findings of necessity (California Water Code 375) that the City Council may adopt and enforce a water conservation program.

Staff will continue to monitor water usage and the City's ability to continue to replenish water storage. If necessary, staff may recommend that City Council declare an emergency and/or implement mandatory water conservation measures.

Voluntary Stage 1 Water Conservation Measures include the following:

1. All users of potable water shall reduce their potable water consumption by 10% as compared to the same month of the base year.
2. Consistent with state requirements to prevent the waste and unreasonable use of potable water and to promote water conservation, each of the following actions is strongly discouraged:
 - a. The use of potable water on outdoor landscapes in a manner that causes runoff such that water flows onto adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, private and public walkways, roadways, parking lots, or structures.
 - b. The use of a hose that dispenses potable water to wash a motor vehicle, or to irrigate landscaped areas, including trees and shrubs located on residential and commercial properties that are not irrigated by a landscape irrigation system, except where the hose is fitted with a shut-off nozzle or device attached to it that causes it to cease dispensing water immediately when not in use.
 - c. The use of potable water to wash driveways, sidewalks, and similar hardscapes.

d. The use of potable water in a fountain or other decorative water feature, except where the water is part of a recirculating system.

e. The irrigation of outdoor landscapes during and within 48 hours after measurable rainfall.

f. The irrigation of residential and commercial landscapes, at any time other than before 10:00 a.m. and after 6:00 p.m.

g. The serving of drinking water other than upon request in eating or drinking establishments, including but not limited to restaurants, hotels, cafes, cafeterias, bars, or other public places where food or drink are served and/or purchased.

h. The irrigation with potable water of ornamental turf on public street medians.

i. The irrigation with potable water of landscapes outside of newly constructed homes and buildings in a manner inconsistent with regulations or other requirements established by the California Building Standards Commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

3. In addition, each of the following uses of potable water is strongly discouraged:

a. The use of any hose or similar device, irrespective of whether a nozzle, valve, or other shut-off mechanism is attached thereto, for washing or cleaning the exterior surface of any dwelling, garage, commercial or industrial building. Persons painting building exteriors shall be exempted from this provision when potable water is used to clean or prepare a surface for painting.

b. The use of potable water for filling or refilling any existing or new swimming pool. Replenishing existing pools which have lost water due to evaporation shall be permitted.

c. The use of potable water in construction projects for backfill consolidation or compaction, or for dust control purposes; provided, however, that the City Manager may permit the use of potable water upon a determination by the City Manager that no other source of water for the purpose is available, or that no other method of compaction, consolidation, or dust control is reasonably available. The reuse of water system flush water is permitted.

d. The use of water through, with or by any plumbing, sprinkler, watering or irrigation system, or other device, equipment, or appliance which is broken or defective, or which, for any reason, fails to use water in the ordinary and customary manner or quantity for which it was designed, constructed, or manufactured.

4. To promote water conservation, operators of hotels and motels should provide guests with the option of choosing not to have towels and linens laundered daily. Each

hotel or motel is requested to prominently display notice of this option in each guestroom using clear and easily understood language.

5. To prevent waste and unreasonable use of potable water and to promote water conservation, lawn watering and landscape irrigation with potable water should be limited to no more than 2 days per week for all water users.

6. Tampering with any part of the water system to circumvent the provisions contained within this section, including tampering with hydrants or water meters, is prohibited.

7. Residents and business owners should repair all water leaks as soon as feasibly possible, but no later than 5 days after notification by the City, unless other arrangements are made with the Public Works Director.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt Resolution recommending and encouraging voluntary implementation of Stage 1 water conservation measures (set forth above) which target a 10% decrease in water usage from the same time in the base year.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

1. Do not adopt Resolution.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Reduced water usage will impact Water Fund revenues during the time frame customers practice water conservation, however, the water fund's reserves and fund balance can absorb the loss. A small reduction now may mitigate the necessity of more significant mandatory water conservation measures in the future that would have a greater impact on revenue.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACT:

Reduced water usage will have an incremental reduction in pumping and water treatment, which will result in a small decrease in the use of electricity and resulting greenhouse gas emissions.

CONSISTENCY:

N/A

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:

The request for voluntary compliance with Stage 1 water conservation measures would be immediate and if implemented, water usage could be reduced immediately.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution

NOTIFICATION:

1. N/A.