

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: Groundwater Strategy For The Central Valley Region

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of Special Resolution*

BACKGROUND: The Central Valley Region has the second largest contiguous groundwater basin in the United States, and the largest in California. Residents, industries, and agriculture are highly dependent on groundwater. Groundwater is the sole source of domestic drinking water for many communities and rural residential developments. Industries rely on high quality groundwater for their supply. In some areas of the region, agriculture users depend exclusively on groundwater for irrigation. Even in areas where surface water supplies are available for irrigation, groundwater is used to supplement those supplies.

The Region's groundwater has seen the effects of over use. Overdraft is being experienced in many parts of the region. Over 50% of the waste discharges to land in California, and over 40% of the septic systems, are in the Central Valley Region. Some groundwater supplies have been degraded or polluted which, in part, may be due to historical practices of agriculture and dairy industries, failing septic systems, and other discharges to land. The problem is exacerbated where there are areas of overdraft.

This resolution would recognize the need to develop a long-term strategy addressing these issues to assure comprehensive, consistent, and coordinated protection of the beneficial uses of groundwater throughout the Region, and particularly within the Tulare Lake Basin. The resolution would recognize the need to work with other state agencies and stakeholders to find both regulatory and non-regulatory solutions to the problems being faced, and ensure a sustainable, high quality water supply for the Central Valley.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the proposed Resolution.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review ____ LTO _____

23/24 October 2008
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