

MRWPCA UPDATE

MONTEREY REGIONAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY

Dedicated to Meeting Wastewater and Recycled Water Needs

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Board of Directors Approves 2002/03 Budget

Customer Rates to Remain Unchanged for 11th Year

For the 11th consecutive year, the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Water Control Agency (MRWPCA) board of directors has approved a balanced budget for fiscal year 2002-2003 holding residential customer rates un-

changed. The last rate increase in July of 1992 was from \$9.00 to \$9.30 per month. This achievement was a cooperative effort from MRWPCA's staff who implemented ways to cut operational costs and restructured its work

force more efficiently.

Formed in 1972, MRWPCA is also celebrating its 30th anniversary. In September, the water recycling facility will have completed its fifth year of operation.

A Milestone Project Has Begun in Northern Monterey County

Recycled Water Is Used to Restore Our Natural Wetlands

The core of Northern Monterey County's natural water system is the wet corridors where water flows and settles. By the turn of the century, these wetlands were ditched and drained, and the rivers were straightened, ditched and diked primarily to provide more land for agricultural use. These natural wet corridors had provided the best flood control and water filtering system, plus they recharged the ground water.

John Oliver, adjunct professor at the Moss Landing Marine Labs, first became interested in the area's watershed problems 10 years ago. As an oceanographer, he has spent over 30 years exploring sea floor animals from pole to pole. "Our freshwater wetlands are the most important and endangered ecosystems," Oliver says, "which is of major global concern."

In the 1940s, well water in Northern Monterey County started to become salty. Now, because salt water has intruded in the 180- and 400-foot ground water aquifers, local growers use recycled water for irrigation. These growers requested the marine lab to restore the Moro Cojo Slough, one of the largest freshwater



"Many wildlife use the wetlands in Tottino Marsh, including endangered frogs and breeding shorebirds," says Oliver pointing out a nest of eggs.

ecosystems on the coast, and Oliver and his colleagues took on the challenge.

"It will take many years to decommission the ditch system and pond large volumes of water in the historical wetlands," says Oliver. "For now, Tottino Marsh is the only perennial stream in the area that flows because we are able to flood it with recycled water for several days every two weeks

during the dry season. At the Marsh, we've unplugged the ditches; spread drainage water over broad flood plains; ponded freshwater wherever possible; and planted native plants to establish a natural succession and push out invasive, non-native weeds.

The recycled water is produced at the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency's treatment plant located two miles north of Marina. The water has been used primarily for agricultural irrigation since the facility was built five years ago.

It will take over a decade to establish larger riparian trees and long-lived wetland grasses, and perhaps 50 to 100 years to reclaim the thick, spongy wetland above and below ground.

Like Tottino Marsh, recycled water can be used to enhance wetland restoration in many other parts of Moro Cojo and in inland wetlands. There are eight historical lakes between Moss Landing and Salinas, many ditched creeks and the Salinas River (the largest ditch). Restoration of this natural water system will be done by landowner partnerships and recycled water.



The MRWPCA Board of Directors celebrated the urban use approval with a cake being cut by past chair Theresa Canepa (Monterey). Watching are (l to r): Peggy Shirrel, PhD (chair/Moss Landing), Jack Barlich (Del Rey Oaks) and David Pendergrass (Sand City)

A New Source of Water for Our Communities

Urban Use of Recycled Water Receives Landmark Approval

After four years of active negotiations, the Monterey County supervisors unanimously approved an agreement for a portion of the recycled water produced at the Water Recycling Facility to be set aside for urban use. The agreement, approved on April 30 at the Board of Supervisors meeting, specifies the amounts of recycled water for MRWPCA.

ment between MRWPCA and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (which is part of the County of Monterey)," says MRWPCA General Manager Keith Israel. "The outcome was very positive, as we were able to establish a water allotment for urban use without taking any water away from the growers who use it for crop irrigation."

"Negotiations required agree-

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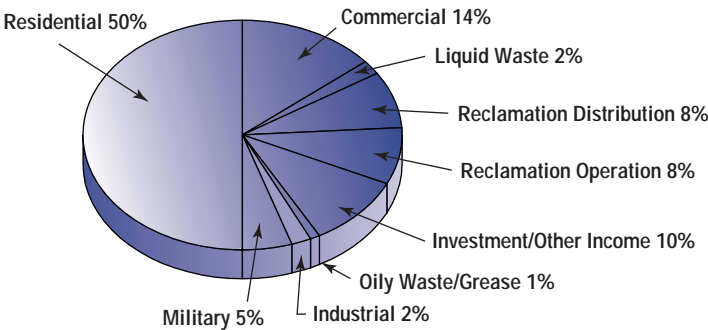
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What We Do

The Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency is responsible for treating wastewater for Del Rey Oaks, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Salinas, Sand City, Seaside, Boronda, Castroville, Moss Landing, Marina, the former Fort Ord, and unincorporated areas of northern Monterey county. MRWPCA's facilities include a 30 million-gallon-per-day treatment plant and water recycling facility located two miles north of Marina, as well as community pumping stations and transport piping to the treatment plant. (City sewer systems are maintained independently by each city.)

MRWPCA Fiscal Year 2002/03 Approved Budget

Revenues



Expenditures

