SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT

TO: Board of Directors **AGENDA NO. V-A**

FROM: Steve Mack, General Manager

Meeting Date: July 3, 2014

SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF STAGE I WATER SHORTAGE

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive a presentation on the possibility of declaring a Stage I Drought following the District's Water Shortage Contingency Plan. Consider declaring a Stage I Drought condition or not invoke Stage I but ask for a voluntary 20% reduction by our customers.

FISCAL IMPACT: A 20% reduction in water sales would have approximately a $140,000 reduction in District revenues if done for an entire year. There would be additional, relatively small District expenses associated with the water conservation effort.

DISCUSSION:

The State of California is in the midst of a statewide drought. The severity of the drought varies throughout the State, but it is unusual and a problem in that the water shortages are generally statewide. The Governor of the State, Jerry Brown, at some point stated that he wanted a 20% water use reduction. The State Water Resources Control Board is supposed to be directing that effort. It seems appropriate that the District invoke its Water Shortage Contingency Plan or some measure of making water use reduction official District policy in response to the Statewide direction.

The District last declared Stage I of the Water Shortage Contingency Plan in 2009 in response to the Temporary Urgency Change to Decision 1610 mandated flows. In that year it was strictly a Russian River event and there was specific language in the relevant Board order directing a regional effort (although not specifically Sweetwater Springs involvement). River flows (and rainfall) are similar this year and a similar effort is appropriate.

A reduction in the amount of 20% will be a big achievement. The District should be setting an example for others in this effort. And we must remember that water that is not diverted is water that stays in the river – that to me is the theme this year.

However, the direction from the State is not clear. The reduction goals are not clear – other than 20%. We don't know for how long the plan should be put in place, for example. Apparently, the State Water Resources Control Board will provide some direction in mid July. We have heard a rumor that the State will place some mandatory restrictions on outside watering – I believe that is a police power that the District does not have.

The regional effort is not clear either. Contractors of the Sonoma County Water Agency have not made formal drought declarations in their communities. They have called for voluntary 20% reductions.

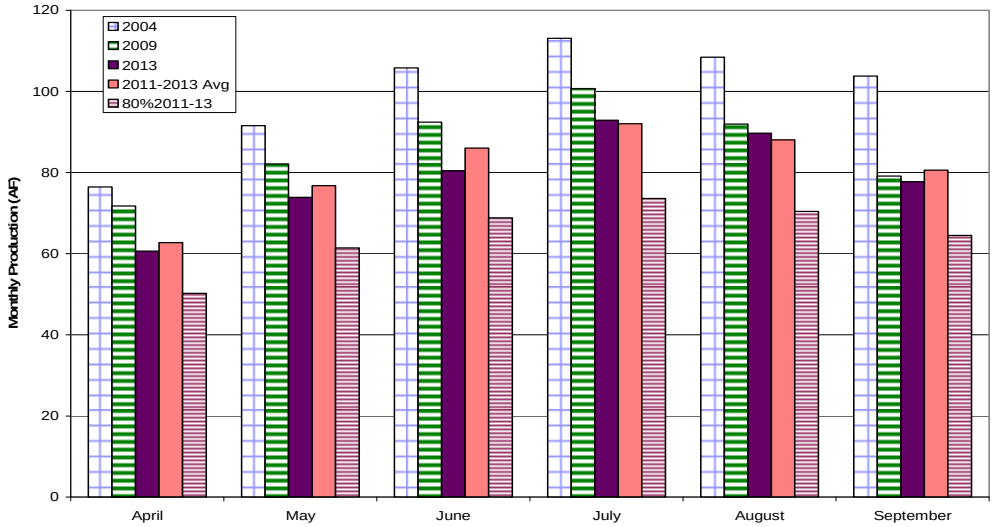
The District's 2010 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), Appendix A. describes the District's Water Shortage Contingency Plan (Plan). The Plan lists three stages of water shortage – I, II, and III. Table A-2, excerpted from the UWMP and shown below, shows that reductions in the 15%-25% call for a Stage I declaration by the Board. The UWMP is sparse on the details of what a Stage I Water Shortage Conservation Plan would include, only stating that the conservation would be voluntary. Exhibit A to Resolution 14-13 contains the proposed elements of the Stage I Water Shortage Conservation Plan. This plan is based on staff experience of working in the conservation field and discussions with SCWA staff of what is available for regional programs. Because of the decentralized nature of this conservation effort, possible changes in direction from the State, and the current lack of an overall regional coordination of regional water conservation, the Plan must be considered subject to change. As we find better ways to achieve results, we would implement those better ways.

Table A-2
Emergency Response Stages and Reduction Goals

Shortage Condition	Stage	Customer Reduction Goal	Type of Rationing Program
15 – 25%	I	25%	Voluntary
26 – 35%	II	35%	Mandatory
36 – 50%	III	50% or >	Mandatory

What does a 20% reduction in production look like? How does this compare with 2009? Figure 1 compares production for 2013 with the 3-year period of 2011-2013 that we believe the State Board is using for comparison purposes and with what we did in 2009 and 2004, which was the base year for comparison purposes back then.

Figure 1. April through September Monthly Production
Sweetwater Springs Water District



Some Observations:

- As I write this report I am uncertain about details about what the State wants us to do. When does the conservation effort end? When it starts raining somewhere? Is it just a summer thing as it was back in 2009?
- Revenue impact is estimated to be $140,000 if done for an entire budget year.
- The District has no police power to enforce restrictions. The proposed water conservation plan, whether for Stage I or requesting 20% reduction, is voluntary. Any plan that had mandatory restrictions would be difficult to enforce. The District's only punitive tool available is turning off service. We cannot fine anyone for not abiding by water use restrictions. One approach to get police power would be to have Sonoma County enact water use restriction ordinances and delegate the enforcement authority to the District. That would be a time-consuming process, if even feasible, and is not available for this summer. (nor is it necessary)
- To me, this is an effort to get in step with the State and to make our message internally consistent. We have been asking for our customers to voluntarily reduce water use for some time, keeping in step with the Sonoma County Water Agency's (and others) program entitled "Turn the Water Off" – doing either approach will make it official policy of the District.

The conservation effort is not being done perfectly, and much can be done to improve regional cooperation. However, the District needs to be a participant in the conservation effort. Exhibit A shows a reasonable plan that can be presented to District customers to get the effort moving regardless of formal invocation of Stage I. Invocation of Stage I Water Shortage makes it more of statement and is following the UWMP. Either action will make water use reduction during the drought official District policy.

Resolution 14-13

A Resolution of the Sweetwater Springs Water District Declaring a Stage I Water Shortage

WHEREAS, the California State Water Resources Board has issued a directive calling for a 20% reduction in statewide water use; and

WHEREAS, the reservoirs in the Russian River system and the flows in the River are low and projections indicate that conditions will deteriorate further later in the summer and fall of 2014; and

WHEREAS, it is in the District's and all regional water purveyors' interest that a cooperative effort be developed to address the water shortage situation in the Russian River system and statewide; and

WHEREAS, the District adopted the 2010 Urban Water Conservation Plan (the "Plan") by Resolution 11-25 on October 6, 2011, which includes a water shortage contingency element: and

WHEREAS, the Plan's voluntary and mandatory rationing stages may be triggered by a water supply shortage; and

WHEREAS, the direction from the California State Water Resources Board indicates a water supply shortage exists thereby triggering the rationing stage provisions of the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan has a three stage response plan and provides that Stage I voluntary rationing should be declared when the conservation goal target is between 15-25%; and

WHEREAS, Stage I voluntary conservation by District customers may be achieved by adjustment to their interior or exterior water use, but still requires concerted effort by District staff; and

WHEREAS, the Plan contains programs and activities that will help the District and its customers achieve a conservation target of up to 20% based on the 2011-13 average usage; and

WHEREAS, attached as Exhibit A is a list of the programs and activities that will be undertaken by the District to assist its customers in achieving water savings under the voluntary Stage I conservation program.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Sweetwater Springs Water District declares the implementation of Stage I of the District's 2010 Urban Water Conservation Plan and directs staff to begin implementation the programs and activities listed in Exhibit A with a goal of decreasing water production by 20%.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution duly and regularly adopted and passed by the Board of Directors of the SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT, Sonoma County, California, at a meeting held on July 3, 2014, by the following vote.

Director	Aye	No
Sukey Robb-Wilder	_____	_____
Tim Lipinski	_____	_____
Richard Holmer	_____	_____
Gaylord Schaap	_____	_____
Victoria Wikle	_____	_____

_____
Richard Holmer
President of the Board of Directors

_____
Attest: Julie A. Kenny
Clerk of the Board of Directors

Exhibit A
Resolution 14-13
Sweetwater Springs Water District Water Shortage Contingency Plan
Stage I Water Shortage
July 3, 2014

Reduction Target is 15-25%. According to 2010 Urban Water Management Plan, this is Stage 1 of the Water Shortage Contingency Plan

Triggering Mechanism is State Board Order directing a 20% water use reduction by all water agencies statewide.

The approach/strategy is voluntary conservation whereby District customers are encouraged and offered resources to use water wisely, and to search for and fix leaks on their property. The District will continue with its capital projects aimed at reducing system losses, pay attention to water wasting in the District, fix surfacing leaks as quickly as possible, and look for other opportunities to reduce system losses.

Plan Elements:

- Public Education/Information
    - Work with SCWA and other water providers in the region for coordinated message
    - Information on website
    - Mailer in May
    - Home Water Audits – self and assisted:
        - Instructions on meter reading.
        - Check for leaks inside and outside.
        - Evaluate all water uses in your facility or home.
        - Provide information on rebates, incentive programs, and water conservation strategies for residents/businesses.
    - Office Display with handouts – rebates, low flow showerheads, faucet aerators
    - Water Wise Gardening
    - Media Spots – press releases, PSA's done on a regional basis?
    - Connect with Statewide effort
- Waste of Water Prohibited, staff will be alerted to be on the lookout for wastage of water.
- Rate incentives – rates have financial incentive to reduce water use (steep incline to tiered rates).
- Capital Improvement Program – 2015 CIP is replacing water distribution mains as part of program to reduce system losses and is starting in July.
- District staff fix reported and found leaks on a priority basis and continue to implement the District effort to decrease water losses.

Resolution 14-13 (Alternative)

A Resolution of the Sweetwater Springs Water District Requesting Customers Reduce Water Use by 20%

WHEREAS, the California State Water Resources Board has issued a directive calling for a 20% reduction in statewide water use; and

WHEREAS, the reservoirs in the Russian River system and the flows in the River are low and projections indicate that conditions will deteriorate further later in the summer and fall of 2014; and

WHEREAS, it is in the District's and all regional water purveyors' interest that a cooperative effort be developed to address the water shortage situation in the Russian River system and statewide; and

WHEREAS, attached as Exhibit A is a list of the programs and activities that will be undertaken by the District to assist its customers in achieving water savings under the voluntary Stage I conservation program.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Sweetwater Springs Water District affirms that it is the policy of the District to request a 20% reduction in customer water use, and directs staff to begin implementation the programs and activities listed in Exhibit A with a goal of decreasing water production by 20%.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution duly and regularly adopted and passed by the Board of Directors of the SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT, Sonoma County, California, at a meeting held on July 3, 2014, by the following vote.

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Richard Holmer	_____	_____
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Victoria Wikle	_____	_____

_____
Richard Holmer
President of the Board of Directors

_____
Attest: Julie A. Kenny
Clerk of the Board of Directors

Exhibit A
Resolution 14-13
Sweetwater Springs Water District Water Shortage Contingency Plan
20% Water Production Reduction
July 3, 2014

Reduction Target is 15-25%. According to 2010 Urban Water Management Plan, this is Stage I of the Water Shortage Contingency Plan. We are using the elements of Stage I to develop the 20% reduction.

Triggering Mechanism is State Board Order directing a 20% water use reduction by all water agencies statewide.

The approach/strategy is voluntary conservation whereby District customers are encouraged and offered resources to use water wisely, and to search for and fix leaks on their property. The District will continue with its capital projects aimed at reducing system losses, pay attention to water wasting in the District, fix surfacing leaks as quickly as possible, and look for other opportunities to reduce system losses.

Plan Elements:

- Public Education/Information
    - Work with SCWA and other water providers in the region for coordinated message
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