SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT

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

FROM: Steve Mack, General Manager

Meeting Date : September 1, 2016

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION/ACTION RE EL BONITA WELL FIELD INUNDATION PREPARATIONS

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive a presentation by the General Manager regarding progress in resolving issues regarding flooding impacts on the El Bonita Well Field and the Guerneville Water Supply System.

FISCAL IMPACT: none

DISCUSSION:

The El Bonita Well Field is at a relatively low level near the Russian River. It is the source of water for the Guerneville Water Supply System of Sweetwater Springs Water District. When the River water elevation gets to 29 feet the well field starts to become inundated. Flood stage for the Russian River at Guerneville is officially at 32 feet elevation. The near flooding in March raised an issue that is concerning to staff - we learned in preparation for anticipated flooding of the El Bonita Well Field that the State Division of Drinking Water would expect the District to issue boil water notices if the wells at that location need to be operated while under water. We had thought that we had addressed that issue to the State's satisfaction (the last large inundation and boil water notice was in 2006 and was due to flood water infiltrating the raw water line because of a leak in the raw water line from the wells) but we learned during this last event we had not.

The State staffs' concern is that flood waters could contaminate the pumped water by negative pressures somewhere along the piping that is under the flood waters. Our position is that District water is continually monitored for turbidity which should show increased turbidity and that we have a plan for addressing this situation, that boil water notices are a hardship for everyone, if not needed, and we want to find out what we can do to satisfy the Division of Drinking Water staff so that boil water notices are only used when needed. We have agreed that District staff would work on solutions.

Staff have been looking at alternatives and have gotten our well maintenance consultants involved. Progress:

- In late July we presented a proposed draft plan for District operations during flood inundations of El Bonita Well Field. That plan is under review by the Division of Drinking Water; we were asked clarifying questions during the

week of August 22. We expect to have a response relatively soon but probably not before the September 1 Board meeting.

- We have received a proposal from Piazza Construction to construct water-tight seals for the well vaults at El Bonita. The proposal for 3 seals was approximately $15,700. We recommend taking this approach if the Division of Drinking Water does not approve our current operations plan and agrees that sealing the well vaults is an appropriate solution.