

Town Hall Questions

March 18, 2023

QUESTION #
TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q01

RESPONSE

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RESPONSE

How do you plan to incorporate climate change impacts in the master plan?

The District will look at the best available data during the study period. For example, here is an American River Basin Study published August 2022: <https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/bsp/docs/arbs/ARBS-Study.pdf>. There is also source data from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and other state agencies: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/cci-quantification-benefits-and-reporting-materials> and <https://cal-adapt.org/>. The District will be looking at the river hydrology analysis from the ARBS study as well as data developed/funded by the state to provide river level forecasting for the Cosumnes. There is a total of 12 fundamental scenarios, including the dry scenarios the District will be evaluating.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q02

RESPONSE

Under Severe Drought Conditions will the study use the developers predetermined conservation rate of 50% used in prior studies or will the industry standard of 20-25% be used?

Developers do not determine the conservation rate. The community (CSD Board representing current and future users) decides what water shortage contingency (drought) plan reduction governs planned efforts & decides the curtailment level when droughts occur. This is what guided the Past & Proposed parameters plugged into the Shared Vision Model. CSD's Policy 90-2 governs Drought Response. Separately, best practices exist for planning for a reliable water supply that relate to Rancho Murieta CSD. Recent droughts & recession have shown reduced CSD customer demands that align with commonly seen reductions of 20-30%. Two state Water Code requirements apply to urban water supplier systems for 3,000 connections or 3,000 acre-feet served:

1. **Water Conservation Act of 2009** requires reduction of 20% by 2020 for gallons per capita per day demand for existing customers. This regulation was voluntarily met by Rancho Murieta CSD (& its customers' conservation over the past 13 years).
2. **Emergency water response planning** for water shortage in Water Code Sec. 10632 requires that permitted water systems plan for more than a 50% cutback in demand as a best practice for water shortage contingencies (system water quality upset, drought, earthquake. etc.).

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q03

RESPONSE

How long will the study assume drought restrictions will be in place?

The District is running a planning level forecast related to reliable supplies. The consultants run a lot of scenarios and the outcome was not that the community would be curtailed for an extended duration, that was a mischaracterization from the last 2010 IWMP planning study. The consultants are required to test all the supply options and investigate a wide range of scenarios.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q04

RESPONSE

What is being done differently now from the 2010 plan?

The 2010 IWMP has been criticized by some as being supportive of development, utilizing bad data, and establishing the 50% conservation policy. In fact, the 2010 IWMP was a technologically objective analysis of water supply and demand, including climate change and past droughts. The 50% conservation policy (90-02) was established by the Board in 1990 & was not fully exercised in the last drought scenarios that did not include Stage 4 & 5 level drought measures. The data relied on by the consultants was provided by the District, which relied on original lot counts under three levels of growth scenarios (low, medium, high) as there were no “parcel maps” or “as builts” to analyze. The current IWMP is benefiting from the ability to use more updated historic data series to inform the analysis over the 1994-2023 time period (e.g., billed consumption metered data for past water use, past history on river flows, pumping to storage, historical evaporation & other applicable data that is needed). The past analysis is 13 years old & needs to be updated. The consultants will be using actual storage levels & pumping data back to 1991, because best practice is to use actual data to do a thorough investigation. The District now has a better view of use with a longer history of data. The consultants will use all the data information & scenarios available to take a fresh look at the analysis.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q05

RESPONSE

If we are supposed to inspect every 3-5 years why did we wait 12? Our water supply system is supposed to be looked at every 3-5 years?

Communities are not required to update water plans every 5 years if the number of connections served is under 3,000 connections. The District has approximately (2,822) connections. Urban Water Suppliers with more than 3,000 connections are required to voluntarily submit plans every 5 years to receive access to state funding resources for drinking water and wastewater treatment systems. <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Water-Use-And-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Use-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Management-Plans>.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q06

RESPONSE

Data is mistrusted due to being 10% off on reservoir capacity and a developer said CSD will provide water to new development.

There are two reasons the reservoir capacity is less than previously thought. For Calero Reservoir the reservoir was not constructed as designed, and was constructed a bit smaller than designed, and this has just come to light. The second reason is likely due to the accuracy in surveying methods. The original land was surveyed in the '70s using aerial photogrammetry, whereas the new survey used high accuracy survey-grade GPS and sonar. The updated reservoir capacities will be utilized in the current IWMP effort.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q07

RESPONSE

Are you going to be considering Clementia as part of our water supply?

Clementia Reservoir will be considered as part of the water supply alternatives analysis. The recommendation to utilize the reservoir will depend on the model results, the potential viability of the reservoir for municipal use, and the comparison of the other supply alternatives. Clementia Reservoir was part of the original water rights permit and water treatment plant operating permit. Permit 16762 currently allows water from the Cosumnes River that is pumped into Clementia reservoir to be used for municipal purposes. The District is currently investigating the ability of the water treatment plant to accept water stored in Clementia reservoir.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q08

RESPONSE

What standard is this new IWMP being performed to? The 2010 plan was performed to an urban standard, what will the new one be performed to?

There are many California State Standards that have changed since 2010. The consultants will be explaining those standards during outreach discussions and in planning documentation.

The California Department of Water Resources is the primary state water agency that oversees urban water planning and sets the guidance for suppliers that serve more than 3,000 connections or 3,000 acre-feet served. The consultants will essentially follow this guidance and other industry publications like the American Water Works Association guidance. <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Water-Use-And-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Use-Efficiency/Urban-Water-Management-Plans>

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q09

RESPONSE

What is the difference between the Urban Water Management Plan and Integrated Water Master Plan and what is the risk to us?

Both plans look at water reliability, water balance, checking demand/supply, & voluntarily account for climate change. Fundamentally, the core is the same & the level of rigorous analysis is applicable. The State requires a lot of historical data documentation & the Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) is often on the order of a 250-page plan whereas the Integrated Water Master Plan (IWMP) is often on the order of a 150-page plan. At this time, CSD is not required to prepare an Urban Water Plan in the time frame of the study or even a few years after. An agency has 12 months once 3,000 connections are reached (or 3,000 acre-feet served) to submit the UWMP per State Guidance. Once the IWMP is completed, the effort to bring it up to the urban water standard will be minimal. Prematurely completing the UWMP portions will result in having to perform re-work & more updating, given specific data inputs will be updated like annual water use in the past time period that has yet to occur, more corrections will be necessary than if the District performs this portion of the plan when the State makes the request at the appropriate time.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q10

RESPONSE

Why are we taking the cheap route on the study? Why can't we get the more detailed report before we make decisions?

The District looked at the differences in the Integrated Water Master Plan (IWMP) and the Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), and the consultants separated out what tasks would be in each plan and based on the difference in costs. The District chose to do the integrated water master plan. Once the IWMP is completed, the effort to bring it up to the urban water standard will be minimal in comparison to performing the urban water portions now. Prematurely completing the UWMP portions could potentially result in having to perform more updating and corrections than if the District performs this portion of the plan when the State makes the request as several study conditions may change in the future. (See also Q9, above)

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q11

RESPONSE

What is the difference in the cost?

There was an \$88,000 difference between the original IWMP that included the Urban Water Management Plan requirements and current IWMP without the Urban Water Management Plan requirements.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q12

RESPONSE

How many more homes will we need to provide water for?

Based on a review of likely development within Rancho Murieta's boundaries, the IWMP currently estimates additional water demands of approximately 1,198 developed lots. The District is also making a provision to consider 245 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) within the future demand forecast. More information is provided on the District Demand StoryMap: <https://www.ranchomurieta.com/integrated-water-master-plan>.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q14

RESPONSE

When we have to do the Urban Plan, it sounds like this plan could be revised and we wouldn't have to pay the full price for the new plan?

This is a correct assumption, there are some cost efficiencies when transitioning from an Integrated Water Master Plan to an Urban Water Management Plan. Much of the basic analysis would be complete, such as descriptions of sources of supply and climate change analysis will be current for a reasonable amount of time, usually 2-3 years, perhaps up to 5-year time period. Some documentation of most recent water demands would potentially need to be updated. Most of the effort to get an UWMP is completed when doing an IWMP.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q15

RESPONSE

Do we have enough water now for the proposed build out? Until we do know, should we put a hold on development until we know what we can support?

That is the purpose of the study. We do not have the authority to stop development, as we do not have the authority to approve land development at Rancho Murieta.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q16

RESPONSE

Do we know how many other entities have water rights to the water upstream?

There are 273 water rights of varying volumes and beneficial uses, which are physically located upstream of the RMCS D municipal permit diversion location. Of those there are 222 that are senior in priority (based on standard water right priority which is solely based on the filing date). The remaining 51 rights are located upstream but have a junior water right. Depending on the authorized uses of the 222 senior upstream rights, the RMCS D municipal right would likely have a priority over rights that allow for irrigation, stock watering, recreation, etc. Domestic (municipal) use is typically a higher priority than most other uses. Our Integrated Water Master Plan is based on the water right permitted accessibility of river flows at Granlees Dam. This location has historical river flow data back to 1904 that shows pumping is allowed based on enough flow in the river, with the only exception being drought year 1977.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q17

RESPONSE

It takes 2 homes to generate recycled water for 1 home. If all future lots are supposed to be watered by recycled water, how will we achieve that?

Water we currently make with our tertiary plant can be utilized as recycled water for non-potable use on residential lots, such as outdoor irrigation. There isn't enough recycled water produced to irrigate all future lots. The District will investigate ways to utilize the recycled water we have now, and in the future as new homes are built, to provide as much recycled water for irrigation as possible. The consultants will then make recommendations for capital improvements to address these needs.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q18

RESPONSE

Why are we not planning for over 3,000 lots when they are already in development?

Based on a review of likely development within Rancho Murieta's boundaries, the IWMP currently estimates additional water demands of approximately 1,198 developed lots with 245 ADU's.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q19

RESPONSE

How long is it going to take for you to complete the study?

The consultants plan to complete the study in the winter of 2023-2024. The public process will drive the timeline and the consultants need time to do their best analysis. It is an incremental schedule based on milestones. The District wants to strive to supply enough time the community to review draft work before each public engagement.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q20

RESPONSE

Have you taken into consideration how the reclaimed water system is going to be handled in the future?

The recycled water system is an important part of the “integrated” water plan. Currently the Country club and the Van Vleck Ranch are the sole recipients of recycled water. The District has a policy on utilizing recycled water where feasible for the irrigation of outside landscaping on new residential and non-residential developed lots. The integrated water master plan will address potential updates to the recycled water system.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q21

RESPONSE

What is the date you anticipate hitting the 3,000 (connection) threshold?

Our best guess is between 2-5 years from now.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q22

RESPONSE

(What) If the plan comes back and says that we don't have enough water to supply?

That is where the water augmentation portion of the plan comes in. If the plan finds that there is not enough water, then the CSD would utilize the water augmentation portion of the plan to decide from a menu of possible alternatives for augmenting the District's water supplies.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q23

RESPONSE

When August comes around and Calero starts to get down we can see areas that only have about 4 feet of water, what does it take to modify our reservoirs to hold more water?

The difficulty lies in the cost of large projects of that scale. Back in 2006/2007, the District took a look at what it would cost to increase the size of Calero and it was estimated at \$13 million to add 300 acre-ft of storage.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q24

RESPONSE

How many connections is the hotel?

There is a one meter-connection with a larger size to the hotel. One property served means one "account" but may have a few connections for redundancy and fire flow requirements. The water usage is billed by their account consumption for each metered connection.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q25

RESPONSE

Eastern section of Calero seems like there is a natural water drainage area. Is that something we account for?

Correct, the consultants account for this natural drainage. The water right allows for 100 acre-feet of water from this drainage to be stored in Calero annually.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q26

RESPONSE

Can the water plant supply the water?

Likely yes, in the future, once the District expands Treatment Plant 1. The District may also need to make some plant upgrades to pre-treatment for manganese removal to take advantage of the full treatment capacity. Currently the treatment plants are designed to produce up to a combined peak of 6 million gallons of water per day.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q27

RESPONSE

When we formulate a report can we format it to address the questions specifically?

The consultants will answer all the questions and address all key relevant scenarios and post the questions and answers on the IWMP page of the District website as we move through the planning process

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q28

RESPONSE

Will natural disasters be included in the plan?

The consultants will be utilizing natural disaster planning, in the form of addressing drought-caused water shortfall, as a part of the IWMP. The IWMP contract's scope of work does not include an update to the District's current Water Shortage Contingency Plan. It is more ideal to do that at a later date when the Urban Water Management Plan is also updated as both are to be prepared to the most current state guidance (due to be updated in 2025) and Board adopted at that time.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q29

RESPONSE

Wouldn't it have been a good idea to be more collaborative? To ensure our community can continue to grow, we need to come together to come up with a collaborative approach.

These public forums and public meetings are a big part of this collaborative process.

TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q30

RESPONSE

Are there any contingency plans?

There is a requirement for the CSD to have a water shortage contingency plan for natural disasters.

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TOWN HALL.3.18.23. Q31

RESPONSE

Can you tell us who on the CSD is going to answer the grand jury's questions?

The grand jury answers have been adopted by the Board and provided to the grand jury.