



# Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, August 24, 2021

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** INTERIM PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR DI RENZO  
WATER DIVISION MANAGER, BEAU KAYSER

**SUBJECT:** WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN – STAGE LEVEL 1  
DECLARATION

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## **STATEMENT OF ISSUES:**

On July 8, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom extended an emergency drought proclamation for nine additional counties, including Santa Cruz County. Currently, 50 of the state's 58 counties fall under this proclamation as the state is now two years into a drought that sees storage reservoirs like Lake Oroville at its lowest point since 1977; emergency curtailments on Central Valley farmers; and another raging fire season.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution declaring a Stage Level 1 Water Supply Shortage, setting up to a 10% water reduction target, via the implementation of water use practices outlined on page 4 in the Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP), included in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), both approved by City Council on June 22, 2021 meeting per Resolution No. 183-21 (CM).

## **DISCUSSION:**

California is experiencing a drought for a second consecutive year. As the footprint and severity of the drought continues to widen, on July 8, 2021, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order expanding the Drought Emergency Declaration to Santa Cruz County and calling on Californians to voluntarily reduce water use by 15% compared to 2020 consumption.

As 2020 and 2021 have been the second driest back-to-back pair of years on record, water agencies in Santa Cruz County and the state are taking measures to conserve water now, in an effort to offset further impacts on water supplies should drought conditions persist in 2022. Given that the state-wide water conservation order is voluntary, it is staff's desire to begin promoting and encouraging all water customers to practice water-wise consumption habits without imposing restrictions that are too draconian in nature. Historically, customers have been able to conserve with great success and, per the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), the stated residential use stands at 87 gallons whereas the target is 117 gallons per day per person.

Declaration of Stage 1 of the WSCP would enact the following practices:

- Expand existing efforts to promote conservation – intensify water conservation public information and outreach programs
- Allocate additional funds to water conservation staffing, rebates, and outreach programs
- Step up enforcement of landscape water use per the MWEL0 and previously approved water allowances
- Reduce potable water supplement to reused water by 25 percent

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The project is consistent with the following Strategic Plan goal:  
03 – Infrastructure & Environment

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Development of the City’s water rate structure included the potential for reduced water consumption due to drought conditions. The rate structure is designed to generate sufficient revenue to support ongoing water enterprise fund costs with reduced water use and the ongoing water conservation practices and programs that the City is implementing.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

The City Council can decide not to declare a Water Shortage Contingency Plan - Stage Level 1 or consider other stages above that being recommended.

**ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES:**

- 1) 2020 Water Shortage Contingency Plan also found on City website:  
<https://www.cityofwatsonville.org/1205/Water-Management-Plan>