



Agenda Report

March 27, 2017

TO: City Council

THROUGH: Municipal Services Committee (March 14, 2017)

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: ESTABLISH A 20% WATER CONSERVATION TARGET AND IMPLEMENT A LEVEL I WATER SUPPLY SHORTAGE PLAN AS DESCRIBED IN PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE ("PMC") TITLE 13, CHAPTER 13.10.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the action recommended herein is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15307 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of Natural Resources);
2. Adopt a water conservation target of 20% compared to Calendar Year 2013 water use; and
3. Adopt implementation of the Level 1 Water Supply Shortage measures effective April 1, 2017 by way of public proclamation (Attachment A) pursuant to Pasadena's Water Waste Prohibitions and Water Supply Shortage Plans Ordinance (PMC Chapter 13.10).

Municipal Services Committee Recommendation:

On March 14, 2017, the Municipal Services Committee approved the recommended actions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Despite recent record rainfall, California is still recovering from its record five- year drought, with 2011-2015 being the driest four years in state history. At the peak of the drought, in January 2014, California Governor Edmund Brown declared a state of emergency and by April 2015 the Governor called for a 25% mandatory water reduction

throughout the state. In 2016, as water supply conditions improved, the State Water Resources Control Board (“State Water Board”) lifted the emergency mandated water reduction target and many agencies have moved to a less restrictive water shortage level. Most recently, the State Water Board extended its existing emergency water conservation regulations (excluding agency-specific conservation targets) for 270 days, through November 2017.

Pasadena has been operating under a Level 2 Water Supply Shortage Plan since June 1, 2015. The Level 2 plan restricts watering to two days in the summer months (April – October), and one day in the winter (November – March). Pasadena Water and Power (“PWP”) customers have conserved water at unprecedented levels from June 2015 until present and maintained cumulative savings ranging from 20-23%, using 2013 as the benchmark for comparison.

Although water supply conditions have improved, groundwater basins are still depleted and history shows that droughts are a recurring feature of California’s climate. Thus, it is prudent to have an ongoing water supply shortage plan in effect at this time.

Furthermore, the potential water supply impacts of the damage to the Lake Oroville Dam spillway are not yet understood. The State also continues to maintain the emergency drought declaration, is strengthening long-term conservation planning, and continues to evolve policy that supports water use efficiency and conservation as a way of life in California.

Moving to a Level 1 Water Shortage Plan would ensure that Pasadena stays aligned with California policy and continues to build on the water conservation efforts achieved over the past several years. At the same time, a Level 1 Water Shortage Plan would align the City with neighboring agencies, most of which have moved to less restrictive water shortage levels. Under a Level 1 Water Shortage Plan, watering would be restricted to three days per week in the summer and one day per week during winter months. It is estimated that a Level 1 Water Shortage Plan will maintain current conservation levels and support achieving the state’s 20 percent by 2020 water conservation target as mandated by Senate Bill X7-7 (“SB X7-7”).

BACKGROUND:

On July 28, 2014, the City Council made a determination that a water shortage exists, adopted a 20 percent water conservation target compared to calendar year 2013, and adopted the Level 1 Water Supply Shortage Plan pursuant to PMC 13.10.035. As drought conditions worsened, the City Council adopted the Level 2 Water Supply Shortage Plan on June 1, 2015, a 28 percent water conservation target as mandated by the State Water Board, and additional mandatory conservation measures.

Implementation of these measures resulted in a nearly 21 percent decrease in water usage from June 1, 2015 through May 2016 as compared to calendar year 2013.

At the State level, Governor Brown has maintained the drought state of emergency, which he declared on January 17th, 2014, and on February 8, 2017 the State Water

Board re-adopted and extended the existing emergency drought regulations. This maintains specific prohibitions against wasteful water use practices, and continues the existing required monthly reporting of water use. The State Water Board also released a draft plan in November 2016, which provides the implementation framework for Executive Order B-37-16, which calls for "Making Conservation a California Way of Life", and provides guidance for urban water suppliers to adopt conservation standards to move towards using water more efficiently on a permanent basis.

Over the last year, rainfall has improved reservoir storage and water supply conditions; however, many areas in California continue to experience the effects of the drought, with some areas, such the central coast's Tulare Basin, still experiencing water supply shortfalls. Groundwater levels also remains significantly depleted in many areas of the state. Furthermore, water imports from Northern California are continuously at risk due to perennial drought, pumping restrictions, environmental concerns, levee failure, seawater intrusion, climate change, and numerous other threats to the Sacramento Bay Delta.

Mandatory Water Conservation Targets and Supply Constraints Lifted

The Metropolitan Water District ("MWD"), which supplies about 60 percent of PWP's water needs, has terminated its Water Supply Allocation Plan that requires member agencies to reduce water purchases. Based on current supply conditions, MWD anticipates being able to meet all of its member agency water purchase demands for the next three years.

The State Water Board has also modified its emergency water conservation regulations to eliminate mandatory water conservation targets in favor of regulations that provide a greater degree of local control for individual water agencies. Based on Pasadena's application of its new "Reliability Stress Test" formula, the minimum conservation target for Pasadena has been reduced to zero.

Recommended Water Conservation Target

Despite the recent improvements in water supply and termination of mandatory conservation goals, it is prudent and appropriate for Pasadena to continue aggressive conservation efforts under the Pasadena Water Waste Prohibitions and Water Supply Shortage Plans Ordinance to help ensure both short-term and long-term water supply reliability.

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a 20 percent water conservation target pursuant to PMC 13.10.035. The savings would be measured relative to calendar year 2013 water demand. This would maintain water conservation near current levels and continues to position Pasadena for compliance with California's statutory "20x2020" conservation requirements set forth in SB X7-7. The 20 percent water conservation goal recommended herein is not intended to be reportable or enforceable under the State Water Board's emergency regulations.

Level 1 Water Shortage Plan Recommendation

At this time, staff recommends a moderate easing of irrigation restrictions by adopting the Level 1 Water Supply Shortage effective April 1, 2017. The Level 1 Water Supply Shortage (PMC 13.10.040) restricts outdoor watering to three days per week from April 1 to October 31, whereas the current Level 2 plan only allows two days per week during this period. Both Level 1 and Level 2 limit watering to one day per week from November to March. The Level 1 plan, unlike Level 2, allows filling or re-filling ornamental lakes or ponds.

Under the proposed Level 1 Water Supply Shortage, the following schedule for watering or irrigating lawns would apply to all residential and most non-residential customers:

- Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays between April 1 and October 31; and
- Saturday only between November 1 and March 31.

PWP will continue to provide exemptions for irrigating trees and new water-efficient landscape, as well as flexibility in which days customers with large irrigation areas and active playing fields choose to water, provided they do not exceed weekly limitations.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed actions are consistent with the Water Integrated Resource Plan, the 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, the Urban Environmental Accords Goal to reduce potable water use, and the City Council Strategic Planning Goals to increase conservation and sustainability.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project has been determined to be exempt per Section 15307 of the CEQA Guidelines, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources. This exemption consists of actions by regulatory agencies as authorized by state law or local ordinance to assure the maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource (such as water) where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the resource. Establishing a 20% Water Conservation Target and implementing a Level I Water Supply Shortage are actions by the City of Pasadena's Department of Water and Power to protect and maintain water resources.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The cost of this action will be \$30,000 for outreach costs to ensure community awareness of moving to a Level 1 Water Shortage Plan. Funding for this action will be addressed by the utilization of existing budgeted appropriations in the Water Operating Fund (402) Outside Printing and Duplicating Expense account string 41207820-811000. It is anticipated that \$20,000 of the cost will be spent during the current fiscal year. The remainder of the costs will be spent over the next fiscal year. The actions are not expected to substantially change water sales or administrative costs associated with water conservation and waste enforcement activities. The anticipated impact to other operational programs or capital projects as a result of this action will be none.

Respectfully submitted,



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Approved by:



Steve Mermell
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Attachments

Attachment A - Proclamation