

TO: James L. App, City Manager
FROM: Doug Monn, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Local Groundwater Assistance Grant for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management and Monitoring Program
DATE: December 18, 2007

NEEDS: For the City Council to consider authorizing application for a California Dept. of Water Resources Local Groundwater Assistance Grant to provide a funding source for a joint undertaking with the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District. Funds would be used to prepare a Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management and Monitoring Program.

FACTS:

1. The City currently draws all of its water supply from the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (Basin) and the Salinas River underflow and will continue to draw a significant amount of its water supply from wells once deliveries from Lake Nacimiento commence.
2. Water resource reports prepared over the past five years indicated that demands across the Basin are approaching its estimated sustainable yield. At the historic rate of pumping, this balance point may be reached as early as 2010.
3. Notable water level declines are occurring east of the City along the Highway 46 corridor, evidence of localized stress on the Basin.
4. The opportunity exists to take steps to keep the Basin in a state of balance such that a regional overdraft condition can be avoided. Identification of just what those steps may entail would be performed through a proposed Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management and Monitoring Program.
5. A total of \$6.4 million in grant funds are available through the State of California Department of Water Resources Local Groundwater Assistance Program for fiscal year 2007-08. Preparation of the proposed Groundwater Management and Monitoring Program is an eligible activity under the grant guidelines.

ANALYSIS &

CONCLUSION: The Local Groundwater Assistance Program presents a potential funding source for the Groundwater Management and Monitoring Program. The Program would entail:

- Building on the existing organization of local water purveyors, agricultural interests, and stakeholders to develop a regional understanding of the groundwater management opportunities in the Basin.
- Formulating groundwater management components
- Identifying projects and programs to improve long-term water supply reliability throughout the Basin.
- Establishing a regional organization that is recognized by other local, state, and federal agencies and that can successfully pursue grant funding for groundwater management projects

Since the Basin itself extends well beyond the City limits and since other users, especially agricultural, use the majority of available supplies, the City would partner with the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District in this effort. If successful, the City would act as lead agency in administering grant funds and execute a memorandum of agreement with the Flood Control District delineating each agency's roles.

Much of the City's water resource planning to date is aimed at sustainability as well as recognition of the long-term consequences of water management within the City limits. Applying for the Local Groundwater Assistance Program grant monies would place the City in a leadership position in the proposed management planning, ensuring that appropriate weight be given to both roles as a groundwater user and Basin discharger.

Other stakeholders throughout the Basin share an interest in proceeding with the proposed management plan. For example, the County Board of Supervisors authorized the Director of Public Works to author a letter of support at their December 4th meeting. The Shandon Area Advisory Committee will be considering a letter of support at their December 6th meeting. Templeton and San Miguel Community Services Districts and the Farm Bureau are similarly considering letters of support; and the Water Resource Advisory Committee is considering the issue at their December 5th meeting.

Considering the importance of maintaining a healthy groundwater supply to the City and to the region, and considering the opportunity for the City to play a leadership role in preparation of a basin management plan, staff recommends that the City apply for the State of California Department of Water Resources Local Groundwater Assistance Program for fiscal year 2007-08.

POLICY

REFERENCE: Integrated Water Resource Management Plan

FISCAL IMPACT: The estimated value of the grant application is \$215,000 but in any case will be capped at \$250,000 which is the limit set forth by the State for this program. This value includes estimated City and Flood Control District staff time to administer and grant and manage the project as well as consultant fees to assist with authoring the management plan.

It is envisioned that all costs associated with the City's participation in the effort would be covered by the grant.

- OPTIONS:**
- a. Adopt Resolution No. 07-xx authorizing and directing the Director of Public Works to prepare the necessary data, make investigations, execute, and file such application and execute a grant agreement with California Department of Water Resources.
 - b. Amend, modify, or reject the above option.

Prepared by: Christine Halley, Water & Utility Consultant,
TJ Cross Engineers, Inc.

Attachments (1)
1) Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 07-XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES
TO APPLY TO THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES TO OBTAIN A
LOCAL GROUNDWATER ASSISTANCE GRANT
FOR THE
PASO ROBLES GROUNDWATER BASIN
MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the State of California has established a Local Groundwater Assistance grant program pursuant to the Local Groundwater Management Assistance Act of 2000 (California Water Code Section 10795 et seq.) (Also known as Assembly Bill 303); and

WHEREAS, the Director of Public Works is especially suited to ensure that grant application materials related to groundwater projects are prepared in a complete, efficient, and adequate manner; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Public Works has the authority to ensure that projects are carried out in full compliance with the applicable permits and agreements;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1 the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles orders that application be made to the California Department of Water Resources to obtain a Local Groundwater Assistance Grant pursuant to the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Water Code Section 79560 et seq.), and to enter into an agreement to receive a grant for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Management and Monitoring Program.

SECTION 2 the Director of Public Works of the City of El Paso de Robles is hereby authorized and directed to prepare the necessary data, make investigations, execute, and file such application and execute a grant agreement with California Department of Water Resources.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Paso Robles this 18th day of December 2007 by the following votes:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Frank R. Mecham, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deborah D. Robinson, Deputy City Clerk