

Overview



State Limits Water Use

State Board Order Impacts Water Supplies in 1999

1999 was another one of the relatively wet and cool years that made the 1990s one of the wettest decades recorded. As a result, the greatest factor limiting the water supply was not drought, but the State Water Resources Control Board Order 95-10 that requires California-American Water Company (Cal-Am) to cut back its historical water production from the Carmel River by 20 percent in the near term and up to 75 percent in the long term. The cutbacks were ordered because Cal-Am does not hold a valid right to the water and because the excess pumping was harming the Carmel River environment.

Legal Challenge to State Water Limits Heard In Superior Court

Following issuance of Order 95-10, the District requested relief for the community both administratively and through the courts. In December 1999, the Monterey County Superior Court upheld the 20 percent reduction in water use specified in the State Order.

Developed Major New Conservation Plan

Because Cal-Am serves 95 percent of the residents within the District boundaries, the Water Management District focused its efforts on improving water conservation programs to assist the community in meeting the requirements of State Order 95-10. At the same time, the District continues to work on development of water supply augmentation proposals that the community will support.

Environmental Protection

Implemented Comprehensive Mitigation Program

In order to protect Carmel River habitat and threatened species such as the California red-legged frog and steelhead trout, the District monitors streamflow and its effects on fish and wildlife habitat. Groundwater levels in the Seaside and Carmel River basins are also measured regularly. The District performs fish rescues, constructs erosion protection projects and plants vegetation in degraded areas. These activities help preserve and protect the Carmel River environment.

Water Supplies Limited

No New Supplies Currently Available

At the end of 1999, approximately 42 acre-feet of water remained for new construction and remodel projects within the Cal-Am service area. Most of that water had been set aside by the jurisdictions for projects that are awaiting final planning department approval. Presently, no new water source is available to serve Cal-Am customers within the District.