

ASR Starts Up During Heavy Rains

Heavy winter rains increased Carmel River flows to high enough levels that the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project (ASR) could start up again. The project captures excess river water, pumps it underground in the Seaside area and stores it there for later use.

The first week in February, ASR captured about 3.6 million gallons of water per day. That is enough water stored underground each day to serve 40 homes for an entire year. Between January 1 and February 4, 2016, ASR injected over 75 million gallons or over 230 acre-feet of water.

The ASR project can collect water from the Carmel river through May, as long as there is enough water in the river for fish and other wildlife.

"ASR is a critical component of our area's water supply solution," said David Stoldt, General Manager of the Water Management District. "By capturing these excess flows, we are helping to comply with the State's Cease and Desist Order.

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District staff Tom Lindberg and Jon Lear preparing the ASR site for operation. The first week in February, enough water was stored underground daily by the ASR Project to serve 40 homes for a year.

The mission of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District is to promote or provide for long-term sustainable water supply, and to manage and protect water resources for the benefit of the community and the environment.

Hazards Removed from River Channel

There is an ongoing need to reduce the potential for erosion on the banks of the Carmel River. The Water Management District has worked to protect the riverbanks since 1990 with the Vegetation Management Program. District staff are on the lookout for threats to the riverbanks. Hazards such as large trees that fall across the river or patches of thick vegetation growing in the riverbed can cause erosion by forcing high flows against streambanks.

The District is not a flood control agency. However, actions taken to protect streambanks can help to keep the river in its channel and reduce damage to nearby houses, roads and bridges from high flows. Staff remove or cutback vegetation by hand with chainsaws, and take tires, trash, plastic, car parts, construction debris, and other unwanted items out of the river in an effort to prevent erosion and preserve good water quality.

The Carmel River is home for two threatened species, the steelhead fish and California red-legged frog. Federal, state, and local agencies must approve any plan for removal of vegetation, in order to provide a safe environment for the fish and frogs. The process to obtain permission for vegetation removal is long and detailed. If live trees must be removed, the District is required to plant new trees in another area and monitor their growth for five years.

Downed trees and blockages in the river channel can be a problem during high flows, but plants and trees growing on the river banks helps protect property from erosion.

The District constantly strives to strike a balance between vegetation that protects property and vegetation that poses a hazard.



District field crew prepares to remove a large tree that has fallen across the river. The tree creates a hazard that can cause erosion by forcing river flows against streambanks.



Carmel River Lagoon -- District staff monitor water level and temperature to assess conditions for migrating steelhead fish.



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Pure Water Monterey Could be Approved in July or August

Support for the Pure Water Monterey project is on the rise as the date for project approval approaches. In January, the Water Management District filed testimony with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in support of project approval. The Chairman of the State Water Resources Control Board also issued a strong letter of endorsement. The PUC could approve the project in July or August 2016.

Pure Water Monterey will deliver over 3,500 acre-feet per year of highly purified drinking water for storage underground in the Seaside Basin. California-American Water will then distribute the water to residents and businesses on the Monterey Peninsula. Using scientifically verified technology, the source water will undergo a four-step advanced water purification process, creating a safe and sustainable supply of purified water.

Visitors to the Pure Water Monterey demonstration facility can view the purification process and sample the water. State Senator William Monning and Assembly member Mark Stone toured the facility in January. Many other elected officials and key regulatory agency who toured the facility were impressed with the project's benefits.

Pure Water Monterey will reduce discharges of treated wastewater into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and result in lower carbon emissions and energy consumption than a larger desalination plant. The Final Environmental Impact is certified, and no legal challenges have been filed. The \$73 million project could deliver water by the end of 2017.



Local officials sample the water produced at the Pure Water Monterey demonstration facility. The proposed project will provide a safe and sustainable supply of over 3,500 acre-feet of purified water per year.

Tune Up Your Irrigation Systems

Warm weather can mean outdoor watering. Everyone with an automatic irrigation system should install a rain sensor that will shut off the system when it rains. It also helps you comply with the state law that prohibits watering during and for 48 hours after measurable rainfall.

Twice a year when you reset your clocks, replace the battery in your irrigation controller. Automatic irrigation systems often have battery back-ups for the controller. When the power goes out, the battery takes over. Dead batteries may cause the system to reset to its factory settings, running at odd times/days and costing you money. Watering on the Monterey Peninsula is only allowed on Wednesdays and Saturdays before 9 a.m. or after 5 p.m.

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While last year's yield was the lowest we'd seen in 4 years, December was huge and we are continuing to see the daily injection of double digit acre-foot totals."

The project is a partnership between the District, which owns two ASR wells, and California American



Replace the battery in the controller of your automatic irrigation systems. If the power goes out, the battery will take over and the system will run well in dry or wet weather.

Water Company that delivers the Carmel River water to wells located along General Jim Moore Boulevard in Seaside. Since testing began in 1998, the ASR program has injected a total of 5,207 acre-feet of water into the Seaside Basin.