

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**FROM:** Supervisors John Benoit and Marion Ashley

**SUBMITTAL DATE:** April 18, 2014

**SUBJECT:** California Drought Status Update

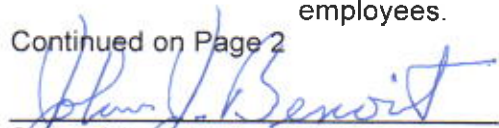
**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** To Direct the Executive Office to:

1. Facilitate and participate in discussions among local stakeholders, county departments, water purveyors, WRCOG/CVAG and the Water Task Force; and
2. Evaluate current best practices in water-use efficiency, particularly those of large governments in similar desert areas such as Las Vegas and Phoenix, to develop future recommendations for the Board to consider;

**BACKGROUND:** Persistent multiple years of minimal rainfall have resulted in extremely dry conditions throughout the state, including Riverside County. The current rain year (2013/14) is proving to be one of the driest on record. The Department of Water Resources recently reported that the latest snowpack measurements statewide are 33% of normal. Because of the persistently dry conditions, Governor Brown declared a Drought State of Emergency on January 17, 2014, which, among other items, called for a statewide voluntary water use reduction of 20%, authorized hiring of additional firefighters, and authorized accelerated funding for water supply enhancement projects. Previous similar drought cycles caused a similar call for action by the Board of Supervisors, which promulgated the following progressive board policies and ordinances as they relate to water-use efficiency:

- 1/18/2007: Ordinance 859, Water Efficient Landscape Requirements
  - *Purpose:* to promote water-efficient landscaping, water use management, and water conservation through the use of water-efficient landscaping, wise use of turf areas, and appropriate use of irrigation technology and management
- 2/10/2009: Board Policy H-29, Sustainable Building Policy (for County CIP projects)
  - *Purpose:* to establish the use of sustainable building practices in the design of CIPs in order to reduce pollution, protect natural resources, enhance asset value, optimize building performance, and create healthier workplaces for county employees.

Continued on Page 2

  
Supervisor John J. Benoit  
Fourth Supervisorial District

  
Supervisor Marion Ashley  
Fifth Supervisorial District

Prev. Agn. ref.

Dist. ALL

AGENDA NO.

**3-80**

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**Subject:** California Drought Status Update

**Date:** April 18, 2014

**Page 2**

**BACKGROUND CONTINUED:**

- 10/20/2009: Board Policy H-25, Water Efficient Landscape Policy for County Owned or Maintained Facilities
  - *Purpose:* to establish provisions for designing, installing, and maintaining water efficient landscapes for County owned or maintained facilities.

Subsequent to the drought declaration, the governor and legislature recently passed SB 103 and SB 104. These two bills provide \$687 million to support drought relief through accelerated bond fund distribution for capturing storm water for reuse or groundwater storage, grant funds for local agencies to improve water-use efficiency, and expanding funding for conservation activities related to reducing fuel loads to prevent catastrophic fires. It is therefore pertinent that the County works collectively with the necessary stakeholders to ensure that its current best practices (e.g., ordinances, board policies, etc.) are up to date given California's new drought environment. Additionally, opportunities to leverage grant resources allocated by the state should be pursued to the maximum extent possible for the benefit and protection of the County and its residents.