



MONTEREY PENINSULA

**WATER SUPPLY  
PROJECT**

**NEWSLETTER**

**2020/Q3**

# PROJECT CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD



## **ALSO INSIDE**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION  
PROJECT UPDATE**

# DESALINATION PROJECT CONTINUES

**C**alifornia American Water resubmitted its application for the Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project to the California Coastal Commission. The resubmission came roughly a month after the company withdrew its application, prior to the Commission hearing that had been scheduled on the project in September. "Our withdrawal was made as we attempt to address some of the issues we had heard from Commissioners, staff and stakeholders," said VP of Engineering Ian Crooks. "We've taken the intervening time to reach out to the City of Marina to see if it's possible to resolve their concerns as well as to further examine options for our low income customers who will be served by the project."

A week after withdrawing its application, California American Water sent a letter to the City of Marina offering several major options to modify the project in response to objections raised by stakeholders in the Marina community. These included options to purchase water from the project, own infrastructure, enter into a franchise agreement and perform mitigation and restoration work at the proposed project well site, above and beyond what is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. The City responded with a letter indicating these options were insufficient but stating they would nevertheless be willing to talk.

"Our project provides major benefits to the region as a whole, including the City of Marina," said Crooks. "Not least among them is that our wells will act as a protective barrier against seawater intrusion, assist in restoration of the Cemex

property and offer reliable potable water supply options to residents

We remain open to working with the City and maintain our project will help to address regional inequities in housing and economic opportunities that effect the entire region."

Once the Commission deems California American Water's renewed application complete, the Commission will have 180 days to make a decision on the project.

"We hope for a hearing as soon as possible," said Crooks. "Time is of the essence given the pending restrictions on pumping from the Carmel River." California American Water informed the State Water Resources Control Board it would not meet the 2020 desal project construction milestone required by the Board's Cease and Desist Order after the Coastal Commission postponed a vote on the project in November 2019. Recently, the company sent another letter to the Water Board acknowledging the missed milestone and the accompanying diversion reduction imposed by the CDO, as well as the company's understanding that a discretionary waiver of that reduction from the Board was unlikely. Nevertheless, the company expressed the need for continuing discussions regarding the 2021 milestone and final cutback scheduled for December 31, 2021.

"We need to ensure the Board understands we are still working diligently to develop a permanent replacement supply for the community and to protect the river. The desal project remains the only viable option that can solve the issues long term, which is what the Cease and Desist Order requires," said Crooks.



An aerial photograph of a research vessel, likely the R/V Albatross, sailing on a dark blue ocean. The vessel is white with a blue hull and has several people visible on deck. In the lower half of the image, two large whales are visible, swimming parallel to each other. The text "Our project provides major benefits to the region as a whole" is overlaid in a pink font in the center of the image.

“Our project provides  
major benefits to the  
region as a whole”

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Monterey Peninsula is facing a severe water supply problem. That's because the State Water Resources Control Board has ordered California American Water to significantly reduce its pumping of water from the Carmel River.

This order coupled with pumping restrictions in other parts of the county means that nearly 70 percent of the Monterey Peninsula community's historic water supply must be replaced.

The current project is comprised of three elements:

- [Desalination](#)
- [Aquifer Storage and Recovery](#)
- [Pure Water Monterey: A Groundwater Replenishment Project](#)

This multi-faceted approach brings numerous advantages over a single-source solution. For one, it will enable California American Water to build a smaller desalination plant that will reduce the project's environmental footprint.

Secondly, this strategy will build-in redundancy that is critical for all municipal water supply systems, allowing the water system to continue to provide water if one component becomes temporarily unavailable.

## DESALINATION

The Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project consists of sub-surface slant intake wells, a desalination plant, and related facilities including source water pipelines, product water pipelines and brine disposal facilities.

The desalination plant will produce 6,250 acre-feet of treated water per year. One acre-foot is

equal to one acre filled with one foot of water, which is typically enough water to support four households on the Monterey Peninsula for a year. California American Water purchased a 46-acre parcel of land located off of Charles Benson Road in unincorporated Monterey County as the site for the proposed desalination plant.

California American Water has also purchased permanent easements near the coastline in the North Marina area to host its slant intake wells. California American Water's project will use a series of slant wells designed to draw ocean water.

The slant wells will be up to 800 feet long. The final location, layout and configuration will be based on the results of the slant test well and groundwater modeling work. In addition to the plant and its intake wells, other pipeline, storage and pump facilities will need to be constructed to ultimately deliver water to customers.

## PURE WATER MONTEREY

The proposed Pure Water Monterey project, a partnership between Monterey One Water and the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, recycles wastewater through an advanced treatment process. The resulting highly purified drinking water will be injected into the Seaside groundwater basin.

A new, advanced water treatment plant will be constructed for the project in addition to a number of supporting facilities. Source water for this project will go through a three-step treatment and purification process of microfiltration, reverse osmosis and oxidation with ultraviolet light and hydrogen peroxide — all commonly used in numerous industries and food manufacturing.



## AQUIFER STORAGE AND RECOVERY

California American Water will expand its current ASR project – a partnership with the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District – which captures excess winter flows from the Carmel River for storage in the Seaside Aquifer and withdrawal during the dry, summer months. Winter flows are considered excess only when they exceed what is needed to protect the river's threatened population of steelhead.

For the Monterey Peninsula Water Supply Project, the company plans to construct two additional ASR wells that will increase capacity of the program and allow the desalination plant to be smaller than would be needed without the wells.

## BUDGET\*

Subsurface Intake System: \$80M  
(36% spent to date)

Desalination Plant: \$132M  
(44% spent to date)

Pipeline Facilities: \$67M  
(40% spent to date)

Pipeline/Pump Station: \$50M  
(100% spent to date)

\*NOTE: These figures are based on a 6.4 MGD desalination facility. These figures include some contingency costs and therefore differ from the capital costs listed in the settlement.



Future editions of this newsletter will contain information on project expenditures, construction progress and milestones. Once collection begins for the Construction Funding Charge (or Surcharge 2), amounts collected by the charge will also be reported. Progress regarding slant well construction and information regarding slant well monitoring data will also be reported in future editions, as well as estimates as to the return water obligation and actual return water obligation calculated.