

Opportunity

# Southwest Florida Water Management District

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The Honorable Jeff Atwater President. The Florida Senate 312 Senate Office Building 404 S. Monroe Street Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

The Honorable Larry Cretul Speaker, The Florida House of Representatives 420 The Capitol 402 S. Monroe Street Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

The Honorable Arthenia L. Joyner, Chair Joint Administrative Procedures Committee Room 120, Holland Building Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Senator Atwater, Representative Cretul and Senator Joyner:

Pursuant to Subsection 120.74(2), Florida Statutes, attached is the Biennial Report of the Southwest Florida Water Management District for the reporting period of 2007 – 2009. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (352) 796-7211, extension 4661.

Sincerely,

General Counsel

WSB/mam

Senator Lee Constantine, Chair, Senate Committee on CC:

**Environmental Preservation and Conservation** 

Representative Trudi K. Williams, Chair, House Agriculture & Natural

Resources Committee

### Report by the

Southwest Florida Water Management District to the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Joint Administrative Procedures Committee in Compliance with Section 120.74, Florida Statutes

The Southwest Florida Water Management District ("District") submits this biennial report and hereby certifies that the District has complied with the requirements of Section 120.74, Florida Statutes ("F.S."), and has completed a review of its rules pursuant to this section.

In the past two years, the District has amended, repealed or initiated rulemaking to amend or repeal provisions of Chapter 40D, Florida Administrative Code ("F.A.C."), as described in further detail in the attached summary.

The District will continue its efforts to identify rules that require amendment, repeal, correction, clarification or updating. The District is involved in a number of activities to coordinate its efforts with other water management districts, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP"), and other governmental entities to promote efficiency, reduce paperwork, and decrease costs to the government and the private sector.

The District has identified some statutory changes that will promote efficiency, reduce paperwork or decrease costs to government and the private sector, which are described in the attached summary.

The District has identified no cases or disputes in which the agency is involved which should be conducted under the summary hearing process described in Section 120.574,

F.S.

By:

Todd Pressman, Governing Board Chairman

Attest:

Hugh MJ Gramling, Governing Board Secretary

## 2009 Section 120.74, F.S. Report Summary

#### **Biennial Rule Review**

As required by Section 120.74, F.S., the District has completed its biennial review of agency rules to identify and correct deficiencies in its rules, clarify and simplify its rules, delete obsolete or unnecessary rules, delete rules that are redundant of statutes and seek to improve efficiency, reduce paperwork and decrease costs to government and the private sector. The District has undertaken rulemaking in conformance with its review. Since October 1, 2007, the District was involved in rulemaking or proposes rulemaking to:

### a) Identify and correct deficiencies in its rules, specifically including:

Amendment of the District's Water Use Permit Information Manual, Part B, Basis of Review for Water Use Permit Applications (WUP BOR), and Part D, Requirements for the Estimation of Permanent and Temporal Service Area Populations, incorporated by reference in Rule 40D-2.091,F.A.C., to expand District-wide a standard per capita water use requirement and related water use conservation and reporting requirements for all public supply permittees, previously applicable only in the Southern Water Use Caution Area and Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area. A statement of estimated regulatory costs was prepared that demonstrated most public supply water use permittees are not small businesses, but there are some private utilities that are small businesses and some small cities and counties affected by the amendments. These permittees may experience some additional costs for implementing water conservation measures, which may be offset when development of future additional water supply resources are necessary to meet growing demands.

Amendment of Rule 40D-2.091, F.A.C., to adopt standardized testing and reporting requirements for water withdrawal facility flow meters that are required for District water use permits. A new flow meter accuracy test form for submitting the required information is also incorporated by reference. The amendments allow alternative methods to demonstrate compliance with the meter accuracy requirements for existing systems that would have to be retrofitted in order to allow for the specified testing, which will be of benefit to small businesses.

Amendment of Rules 40D-2.302 and 40D-80.211, F.A.C., to establish a reservation of water from the Morris Bridge Sink not to exceed 3.9 million gallons of water on any given day to be used to contribute to achieving or maintaining the Minimum Flows for the Lower Hillsborough River. Minimum flows established for the Lower Hillsborough River will be achieved by October 1, 2017 through various recovery projects undertaken by the City of Tampa and the District. The projects will augment the flows at the base of the Hillsborough River dam and include using water from Sulphur Springs, Blue Sink, the Tampa Bypass Canal and Morris Bridge Sink. Projects are subject to feasibility

analyses and, if implemented, monitoring to determine the effects on the river and river flow.

Amendment of the District's Environmental Resource Permit Basis of Review (ERP BOR), incorporated by reference in Rule 40D-4.091, F.A.C., to address the requirements for homeowners' association, property owners' association or master association documents when such an organization becomes the surface water system operation and maintenance entity. A new Section K of the Joint Application For Environmental Resource Permit/Authorization to use State Owned Submerged Lands/Federal Dredge and Fill Permit, Form 547.27/ERP is adopted in Rule 40D-1.659, F.A.C., which requires applicants to identify the location within the required association documents of language that ensures compliance with the requirements of Section 2.6.2 of the BOR. The amendments facilitate agency review of applications and help reduce staff review time, as well as serve as a checkpoint for applicants to ensure that affected applications are complete and meet all conditions for issuance. This could benefit permit applicants, including any small business applicants, by reducing the time it takes to obtain a permit.

Amendment of Rule 40D-4.091, F.A.C., and the District's ERP BOR, to allow a mitigation banker to request that the District require additional signatories, such as the representative of a financial institution providing funding for the mitigation bank, in order to authorize the withdrawal of mitigation credits. This change is not anticipated to have any impacts on small business.

Amendment of Rules 40D-2.091 and 2.801, F.A.C., to correct the legal description of the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area (NTBWUCA) and to delete an unnecessary sentence describing the NTBWUCA. This change is not anticipated to have any impacts on small business permittees or applicants:

Proposed amendments to Chapter 40D-2, F.A.C., and the WUP BOR to implement enhanced water conservation requirements in the water use permitting program. Specific conservation measures and reporting forms for each type of water use have been developed and will be implemented District-wide. This rulemaking is ongoing and a statement of estimated regulatory costs is being prepared. It is anticipated that any increased costs to businesses implementing conservation measures will be balanced in part by decreased water utility costs. Utilities that incur additional costs for implementing water conservation measures now may realize cost savings when additional water resources must be developed in the future to meet growing demands.

### b) Clarify and simplify its rules, specifically including:

Amendment of Rules 40D-1.603, 2.091, 2.361, F.A.C., and the WUP BOR, to clarify requirements for permit applications and to clarify when an application to renew a permit must be received by the District in order to avoid having a permit expire. This amendment assists permittees including small businesses in ensuring that existing permits do not expire before they are renewed, thus preserving the water use as an existing legal use and avoiding additional costs for applying for a new permit.

Amendment of Rules 40D-2.091, 2.101 and 2.351, F.A.C., to assist applicants for water use permits by referring to the District rule in which the list of available permit application forms can be found and to explain which application and supplemental form to use when applying for a water use permit for water withdrawals within the Southern Water Use Caution Area ("SWUCA"). This rulemaking simplifies permitting requirements and helps ensure applicants, particularly those who do not rely on consultants, use the proper forms.

Amendment of the WUP BOR, incorporated by reference in Rule 40D-2.091, F.A.C., to conform the standard permit condition regarding transfer of land and withdrawal facilities to a rule change that was completed in 2005. Amendments also combine and clarify certain permit special conditions.

Amendment of Rule 40D-2.091, F.A.C., and the District's WUP BOR, to reduce the documentation required to be submitted in support of renewal and modification applications for water use permits authorizing withdrawals of less than 100,000 gallons per day on an annual average basis. Most permits of this size are issued to small businesses, particularly small agricultural operations, and the amendments will benefit a significant number of such applicants and permittees.

Amendment of Rules 40D-2.091, 2.381 and 2.401, F.A.C., to eliminate the requirement to attach identification tags to all wells from which water is withdrawn under a WUP. Well tags are now only required if the withdrawal facility is metered and withdrawal quantities reported to the District. This amendment benefits small agricultural operations that use less than 100,000 gallons per day by no longer requiring them to attach or maintain permanent identification tags to their wells.

Amendment of Rules 40D-1.603, 2.091 and 2.101, F.A.C., and the WUP BOR, to eliminate the requirement for water use permit applicants to submit with their applications the names and addresses of all property owners located near the proposed water use, and to eliminate sending notices of application receipt and agency action to such property owners. This rulemaking will reduce permitting costs for all water use permit applicants, including small businesses and governments, as well as reduce District costs.

Amendment of Rules 40D-2.021, 2.041, 2.091, 2.321, 2.501 and 2.621, F.A.C., to establish formally the category of "small general" water use permits and to limit this permit category to those water uses that are anticipated to have no adverse impact upon the water resources. Amendments also reduce permit application information requirements and eliminate compliance information submittal requirements for small general permittees. This rulemaking benefits those small businesses that will continue to be small general water use permittees or applicants, and cause some increases in regulatory costs to other permittees and applicants including some small businesses, that will now be placed in the category of general as opposed to small general permits. A statement of estimated regulatory costs was prepared to document these costs. Some individuals and small businesses will incur additional costs in terms of application

fees (an increase in application fees of \$200 for new applications and \$50 for modification or renewal of existing permits) and some will incur additional costs for compliance monitoring, particularly small mining businesses, which are elevated to general permits and thus are now required to meter and report water withdrawals. General permittees are also required to investigate the feasibility of using reclaim or other alternative water supply and to make use of such water supply if feasible, which could result in additional costs.

Amendment of Rules 40D-3.021, 3.037, 3.038, 3.101, 3.301 and 3.411, F.A.C., to make minor corrections to water well construction permitting rules and incorporate related amendments recently adopted by the Department of Environmental Protection for water well construction. This rulemaking is not anticipated to have any impacts to small businesses.

Amendment of Rules 40D-4.041 and 4.101, F.A.C., to clarify application review requirements for ERP applications that involve a proprietary authorization for activities located on sovereignty submerged lands. This rulemaking is not anticipated to have any impacts to small businesses.

Amendment of Rule 40D-4.101, F.A.C., to list correctly the agencies that the District notices and requests comments from when reviewing an individual ERP application involving activities located in, on, or over wetlands or other surface waters. This rulemaking is not anticipated to have any impacts to small businesses.

Amendment of Rules 40D-4.021, 4.041, and 4.051, F.A.C., to clarify when an ERP is required by removing the distinction between a "surface water management system" and a "new surface water management system," to create new permitting exemptions for operation of systems constructed prior to October 1, 1984 or constructed under a previous exemption, and to clarify that an ERP is required for activities that result in an increase or decrease in system discharge. This rulemaking clarifies rules in accordance with existing District practices and has no impact to small business.

Amendment of Rules 40D-4.051 and 4.091, F.A.C., and the ERP BOR, to add new permitting exemptions for certain safety-related roadway projects that pose minimal concerns for adverse impacts. Exempt activities now include: sidewalks six feet or less in width constructed along roadways and which do not obstruct or impound surface waters; turnlanes less than 0.25 mile in length and other intersection improvements; road widening and shoulder paving projects which do not create additional traffic lanes; and recreational paths for nonmotorized vehicles located along roadways and limited to eight feet in width for unidirectional paths or 12 feet in width for bidirectional paths. The rule amendments primarily concern improvements to public roads and are not expected to have impacts to small business.

Amendment of various rules in Chapters 40D-1, 40D-2, 40D-4 and 40D-40, F.A.C., to revise and update the District's noticing requirements and procedures for permit applications and permit issuance. Noticing rules are revised to be more efficient and to allow greater use of technological advances in communication such as the internet and

electronic mail. This rulemaking reduces District costs in processing permit applications. Greater reliance on internet noticing and information will benefit all permit applicants and businesses. Permittees seeking individual permits will incur some additional permit advertising costs, but these permits involve larger projects that typically are not small businesses.

Amendment of Rules 40D-1.603, 1.605, 1.6051, and 1.659, F.A.C., to revise and update permit application processing timeframes, make District permit application processing more consistent with other water management districts and to consolidate permit process-related rules within Part VI of Chapter 40D-1, F.A.C. The amendments allow applicants up to 90 days to respond to District requests for additional information, adopt a new form to be used when submitting information to complete an application and establish a process for staff denials of incomplete applications. This rulemaking does not increase permitting costs and may result in cost savings to large and small businesses by decreasing the time it takes to obtain a permit, thereby allowing construction to begin sooner.

Amendment of various rules in Chapters 40D-1, 40D-2, 40D-3, 40D-4, 40D-26 40D-40, and 40D-400, F.A.C., to incorporate all District permitting forms by reference into the specific rule applicable to each individual form. All forms are renumbered and revised to contain a citation to the rule in which the form is adopted. No impacts to small or large businesses are anticipated.

Amendment of Rule 40D-4.091, F.A.C., and water quantity criteria set forth in the ERP BOR, to provide greater clarity as to the frequency and duration of storm events to be used by permit applicants to provide reasonable assurance of compliance with the conditions for permit issuance and to prevent adverse impacts. The amendments are intended to be consistent with the methods used to establish the 100-year flood elevations in updated floodplain maps developed for FEMA by the District. This rulemaking clarifies existing rules; however, a statement of estimated regulatory costs has been prepared to address potential impacts. Potential increased costs to applicants may include additional storm water modeling/analysis and if necessary, the cost of constructing and maintaining larger storm water facilities. The amount of potential additional costs decreases with the size of the project.

#### c) Repeal obsolete or unnecessary rules, specifically including:

Amendment of Rule 40D-2.091, F.A.C., to delete the Alternative Water Supply Supplemental Form previously used by water use permittees to document efforts to use alternative water supply. This information is now obtained through updated permit application forms. This rulemaking is not anticipated to have any impacts on small businesses.

Amendment of Rule 40D-2.321, F.A.C., and the District's WUP BOR, to delete references to a one-time permit renewal redistribution process undertaken by the District that has since been completed and is no longer needed in the rule. This rulemaking has no impacts to small businesses.

Amendment of Rule 40D-2.091, F.A.C., and the WUP BOR, to repeal an outdated description of a compliance process for water use permits. No impacts will result to small businesses.

Amendment of 40D-4.091, F.A.C., and the ERP BOR, to remove the consideration of taxes in the development of cost estimates for the perpetual management of mitigation banks. Recent statutory amendments to Section 197.572, F.S., renders unnecessary the inclusion of taxes in determining such costs. This rulemaking should benefit small businesses.

### d) Repeal rules that are redundant of statutes:

Repeal of Rule 40D-1.139, F.A.C., which incorporated by reference certain required federal processes for discrimination-related grievances. The rule is not necessary for the District to comply with the referenced federal programs. Instead, the District will meet the requirements of the federal programs by including the processes in the District's Statement of Agency Organization and Operation. This rulemaking is ongoing and is not anticipated to have any impacts to small businesses.

Repeal of Chapter 40D-24, F.A.C., which established a xeriscape incentive program in the District that has since been superseded by legislation establishing requirements for implementation of Florida-friendly landscape ordinances and practices. This rulemaking will initiate in September 2009 and is not expected to have any impacts to small businesses.

# e) Seek to improve efficiency and decrease paperwork and costs, specifically including:

Amendment of Rule 40D-1.603, F.A.C., and the WUP BOR, to eliminate the requirement for water use permit applicants to submit with their applications the names and addresses of property owners located within certain distances of the proposed water use, and for the District to send notices of application receipt and agency action to such property owners. This rulemaking reduces permitting costs associated with preparing and verifying lists of adjacent and nearby property owners.

Amendment of Rules 40D-2.101, 2.091, and 2.331, F.A.C., and the District's WUP BOR, to adopt new and revised WUP application forms. The information-gathering format embodied in the new and expanded forms is intended to replace the practice of multiple requests for additional information and is also designed to facilitate electronic permitting through the District's Water Management Information System or WMIS, which has recently been expanded to accept General and Individual WUP applications in addition to Small General WUP applications. This rulemaking is not anticipated to have impacts to small business permittees or applicants. Some cost savings may be incurred through electronic application in lieu of submittal of paper forms.

Amendments to Rules 40D-4.021, 4.041, 4.321 and 4.331, F.A.C., to provide greater flexibility for conceptual ERP permits by reducing the level of application detail required and extending the duration of conceptual permits. Amendments also clarify the circumstances under which an approved conceptual design is not affected by future rule changes. This rulemaking will benefit applicants including any small businesses that are seeking a conceptual permit.

Amendments to Rules 40D-4.331, 4.351 and 4.381, F.A.C., to establish criteria for the transfer to the operation phase completed phases of a permitted construction project. Independently functioning portions of a completed surface water management system now can be transferred to the operation phase and to the operation and maintenance entity while the originally-issued permit stays active to allow continued construction of remaining phases or portions of the permitted project. This rulemaking will benefit permittees by clarifying when a permit modification is necessary and allow permittees to being using portions of their project before the entire project is completed.

Amendments to Rules 40D-4.331 and 40D-40.331, F.A.C., to standardize the process for seeking minor modifications of ERPs. Use of a new ERP Modification Short Form is now available when permittees seek certain minor project modifications or extension of a permit duration. Amendments eliminate the requirement to determine that completed construction complies with a currently valid permit when a permittee applies to extend the duration of a permit. This rulemaking will benefit permittees including small businesses by reducing costs for obtaining minor permit modifications and permit extensions.

Chapter 40D-26, F.A.C., is created to implement the District's Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) Program, a cost-share reimbursement program for the development of agricultural best management practices. The purpose of this program is to reduce water use and to improve water quality and natural systems within the District. Chapter 40D-26, F.A.C., establishes definitions, conditions of eligibility, application procedures, eligibility determination, ranking criteria, and cost-share rates for the implementation of the FARMS Program. The FARMS Program benefits agricultural businesses, particularly small farmers, who need financial assistance in implementing best management practices in their farming operations that also improve water resources.

## f) Coordinate with other agencies with overlapping jurisdiction to increase efficiency and decrease paperwork and costs:

In coordination with the SJRWMD and SFWMD, the district amended Rules 40D-2.091, 2.321 and 2.801, F.A.C., to establish the Central Florida Coordination Area (CFCA) located within portions of all 3 districts and which includes Polk, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties and southern Lake County. The amendments provide an interim and coordinated regulatory mechanism to allow for the allocation of available groundwater in the area, subject to avoidance and mitigation measures to prevent harm, and to require the expeditious implementation of supplemental water supply projects in the region.

This framework is one component of a comprehensive joint water management district strategy for regional water resource management that also includes regional water supply planning, alternative water supply project funding and water resource investigations and analysis that will result in a long-term coordinated approach for water supply within the CFCA.

Rule 40D-3.037, F.A.C., was amended to incorporate by reference a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 4, Superfund Division and the Southwest Florida Water Management District. The MOA establishes a working relationship between the two agencies with respect to District permitting matters involving well construction and other regulated activities that may be proposed in or near applicable Superfund sites within the District. The MOA will improve coordination between the two agencies and enable each agency to implement its respective regulatory practices in a manner that best minimizes the potential effects of ground water contamination in areas that are or could be impacted by a Superfund site. Information sharing will include geographic descriptions of the contaminated areas associated with the Superfund sites covered by the Agreement. This rulemaking benefits land owners and businesses located near selected Superfund sites by helping them to avoid activities that could cause pollution to spread and thereby avoid becoming potentially responsible parties for cleanup costs.

Amendments to Rules 40D-4.051 and 4.091, F.A.C., adopt by reference an operating agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the District. The operating agreement outlines the procedures to be followed by both agencies to implement the ACOE's Programmatic General Permit - PGP-SAJ-95, which addresses multi-phase projects developed pursuant to a conceptual ERP issued by the District. The implementation of PGP-SAJ-95 will streamline permitting of such projects by eliminating the need for a separate approval from the ACOE once it has approved the conceptual design. This rulemaking benefits large and small businesses seeking permits that have wetland-related impacts.

Amendments to Rules 40D-21.231, 21.331 and 21.441, F.A.C. to include approved Water Shortage Mitigation Plans (WSMP) adopted by local governments as a factor considered by the District in determining whether to declare a water shortage or water shortage emergency. The amendments also clarify that the District retains its authority to impose restrictions and to affect water use permits during a declared water shortage or water shortage emergency in areas where a WSMP has been approved. The amendments clarify that when a WSMP is approved, the District retains the right to require local involvement in regional responses when needed, which may include modifying the actions otherwise specified in the WSMP. The amendments clarify that the District will consider and adapt such templates, as appropriate, each time emergency authorization is requested. Amendments will benefit the public including small businesses by allowing greater coordination among governments implementing watering restrictions during times of drought.

Amendments to Rules 40D-1.607, 2.091, 2.301, 2.321, 2.322, F.A.C., to restructure the District's water use permit duration rules to be more consistent with the durations authorized by other water management districts and to provide incentives for applicants who undertake extraordinary water conservation and reclaimed water reuse efforts. Specifically, 20-year permits will be authorized, provided certain prerequisites are met. This rulemaking is currently pending completion. A statement of estimated regulatory costs is under development. Significant adverse impacts to small business are not anticipated.

## g) Review rules to reduce impact on small business while meeting the stated objectives of proposed rules:

The requirement to review agency rules to determine whether rules should be continued without change or should be amended or repealed to reduce impact on small business while meeting the stated objectives of the proposed rule became effective July 1, 2008. Much of the District's rulemaking summarized above was initiated prior to that date. The District has reviewed all rulemaking pending or initiated since July 1, 2008 to determine impact to small business as set forth above. The District's permitting rules are tiered according to size of project which generally correlates with the size of business entities holding or applying for permits from the District. Larger projects and water uses typically require more information and analysis for permit issuance and require greater compliance activity following permit issuance than do smaller projects and water uses, which tend to be smaller businesses. Although the District's focus in rulemaking has been on achieving greater regulatory consistency and practices that help to reduce impacts to the water resources, as future rulemaking is undertaken, further consideration of impacts to small business will continue to be taken into account.

One rulemaking initiative being considered specifically to reduce costs to the regulated public is to extend the duration of formal determinations of wetlands and other surface waters by two years in a manner similar to the recent two-year permit duration extension enacted under Chapter 2009-96 Laws of Florida (Senate Bill 360). These amendments will enable property owners who currently have formal determinations of the landward extent of wetlands and surface waters to extend those determinations for two years without additional cost.

## Recommended Statutory Changes to Promote Efficiency, Reduce Paperwork or Decrease Costs to Government and the Private Sector

Based upon the District's review of agency rules and related statutes, the following statutory changes are recommended to promote efficiency, reduce paperwork and decrease costs to government and the private sector:

1. Amend section 373.116, F.S., to allow water management districts to use their websites and electronic communications for noticing the public concerning the receipt of permit applications. Currently, the statute requires water management districts to cause a notice to be published in local newspapers, which increases the cost of permitting for applicants and the costs of permit processing for water

management districts. Relying upon an agency's website and electronic communications for official notices to the public will decrease costs and allow a broader range of noticing to the public while allowing for more specific and individualized noticing through direct electronic communications such as electronic mail to interested persons.

- 2. Amend subparagraph 120.54(3)(b)1, F.S., to clarify that agencies shall prepare a statement of estimated regulatory costs of a proposed rule only when the proposed rule is determined to have an adverse impact on small business. Presently, the statutory requirement to prepare statements of estimated regulatory costs is interpreted to apply to rules having any impact, however slight, as well as to rules that promote or are intended to have positive benefits on small business. These types of impacts are frequently difficult to quantify in a meaningful manner without incurring great expense. Limiting the requirement to conduct a statement of estimated regulatory costs to those rules that may have a significant adverse impact upon small business will reduce costs to agencies that otherwise would have to expend limited staff resources or incur additional expenses for economic consultant services in order to analyze the effects of rules that are either positive for small business or which are of such limited impact that efforts to quantify such impact are not cost-effective.
- 3. Amend section 373.046, F.S., to clarify that water management districts sharing jurisdictional boundaries within the same county may, by interagency agreement, designate a single district to implement all or a part of the rules of that designated district within the county as a whole. Currently, the statutory language does not allow such interagency agreements to extend to municipalities that are not bisected by district jurisdictional boundaries within a county regulated by two or more water management districts. This amendment will facilitate county-wide implementation of watering restrictions and similar regulations in those counties that are within the jurisdictional boundaries of more than one water management district.

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