



State Water Resources Control Board

Notice of Public Comment Period

Identification of a Potential Administrator for Athal Mutual Water Company

PURPOSE

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) has identified Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec) as a potential administrator to Athal Mutual Water Company (Athal MWC).

An administrator is a person or entity that is appointed and/or authorized to exercise total and complete managerial control over a designated water system in order to provide an adequate supply of safe and affordable drinking water.

Prior to the selection of an administrator, the State Water Board shall provide an opportunity to submit comments for at least 30 days after this notice. The public can submit questions and comments regarding the identification of Stantec as the potential administrator for Athal MWC through **Monday, July 9, 2023**.

HOW TO SUBMIT PUBLIC COMMENTS – DEADLINE **July 9, 2023**

Mail: Reyna Rodriguez

State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Drinking Water
265 W Bullard Ave, Suite 101, Fresno, CA 93704

Email: DDW-Administrator@waterboards.ca.gov

BACKGROUND

In May 2018, the State Water Board issued a compliance order to Athal for the violation of the 1,2,3-trichloropropane maximum contaminant level, followed by citations for failing to return to compliance by the May 2021 deadline. On September 30, 2022, the State Water Board issued a Voluntary Consolidation Negotiation Letter to Athal MWC regarding consolidation with Lamont PUD. Athal MWC has also demonstrated limited technical, managerial, and financial capacity to negotiate the consolidation and adequately run a public water system. On December 16, 2022, the State Water Board took the first step in designating Athal MWC as a water system in need of an administrator because it has not consistently provided an adequate supply of affordable, safe drinking water to their customers.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A public meeting was held on March 15, 2023 to provide information on the consolidation of Fuller Acres MWC and Athal MWC with Lamont PUD and the purpose and role of an administrator in Athal MC. The State Water Board proposed appointing an administrator to Athal MWC to manage the water system. A second public meeting is scheduled to be held on June 27, 2023 to continue the consolidation discussion and provide a brief update on the administrator process. Meeting materials and details are available at bit.ly/DDW_AdminWebsite.

All actions taken by an administrator are required to be in the best interest of the community served by the water system and include the following:

- Developing access to an adequate supply of safe and affordable drinking water; and
- Holding public meetings at least every three months.

Any ratepayer, renter, or property owner who receives water from a designated water system can submit a petition to the State Water Board to reverse or modify an administrator decision or to replace an administrator. A description of this process and the administrator authority is contained in Health and Safety Code Section 116686 and in the State Water Board's Administrator Policy Handbook (Sept. 2019) at https://bit.ly/SAFER_Administrator_Handbook.

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED ADMINISTRATOR

NAME OF ADMINISTRATOR

The Stantec team has been identified as a viable candidate to be appointed as an administrator for Athal MWC. Their qualifications include:

- Multidisciplinary team of experts in community engagement, water resources planning, financing, groundwater management, drinking water treatment, and well design and construction.
- Specialized experience working with economically distressed communities to address water resources challenges.
- Understanding of the unique water resources challenges experienced by communities in the Eastern San Joaquin Valley.
- Dedication to implementing an inclusive planning process that ensures communities have a voice while meeting the goals of the State Water Board and Athal MWC.

Additional qualifications of the Stantec team are provided in the attached document.

SCOPE OF APPOINTMENT & SERVICES PROVIDED

This administrator will be a Full-Scope Administrator as defined in the Administrator Policy Handbook available online at bit.ly/SAFER_Administrator_Handbook.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To date, no conflict of interest has been found by the State Water Board or reported by Stantec. If at any time a proposed action would create a conflict of interest, an administrator is required to provide written notice to the State Water Board in addition to

all ratepayers, renters and property owners, who receive water service from the designated water system 30 days prior to taking the action.

MORE INFORMATION

Reyna Rodriguez (559) 447-3485; Reyna.Rodriguez@waterboards.ca.gov

State Water Board Administrator website: bit.ly/DDW_AdminWebsite

ADMINISTRATOR QUALIFICATIONS



Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec) will work closely with the people of the Athal Mutual Water Company (Athal MWC) while assessing the water system's technical, managerial, and financial capacity. Stantec will identify, evaluate, and implement short- and long-term solutions to secure safe, reliable drinking water for the community served by Athal MWC. Stantec is dedicated to implementing an inclusive planning process that ensures community members have a voice in meeting the goals of the State Water Board and Athal MWC.

Administrator Lead

Marisa Perez-Reyes

Marisa brings six years of experience convening multi-party working groups, coordinating complex projects, and guiding publicly engaged water resources planning efforts. She has worked extensively with public agencies across the State of California, primarily helping agencies engage community members in the development and implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014.

Technical Lead

Stephen Chavez, P.E., CCM

Stephen brings 30 years of experience conducting detailed engineering design involving civil design of water treatment facilities, constructability review, condition assessment, program management, and construction management.

Stantec SAFER Program Team

Mike Antos, PhD, (Stantec Program Manager)

Tori Klug, PE, (Stantec Deputy Program Manager)

Depending on the solutions identified for Athal MWC, Stantec may consult their extended team of experts in facilitation, water treatment, conveyance, water system financing, and planning.

For more information, please visit www.stantec.com.