

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16-17, 2023

Prepared on January 27, 2023

ITEM NUMBER: 14
SUBJECT: Field Trip – Tour of Los Osos Water Recycling Facility
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KEY INFORMATION

Location: Los Osos Water Recycling Facility, 2270 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos
Type of Discharge: Domestic Wastewater
Design Capacity: 2.1 million gallons per day
Treatment: Oxidation ditches, tertiary filtration, disinfection
Disposal: Leach fields
Reclamation: Irrigation
Existing Orders: R3-2011-0001

ACTION: Information and Field Trip

SUMMARY

This item consists of a tour of the Los Osos Water Recycling Facility starting at 10:00 a.m., Friday, February 17, 2023. The facility is located at 2270 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos. The tour is open to the public; however, space is limited, and transportation will not be provided. Persons interested in participating in the tour must RSVP by 12:00 noon, Monday, February 13, 2023, by emailing the Clerk to the Board at

RB3-CommentLetters@waterboards.ca.gov.

San Luis Obispo County operates the Los Osos Water Recycling Facility to collect, treat, recycle, and dispose of the community's wastewater.¹ This facility addresses the Central Coast Water Board's septic system prohibition associated with nitrate loading and the community's historical water-quality degradation of groundwater.

¹ <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Committees-Programs/Los-Osos-Wastewater-System.aspx>

DISCUSSION

Background

In 1983, the Central Coast Water Board adopted a prohibition on discharges from septic systems in the Los Osos area to address nitrate pollution of the underlying groundwater aquifer. In 2016, San Luis Obispo County completed construction of and began operating a community-wide sewage collection, treatment, disposal, and recycling system. This system is beginning to resolve water-quality problems in the aquifer. However, it will take many years for nitrate concentrations to decrease, and other challenges, such as sea-water intrusion from groundwater pumping, remain.

Water Recycling Facility

The Central Coast Water Board regulates the facility through an individual waste discharge requirements order and through enrollment in the statewide general order for recycled water.

The treatment system consists of bar screens, secondary treatment through oxidation ditches, secondary clarification, tertiary filtration, and ultraviolet disinfection. Solids are thickened then mechanically dewatered and disposed of at an approved biosolids disposal site. The facility also includes a septage receiving holding tank to meter septage into the wastewater treatment process. The treatment plant's annual average flow design capacity is 1.2 million gallons per day. The entire Los Osos sewer project includes 49 miles of pipelines and 21 pump stations and serves about 5,000 homes and businesses.

The facility produces recycled water that is used at Sea Pines Golf Course, the Los Osos Valley Road median, and for construction and agricultural uses. The county is working with the San Luis Coastal Unified School District to develop an agreement for the schools to use recycled water for irrigation. The school sites would be Los Osos Middle School, Baywood Elementary School, Monarch Grove Elementary School, and at the Sunnyside Elementary site. The county is also working to provide recycled water for the Los Osos Community Park for irrigation. Treated wastewater that is not used for irrigation is disposed of in leach fields.

Facility Tour

County staff will lead the Board and visitors on a tour of the treatment and recycling infrastructure.

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