



News Advisory

Santa Ana Water Board Postpones Decision on Huntington Beach Desalination Permit Renewal

Staff is asked to research Bolsa Chica mitigation measures

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RIVERSIDE - After three lengthy public hearings and intense debate, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board today postponed its decision on a waste discharge permit renewal for a proposed desalination project in Orange County and requested more information from staff.

Poseidon Water's \$1 billion facility would be built on 12 acres of the AES Huntington Beach Generating Station and produce 50 million gallons per day of potable water – enough to satisfy about 450,000 area residents. It would be the second largest desalination plant in the United States, behind the Claude "Bud" Lewis facility in Carlsbad, 30 miles north of San Diego.

[During three recent workshops](#), regional board members raised questions about the need and cost of desalinated water, Orange County Water District's commitment to purchase the supply, the potential harm to marine life, and at today's hearing, devoted the entire morning session to whether the Bolsa Chica wetlands mitigation plan complies with the state's Ocean Plan requirements for coastal desalination plants.

The board concluded that more expansive restoration measures were needed to offset the environmental harm and asked staff to research the appropriate ratio between restoration efforts and preservation – mainly dredging the Bolsa Chica inlet channel – and report its findings at a special meeting scheduled for September 17.

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