

Nipomo board considers desalinization

By Todd Cralley/STAFF WRITER

In an all-out effort to quench a growing community's thirst for water, the Nipomo Community Services District board of directors will hold a special meeting Wednesday to hear a presentation of the latest desalinization technologies available to them.

Removing the salt from sea water is just one of the possibilities the district is investigating as Nipomo's growth outstrips its supply of groundwater.

A representative from Boyle Engineering will be make the presentation and, according to NCSD board member Ed Eby, will probably discuss the overall cost of such a project and a likely timeline for construction while showing examples of some successful desalinization operations.

"I suspect he will present us with the types of desalinization techniques that are currently being used, either evaporation or reverse osmosis; the latest technology in use; and project costs," Eby said.

Of all the options available to the district, the desalinization plant would be the most costly, Eby said, but "the sooner we build it the cheaper it will cost."

"There are other options available to us for supplemental water," he said. "One is to drill some new wells in the Santa Maria riverbed. We can continue ahead with the construction of the pipeline from Santa Maria, or we can trade water rights with farmers. In that option, we'd give them treated water (for irrigation) from the wastewater treatment plants in exchange for their water."

Also on the agenda for the NCSD meeting, which is scheduled for 9 a.m. Wednesday in the district's boardroom, 148 S. Wilson St. in Nipomo, will be a discussion of options for discharge of treated wastewater.

Boyle Engineering is scheduled to present an action plan and a recommendation for monitoring and evaluating groundwater to minimize impacts of discharged wastewater on groundwater quality.

The report also calls for the application of reclaimed wastewater to reduce groundwater depressions and reduce potable water demand within the Nipomo Mesa management area.

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May 15, 2007