

Santa Cruz Integrated Regional Water Management

Project: Water Supply Storage - Zone 2 Reservoirs
Grantee: Regional Water Management Foundation
Lead: City of Watsonville
Location: City of Watsonville
Funders: California Department of Water Resources (Urban Community Multi-Benefit Drought Relief Grant through the Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 240, § 80))
Amount: \$5,000,000 (DWR Grant); \$5,600,000 (local matching funds)
Year: 2022-2024
Status: Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief Grant Program Awarded March 2022

Purpose: Increase the City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities' water supply storage capacity by rehabilitating an aged, deteriorating storage tank (3 million gallons (MG)) as well as adding a new storage tank (2.38 MG).

Issues Addressed: This project will improve the City's water supply reliability, increase operational flexibility, and resiliency while reducing vulnerability to supply disruptions.

Summary: The City of Watsonville is an economically disadvantaged community located in Santa Cruz County. The City serves water to 65,000 customers. In a typical year, the volume of water supplied is approximately 7,000 acre-feet with the sources as 97% groundwater and 3% surface water. The City's Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) provides a flexible framework of planned response measures to mitigate current or expected water supply shortages. Conservation alone is insufficient, and the City's Water Supply Storage project will increase water supply storage capacity and improve system resiliency.

As part of the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, a drought risk assessment was developed to consider the impact of a five-year drought over the next five years (2021–2025). The City is in need of additional water supply storage. The addition of a new storage tank (2.38 MG) in addition to rehabilitating the deteriorating storage tank (3 million gallons (MG)) will enhance the City's ability to manage the system and reduce vulnerabilities.

Results: The new storage tank (Reservoir B) will increase seismic resiliency of the City's water storage and distribution system, provide operational flexibility, and provide redundant storage capacity. Reservoir B will also allow for needed maintenance and repairs to Reservoir A.