

**TOWN ZOOM MEETING WITH BCPUD STAFF ON THE
CURRENT STATUS OF THE TOWN'S WATER SUPPLY**

BOLINAS COMMUNITY PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT



May 12, 2021



MEETING OUTLINE

- **Purpose of Meeting**
- Water Supply Background
- Current Water Supply Conditions
- How Are We Doing on Water Consumption?
- Mandatory Rationing: What Does it Mean and is it Inevitable?
- Q&A with BCPUD Staff



PURPOSES OF MEETING

- Introduce the BCPUD Staff
 - Bill Pierce, Chief Operator
 - Stew Oakander, Incoming Chief Operator
 - Andrew Spalding, Shift Operator
 - Blake Miller, Shift Operator
 - Evan Kahn, Shift Operator-in-Training
 - Belle Wood, Administrative Assistant
 - Jennifer Blackman, General Manager



PURPOSES OF MEETING

- Present the community with a brief background about our water supply
- Update the community on current water supply conditions
- Provide a snapshot on how the town is doing with regard to water consumption
- Briefly discuss mandatory rationing
- Answer your questions!



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WATER SUPPLY BACKGROUND

- The primary water source for the BCPUD water system is the **Arroyo Hondo Creek** located in the southern portion of Point Reyes National Seashore
- This small perennial creek has supplied the district since the 1920s



WATER SUPPLY BACKGROUND

- The limited flow from the Arroyo Hondo Creek is one of the reasons for BCPUD's water shortage emergency declarations in the 1970s, culminating in BCPUD Resolution 173, enacted in 1977, known as “the moratorium resolution”
- In the 1980s, the BCPUD constructed two water storage reservoirs, **Woodrat 1 and Woodrat 2**, as emergency, back-up water supply sources



WATER SUPPLY BACKGROUND

- The Arroyo Hondo Creek and the Woodrat 1 and 2 reservoirs are **surface water sources** which are highly dependent on rainfall
- The Woodrat 1 and 2 reservoirs are supplied by **intermittent** creeks that flow during the rainy season
- When the rains cease the dry season begins, the Woodrat 1 and 2 reservoirs are at their maximum storage capacity



WATER SUPPLY BACKGROUND

- The Arroyo Hondo Creek is a **perennial** creek
- When the rains cease and the dry season begins, the Arroyo Hondo Creek is supplied by groundwater seepage, which decreases slowly over time until the rains occur
- To meet demand when the Arroyo Hondo Creek flows decline, the BCPUD supplements with stored water diverted from the Woodrat 1 and 2 reservoirs



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CURRENT WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS

- Rainfall in Bolinas this year (July 1, 2020 – to date) is **16.25 inches**
- Rainfall in Bolinas last year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) was **22.7 inches**
- Average annual rainfall in Bolinas is **32.5 inches**

CURRENT WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS

- The BCPUD’s water system is extremely responsive to **current** weather/rainfall conditions
- The BCPUD’s water system is completely independent of any other water system
- The BCPUD does not have any “tie-ins” with any other water systems such as Marin Municipal Water District (“MMWD”)

CURRENT WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS

- The flows in the Arroyo Hondo Creek are **much** lower than normal for this time of year
- Creek flows right now are at levels typical for September – October
- BCPUD staff predicts creek flows will decline more quickly than usual this year to historic low levels in the next 6 months

CURRENT WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS

- BCPUD reservoirs currently are at 60% capacity
- Normally, BCPUD reservoirs would be at 100% capacity at this time of year
- Our reservoirs are equivalent to the town's water "saving account"
- We do not want to use this water (i.e., "spend this money") until absolutely necessary

CURRENT WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS

- BCPUD has approximately 10 million gallons of water in storage in the two emergency reservoirs right now
- To put this in perspective: over the course of one year, 10 million gallons of water would provide each property (*not each person*) in Bolinas approximately 46 gallons of water per day



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HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- Today is a **GREAT DAY!**
- It is Foggy 😊
- Consumption went **WAY** down today, to 55,424 gallons town-wide, **thank you!**
- 55,424 gallons town-wide is equivalent to approximately 93 gallons per day per property (not per person)
- The Town is proving that **WE CAN DO THIS!**



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- The “bad news” is that the weather got sunny, hot and then windy -- and water consumption started to climb -- in April and this continued into May
- This is why we posted the sign at the intersection of Mesa and Olema-Bolinas Roads (to raise awareness)
- This is why we are posting daily notices on Nextdoor about the town’s 7-day running average consumption



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- BCPUD is analyzing data collected from all water meters in town for April 7 – May 12th
- A detailed report will be presented to the BCPUD Board at next Wednesday's regular meeting
- Bottom line: water use is up across the community
- While water use in the community steadily decreased since last June, it has now started to increase



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- In June 2020, water use averaged **210** gallons per day per property
- In September 2020, water use averaged **168** gallons per day per property
- In December 2020, water use averaged **102** gallons per day per property
- In March 2021, water use averaged **92** gallons per day per property.
- Today's 7-day running average of 63,453 gallons is equivalent to **107** gallons per day per property.



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- There is no specific “villain” customer in our town
- Please stop blaming others for their alleged high water use
- Every single “type” of customer increased their water use in the last 4 – 6 weeks
- The current water supply crisis is **OUR** collective challenge
- We can only survive this crisis **as a community**



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- What can **YOU** do?
- Ask yourself: what am I doing differently now than I was doing earlier this year in terms of water use? Where can I conserve more?
- Conduct a water audit or call BCPUD staff for help!
- Water audit information and conservation tips are on the BCPUD website



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- Turn off all irrigation systems and only hand water your garden, ideally with extra water collected from showers or kitchen sinks
- Do NOT plant anything new!!!
- Be prepared to lose plants this year; focus on mulching and soil amendment instead of watering
- Install rain catchment systems to be ready for next year



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- **MOST IMPORANTLY:**
 - Turn off the water to your property at your house valve if you are going to be away for any length of time
 - Alternatively, call and ask the BCPUD to do so at your meter
 - It is not enough to ask someone to check on your house from time to time – leaks are often not noticed



HOW ARE WE DOING ON WATER CONSUMPTION?

- Every month, customers on the BCPUD's water system experience significant leaks, resulting in unfortunate water waste, such as:
 - Hose bib in resident's yard was turned on and left running when resident was out of town – approximately 47,000 gallons wasted (1,505 gallons per day) in December 2020; a similar incident occurred in April 2021 and resulted in more than 30,000 gallons wasted
 - While resident was on vacation, toilet flap failed – approximately 112,140 gallons wasted (3738 gallons per day) in November 2020; a similar incident occurred in April 2021 and resulted in more than 30,000 gallons wasted



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MANDATORY RATIONING: WHAT DOES IT MEAN AND IS IT INEVITABLE?

- In February 2021, the BCPUD Board adopted Resolution 680, which implements the mandatory rationing of water when the town's overall water consumption exceeds 76,000 gallons per day, averaged over 7 consecutive days
- At the present time, the daily ration amount is set at **125 gallons per day per property** (not per person)



MANDATORY RATIONING: WHAT DOES IT MEAN AND IS IT INEVITABLE?

- The daily ration amount of 125 gallons of water per day per property was established on the basis of information available to BCPUD staff as of mid-February and statistical assumptions regarding additional expected rainfall, which unfortunately did not occur
- BCPUD staff therefore is likely to recommend that the daily ration amount be reduced to no more than 100 gallons of water per day per property based on worse-than-predicted water supply conditions
- Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of BCPUD customers already use less than 100 gallons of water per day per property



MANDATORY RATIONING: WHAT DOES IT MEAN AND IS IT INEVITABLE?

- Some may ask: but the mandatory ration trigger is 76,000 gallons per day, aren't we okay if consumption is below that level?
- No!
- The mandatory ration trigger of 76,000 gallons per day of water use is something we all should seek to avoid at all costs
- The good news is that the town is demonstrating right now that it is capable of avoiding mandatory rationing
- Mandatory rationing is **NOT** inevitable!



MANDATORY RATIONING: WHAT DOES IT MEAN AND IS IT INEVITABLE?

- BCPUD staff hereby challenges our town to keep our 7-day average water consumption **below 60,000 gallons per day**
- Why?
- Because BCPUD **currently** is able to provide that much water to the community from the Arroyo Hondo Creek without “spending” the emergency water in our reservoirs
- If the town can keep water consumption at today’s level (55,424), the town will soon meet and then exceed BCPUD staff’s target and it may then avoid mandatory rationing altogether!



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