

# BCPUD PIPELINE



Summer 2021

270 Elm Road, P.O. Box 390, Bolinas, CA 94924 (415) 868-1224

## Reminder: CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

August 11th is “811 Day” and the BCPUD would like to bring awareness to the 811 Call Before Your Dig message.

According to Common Ground Alliance, 2 out of 5 homeowners dig without contacting 811, putting themselves and their community at risk. Hitting underground lines such as water, electric, gas, sewer or communications lines can cause bad outcomes and be expensive to repair.

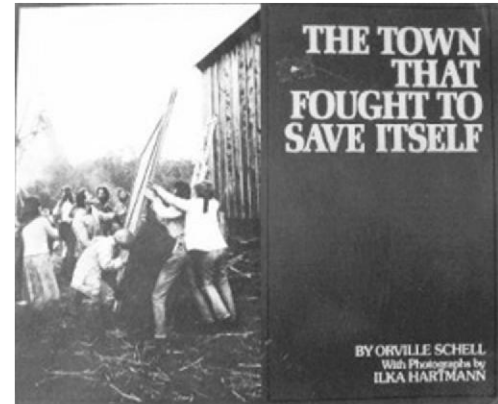
By calling 811 before you dig, you help ensure that the nearby utilities will be marked or located so that you can dig safely - even if simply planting a tree or building a fence.



Water or Sewer emergency? Please contact our office at 415-868-1224

## Update on the Status of the BCPUD's Water Supply As We Approach Fall 2021

Despite all of the challenges we have faced in the last 18 months, persistent drought across the West and here in Bolinas, a worldwide pandemic, devastating fires — including one last August in our neighboring national park — and more, there is an on-going success story to be told and that is the story of *this community*. Because of the personal conservation efforts *each and every one of you* have made beginning last June 2020, when the BCPUD issued a Heightened Water Conservation Alert and asked everyone to reduce their water use by 20-30%. For all the months since then as the BCPUD's requests for conservation became increasingly stringent in order to avoid the mandatory rationing of water, *you have risen to the challenge and collectively acted for the common good of the entire town*. Water consumption across the district in June 2021 was *fifty percent* less than it was in June 2020!



In addition, we have had good fortune this summer in terms of weather: a marine layer settled in along the coast of California in late June and has been fantastically persistent. BCPUD staff has measured meaningful “rainfall” accumulation in July and August due to the heavy wet fog such that by mid August, we recorded nearly 1/2-inch of rain. The marine layer has been enormously beneficial for our water sources and the stream flow in the Arroyo Hondo Creek has stayed relatively steady since the marine layer set in. Last summer, the creek dropped quickly because the weather was considerably sunnier and warmer than it is this year. In addition, the rate of evaporation and seepage from our two reservoirs also has slowed. Earlier this year, we documented significant loss in water storage in our reservoirs due to the sun and wind; in the last 6 weeks or so, that rate of evaporation and seepage has slowed considerably.

As a result of *your* conservation and the wonderful fog, the BCPUD has been able to provide the town with water exclusively from our preferred water source, the Arroyo Hondo Creek, throughout 2021. We have not had to use any of the emergency stored water we have in our reservoirs yet,



which is truly amazing. The BCPUD had anticipated that we would be drawing down our stored reserves by this time in the year. The fact that we have not had to do so (yet) means that we likely will enter the next calendar year without severely depleting our emergency water sources. If the upcoming rainy season is another dry one (which the current long-term forecasts regrettably are suggesting), the BCPUD will be in a ***much*** more resilient position in terms of our stored water, which will be critical if the Arroyo Hondo creek flow lags as we anticipate that it will without a robust 2021-22 rainy season.

The impact of the drought on the Arroyo Hondo Creek is significant; we all know this intuitively, but the photos below are a dramatic visual depiction of that impact. To the left is a photograph of the headwaters of the creek taken by the BCPUD's former General Manager, Phil Buchanan in May 2005 - the district received 48.8 inches that rain year. To the right is a photograph of the same location taken by BCPUD shift operator Evan Kahn in June 2021 (before the current marine layer set in) - the district received only 16.42 inches of rain this past rain year.



Arroyo Hondo Creek, May 2005  
Photo by Phil Buchanan



Arroyo Hondo Creek, June 2021  
Photo by Evan Kahn

While the community has been hard at work conserving water, the BCPUD has been hard at work managing our existing supply and exploring options to increase that supply. To that end, the BCPUD Board at its regular monthly meeting in May approved a project recommended by staff to add two emergency groundwater sources of supply to the BCPUD's water system. As this newsletter goes to print, the BCPUD is finalizing its applications to the State Water Resources Control Board ("SWRCB") for permission to add these sources on an emergency basis. If the SWRCB approves the BCPUD's emergency groundwater permit applications, the district will have two additional sources of back-up water supply to draw on during prolonged drought conditions (albeit limited and more expensive to operate).

Overall, the BCPUD believes that our customers will be best served if we are able to develop additional emergency sources of supply that are different in kind from our existing surface water sources. This diversity in our water source portfolio will provide the district with more options during extended droughts and better ensure our ability to reliably provide our customers with safe drinking water.