



POWER

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

WATER RESOURCES PLANNING
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DATE: March 6, 2006

TO: Richard Sklar SFPUC President
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THRU: Susan Leal, General Manager *SL*
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FROM: Greg Bartow, Integrated Water Resources Manager *GB*

SUBJECT: QUARTERY LAKE MERCED UPDATE

This is a quarterly update on recent actions taken by the SFPUC to restore Lake Merced water levels.

Lake Levels: As of March 1, 2006, the lake is at a level of 5.7 feet City Datum. For historical comparison, Lake Merced was at 2.6 feet on March 1, 2003 and 2.7 feet on March 1, 2001 (see attached lake level graph). System water has not been added to the lake to raise water levels for over one-year.

Water level increases over the last 4-years are a result of a combination of factors including above average precipitation, substantial SFPUC system water additions in 2002 and 2003, limited SFPUC system water additions in 2005, and limited treated stormwater additions in 2004 and 2005.

In addition, two significant regional partnerships have contributed to reducing groundwater pumping near Lake Merced and raising groundwater levels south of the Lake in Daly City, South San Francisco, and San Bruno: 1) Daly City initiated a recycled water project with three local golf courses around Lake Merced in late 2004 that partially replaced groundwater pumping with recycled water for irrigation and 2) Between 2002 and 2005, the cities of Daly City and San Bruno, and CalWater (South San Francisco) conducted a conjunctive use demonstration project whereby groundwater pumping was reduced and surface water purchases increased, allowing natural recharge to accumulate in the subsurface aquifer. Approximately 13,000 acre-feet of water have successfully been stored in the Westside Groundwater Basin as a result of this 2002-2005 joint demonstration project. The combined benefit of the conjunctive use demonstration and the recycled water irrigation supply has been a generally reduced gradient for groundwater flow from the vicinity of Lake Merced toward the areas of reduced groundwater levels beneath Daly City, South San Francisco, and San Bruno.

Vista Grande Watershed Plan to Reduce Flooding and Beneficially Reuse Stormwater: As part of the March 14, 2006 General Manager's Report, SFPUC staff

will update the Commission on the status of this joint planning effort with the City of Daly City. The purpose of this work is to develop a Watershed Plan that will reduce or eliminate flooding, reduce erosion along Lake Merced, and maximize other potential benefits such as groundwater recharge and augmentation of Lake Merced water levels. A Public Stakeholder Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, March 30, 2006 from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM at the Larcombe Clubhouse, Westlake Park, 99 Lake Merced Boulevard, in Daly City.

Trout Day at Lake Merced: For the third year in a row, California Trout is coordinating a family fishing day at Lake Merced. Trout Day is Saturday, June 24th this year. Last year, the fishing area was expanded to keep up with the increased number of kids (over 1500). The event has the support of numerous co-sponsors including the SFPUC, the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, the Lake Merced Task Force, the Olympic Club, and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Pilot Stormwater Wetlands Treatment Project: The City of Daly City and the SFPUC received Regional Water Board approval to continue to discharge treated stormwater to Lake Merced from the Vista Grande Canal on a pilot basis in 2006. We also participated in a workshop with the Regional Water Board and members of the public on ways to better improve the project over the coming year. The project was initiated in January 2004 and is providing preliminary screening information on wetlands treatment to reduce nutrient and bacteria levels in stormwater.

Additional information on SFPUC activities related to Lake Merced can be found at: <http://lakemerced.sfwater.org/>

Attachment: Lake Merced Water Levels 2001-2006.

cc: Lake Merced Task Force Members