



Response to State-Mandated Water Reductions

Water use within the District has been curtailed due to a decision handed down by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) that severely limits local water production. In 1995 the State issued Order 95-10 that required California-American Water Company (Cal-Am) to cut back its historical water production from the Carmel River by 20 percent in the near term and 75 percent in the long term.

Cal-Am produces 95 percent of the water used within the District. Prior to State Order 95-10, Cal-Am produced an average of 14,106 AF water per year from the Carmel River basin. The Order allows Cal-Am to divert only 11,285 AF of water from the Carmel River at this time. In the future, the State could force Cal-Am to reduce production from the river to 3,376 AF of water per year.

Presently, no other new water source is available within the District. Additional water supplies are not available from the Seaside basin because studies have shown that increased Cal-Am production from that basin beyond the present level of 4,000 acre-feet per year could possibly induce seawater intrusion.

In 1995 the District filed suit against the SWRCB and was later granted some relief from the Order. The District took additional action to remedy the situation in April 1998, when a letter was sent to the Chief of the Water Rights Division at the SWRCB requesting that he authorize increased diversions from the Carmel River so that existing water commitments could be met. The request was denied. In July 1998, the District filed a lawsuit against the SWRCB charging that there was insufficient evidence to support the production cutbacks required in State Order 95-10. The lawsuit has yet to be settled.

At this time, the order remains in effect until the community can achieve a permanent 75 percent reduction in water use from the Carmel River, or new water supply projects are developed that will provide 10,730 acre-feet of additional water for the Cal-Am water distribution system. The District is committed to working with Cal-Am and the community to reach agreement on a local water solution.

The Carmel River provides approximately 70 percent of the water used within the District. Water production from the river has been reduced by 20 percent since 1995 when the State Water Resources Control Board mandated cut-backs in Order 95-10. The District has filed a lawsuit against the SWRCB challenging Order 95-10 on the basis that there was insufficient evidence to require such severe production cutbacks.