

Regional Water Quality Control Board
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report
Thursday, March 8, 2017
Fortuna City Council Chambers
Fortuna, California

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: Update on Progress on Consolidated Wastewater Management Project on the Samoa Peninsula, Humboldt County (*Charles Reed, and Paula Mushrush of the Humboldt County Planning Department*)

BOARD ACTION: This is an information item only. No action is necessary.

BACKGROUND: The Samoa Peninsula is a coastal bar separating Humboldt Bay from the Pacific Ocean and is located due west of the City of Eureka. Once an active industrial area interspersed with small industry-supported communities like Manila, Samoa, and Fairhaven, the peninsula's several lumber and pulp mills have closed over the last thirty years and all that remains are the small communities and a deteriorating public infrastructure, including water, wastewater, and other community services. The communities qualify as small disadvantaged communities.

Currently, these small disadvantaged communities rely on small community treatment and disposal systems or individual septic systems for the treatment and disposal of domestic, commercial, and industrial wastewater. Restrictive site conditions on the peninsula, such as high groundwater, coarse sandy soils, and small residential lots, make it infeasible for existing and new discharges from individual septic systems to meet consistently the water quality objectives for surface water and groundwater set forth in the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan). The inability to site Basin Plan-compliant wastewater treatment and disposal systems has, over the years, severely constrained Humboldt County and community plans for development and revitalization of the peninsula.

In response, Humboldt County, with partners, is evaluating the feasibility to implement a consolidated wastewater system on the Samoa Peninsula. In 2016, the Humboldt Bay Harbor Recreation and Conservation District (District) completed a study, *Infrastructure Needs and Reuse Study on the Samoa Peninsula*, funded by a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), that looked at the health and safety of the current water and wastewater systems for the residents of the economically disadvantaged communities located on the Samoa Peninsula. The study evaluated existing wastewater infrastructure on the entire peninsula and its condition, and included the potential reuse or repurposing of an ocean wastewater outfall at Redwood Marine Terminal II, currently owned and operated by the District.

Just recently, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), awarded a grant to Humboldt County that will evaluate reuse of the existing water and wastewater infrastructure to support the existing industrial and commercial properties and expand economic opportunities for the Humboldt Bay region. The EDA

grant is also providing support to the Samoa Peninsula Fire Protection District to reorganize as a community services district and prepare an application with the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). The EDA study is anticipated to be finalized in spring 2017.

Additional funding assistance is currently being sought through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Small Community Grant Fund to prepare a preliminary report to assess the existing conditions, project wastewater flows and loads, and analyze wastewater collection, treatment and disposal alternatives. The State Water Board Division of Financial Assistance has received the planning grant application and review of the application documents is in progress.

DISCUSSION: Humboldt County Planning Department staff, Paula Mushrush, will provide an update on current activities related to the Consolidated Wastewater Management Project for the Samoa Peninsula.

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

SUPPORTING INFORMATION: None