

## **Capitola Esplanade Sewer Replacement Project**

Santa Cruz County Sanitation District  
Project Director: Rachel Lather

Grant Agreement #06-300-550-0  
September 2008 Annual Report

**Purpose and Need:** The primary purpose of this project is to reduce the discharge of bacteria into coastal waters at Capitola Beach - one of the most popular beaches in Santa Cruz County. Capitola Beach is the main attraction in Capitola Village and a cornerstone of the local economy. The waterfront includes a row of shops and restaurants, known as the Esplanade, a wharf with restaurants and businesses, and historic residential areas. The tourism-based economy of Capitola is very much dependent on the perception of a high quality environment and is focused on the beach. When surveyed in 2004, Capitola residents identified water pollution as a major community concern.

Capitola Beach and Soquel Creek Lagoon have had relatively high bacteria levels and are frequently posted as unsafe for swimming. The Lagoon is permanently posted. Soquel Creek is a primary source of bacteria at Capitola Beach. The high level of bacteria is attributed to many sources including urban runoff, birds, rodents, pet waste and humans. The human contribution is highest near the Soquel Lagoon. The County Environmental Health Services' monitoring data suggest some sources near the river mouth, such as leaking sewers, are contributing to higher bacteria levels.

Most sewers in Capitola are old and in need of repair or replacement, having been constructed in 1960's or earlier. Approximately 4,460 feet of sewer lines adjacent to Soquel Creek and in the upper village area were surveyed by the Sanitation District in February 2006. Testing showed that these sewer mains and laterals are leaking inwardly and outwardly. Manholes were also inspected. Many had standing, stagnant water and inlet piping of mysterious origin.

The objective of this project is to eliminate leakage from sewer lines with the most potential to impact Soquel Creek and Lagoon. The project consists of replacing approximately 4,306 feet of sewer collection lines and four brick manholes. By replacing the sewer lines with plastic pipe and the brick manholes with cement /mortar manholes, we anticipate that seepage from sewers in these areas will be eliminated.

**Progress:** At the time of this report, the construction work is completed, and we have moved into the monitoring phase. The construction contract was awarded to the low-bidder, KJ Woods of San Francisco, and work began on March 31, 2008. Much of the work was completed by Memorial Day weekend to minimize disturbance in the downtown area during the busy tourist season. Slip-lining on Riverview Ave was completed in August. A sign crediting the State Water Board contribution was displayed prominently on the Esplanade during construction.

The monitoring plan and QAPP were submitted in February 2008 and revised in July and September 2008 in response to SWRCB comments. The estimated costs for monitoring were higher than anticipated, so in July, the approach was revised to complete the monitoring within the budget. The new monitoring plan reduced the frequency of sampling, and Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Services agreed to absorb 33% of monitoring costs. The final CEQA documentation was completed ahead of the February 2008 schedule. The project was jointly designed by the County of Santa Cruz engineering staff and Harris and Associates Engineers. Permits were not required because this was a “replace in-kind” project for a public agency.

<b>Budgeted Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Prop 40</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Total</b>
Personnel Services		\$46,752	\$46,752
Professional & Consultant Services	\$15,000	\$204,620	\$219,620
Construction	\$212,843	\$387,157	\$600,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$227,843</b>	<b>\$638,529</b>	<b>\$866,372</b>

**Future Actions, Partnerships and Coordination:**

The engineered solutions will be combined with other County of Santa Cruz projects, and City of Capitola projects within the Soquel Creek watershed to reduce the pollutant sources. Sewer and storm drain upgrades completed in 2004-2006 are having a positive effect on the bacteria levels at this site. Future plans are to replace the sewer main that is located within Noble Gulch, slightly upstream of this project area. The Noble Gulch project is currently in the preliminary design phase. The County, Sanitation District and City of Capitola will coordinate and collaborate on pollution reduction projects in the future including low-impact development approaches to reducing polluted runoff.

Photo 1: Capitola Esplanade, area of sewer line replacement. Soquel Lagoon is to immediate left in photo

