



UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER AREA WATERMASTER
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UPDATED

QUARTERLY REPORT OF ULARA WATERMASTER

STATUS CONFERENCE OF FEBRUARY 28, 2014 TO THE SUPERIOR COURT, DEPARTMENT 52 HONORABLE SUSAN BRYANT-DEASON

A. Ongoing Watermaster Activities

1. The Annual Watermaster Report for 2011-2012 was completed and filed with the Court on May 15, 2013. The Watermaster continues to appreciate the efforts of LADWP staff, in particular, Messrs Hadi Jonny and Greg Reed and Ms. Fatema Akhter and Ms. Araceli Carrillo.
2. The Annual Groundwater Pumping and Spreading Plan for Water Years 2013 – 2017, normally provided to the Court in July of each year, will soon be filed with the Court.
3. The Watermaster continues to perform work with DWR on its California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring program (known as CASGEM) for the four groundwater basins within ULARA. The Monitoring Plan for the ULARA groundwater basins was submitted for final review by CASGEM staff on February 17. We are waiting for notification of acceptance from DWR.
4. Continue to attend meetings with various agencies with regard to: possible uses of runoff within the Los Angeles River; the possibility of using recycled water for artificial recharge in the San Fernando Basin via spreading basins and injection wells; stormwater conservation and capture, and groundwater contamination. Also, the Watermaster continues to review and/or comment on documents published for public review regarding those subjects. Two recent documents for which the Watermaster submitted comments included the “Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Draft Integrated Feasibility Report” prepared by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the “Initial Study, Los Angeles Groundwater Replenishment Project” by LADWP.
5. Continue to review quarterly groundwater monitoring reports prepared by various consultants for contaminated sites in the San Fernando and Verdugo basins.
6. Continue to review and either approve or deny, based on site-specific conditions, the Low Impact Development (LID) projects within the City of Los Angeles portions of ULARA (i.e., San Fernando & Sylmar basins). These LIDs are for new developments and/or redevelopments in L.A. County, and are based on NPDES regulations promulgated by the RWQCB in 1990 to help minimize the impacts on the Los Angeles River, and ultimately the Pacific Ocean, by reducing the volume and improving the quality of storm water runoff from storm events.

Turbidity and potential urban-derived contaminants in the captured runoff could be reduced by the “treatment” effects of the various stormwater infiltration systems proposed via the BMPs. From a hydrogeologic perspective, and in the opinion of the ULARA Watermaster, whenever and wherever (with certain exceptions) deep percolation (infiltration) of stormwater can be appropriately enhanced, then recharge to the groundwater basins can be beneficially increased.

B. Salt & Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP)

The Watermaster has begun work for the SNMP for the 4 groundwater basins within ULARA. Each Party has established a 2-member group to serve on a SNMP subcommittee formed by the Watermaster for ULARA; this subcommittee has held an initial kick-off meeting open to the public on November 19, 2013, and our second meeting is scheduled with the ULARA SNMP Technical Subcommittee on March 5, 2014. A RWQCB staff person will routinely be invited to these meetings to maintain liaison and to keep them informed of the progress of the study.

The Watermaster has also retained 4 outside consultants for assistance with certain issues regarding the CEQA, public participation/outreach, recycled water elements, and spreadsheet modeling, all of which also need to be included in the SNMP. A Draft of the entire SNMP document for ULARA is to be prepared for review and comment by the RWQCB.

The Watermaster continues to attend occasional meetings with the RWQCB and/or with LADWP, and/or with MWD and other agencies and/or groups to help verify various aspects of the SNMP process that are still being refined by the RWQCB.

C. New Database for ULARA

To help better manage the ULARA groundwater basins on an active basis, and to obtain sufficient types and amounts of surface and subsurface data for a possible future safe yield study of the San Fernando Basin, the Watermaster continues to obtain various types of data. These data are then being input into an electronic database that will eventually include driller’s logs, geologic logs, and electric logs as available from water-supply wells, wildcat oil wells, and key groundwater monitoring wells in the four ULARA groundwater basins. This database, when completed, will complement EPA’s existing database for monitoring wells, groundwater levels and groundwater quality.

These data collection efforts are part of an ongoing Watermaster program to generate a viable, useable and up-to-date database on subsurface conditions for use by all Parties, future investigators and researchers. The database has been distributed on more than one occasion to parties who requested it, and we have received positive comments from those parties. The database will continue to be updated overtime as new data become available.

D. The Watermaster Website

The new Watermaster website went “live” in August, 2013, and can be updated and refreshed, as needed, by the Watermaster to make it more user-friendly and to increase the amount of information available to the public (<http://ULARAWatermaster.com>). This “refresh” also allows for faster and easier editing/changing of the page and also for addition of newly-generated data by the Watermaster. For instance, there is a page dedicated to the SNMP process (<http://ULARAWatermaster.com/SNMP>), through which the public can access public documents generated during the development of the ULARA SNMP.

Additional Watermaster Activities

1. Attending office and field visits to certain monitoring wells (like No. 27711, located at the downstream terminus of the entire ULARA area) and to certain surface water runoff gages (like Gage F-57C, at the southern terminus of ULARA), to help verify that they are viable monitoring sites and that the appropriate data are being accurately monitored and recorded. A key site visit to several such gages was conducted with LACDPW staff on February 25, 2014. These efforts are aimed at increasing the accuracy and reliability of surface water data being collected within ULARA, and will therefore help LADWP with its groundwater modeling for the Watermaster and also with the development of a future safe yield study.
2. The Watermaster has requested that another “Basin-wide Water Level Monitoring Event” take place in the month of April, 2014 within accessible water wells and groundwater monitoring wells in the ULARA groundwater basins. The goal of the basin-wide event is to collect a “snapshot” of the water levels in wells throughout the ULARA groundwater basins within a one-week period. A previous basin-wide monitoring event that occurred in December 2010 has proven to be helpful for model calibration by various parties who conduct modeling work in the San Fernando Valley.