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BMP DELIVERS WATER SOLUTIONS

Watsonville, CA - In the fall of 2010 the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA) established the Ad Hoc Basin Management Plan (BMP) committee. This 21 person community group was tasked with coming up with solutions to the ongoing groundwater overdraft of, and persistent problem of sea water intrusion into, the Pajaro Valley Aquifer. Last Thursday afternoon, June 7, 2012, the committee recommended a sweeping set of solutions.

Three options were presented by the team of Environmental Science Associates (ESA) and Carollo Engineers who were given the task of evaluating the current overdraft condition and vetting some 43 different projects considered by the committee. Of these three options the most aggressive was chosen because in the words of committee member Thomas Karn, "My dad taught me that the best way to solve a problem is to do the right thing the first time. If you do this you will only cry once when you write the check." Many on the committee agreed that the check will be a lot smaller if the overdraft problem and resultant sea water intrusion is solved in the right way and sooner rather than later.

The BMP Committee will pass their recommendations on to the full PVWMA Board of Directors for final approval. The recommended set of projects, and a strong technologically advanced conservation effort, is projected to address most of the known overdraft, and do so in a cost effective way. BMP Chair Dave Cavanaugh stressed that the recommended solutions would be further fined tuned to achieve even more efficiencies and cost savings.

Cavanaugh thanked the group for their tireless effort and the elegant solutions arrived at with a strong consensus. "This citizen committee, representing a wide array of interests, just did a remarkable thing and is presenting a real solution to our very real groundwater problems."

The PVWMA is a public agency whose mission is to protect and preserve the water resources within the agency's jurisdiction, generally the greater coastal Pajaro Valley.

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