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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 24, 2015

## **PV Water Board Adopts New Rates**

Watsonville, CA –Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water) Board of Directors has adopted new rates that will fund projects and programs to bring the over drafted groundwater basin into balance and stop seawater intrusion. At the May 20, 2015 board meeting, a majority protest hearing was held. However the number of protests received did not meet the number required to block implementation of the new rates.

The rate change recommendations are the products of hard work by a community based ad hoc funding committee. This group of growers, land owners, rural residents, the City of Watsonville and water experts spent 18 months looking for the most reasonable way to increase financial resources with the least impact on rate payers.

The purpose of the long deliberative process was to evaluate, explain, and substantiate the Agency's proposed new augmentation and delivered water charges, which are required fund the implementation of critical water supply projects and programs. The need for additional water supply projects has been well documented in the Basin Management Plan Update and the ongoing drought has further heightened the need. These projects are designed to tackle two major threats to the Pajaro Valley; groundwater overdraft and seawater intrusion.

California's Proposition 218 requires that existing, new, or increased property-related fees and charges meet certain requirements. With these requirements met, the new rate structure will go into effect with the beginning of the next fiscal year which is July 1, 2015.

Under the new rate structure, rural residents will pay less the first year (fees reduced from \$102/year to \$92/year), and well owners over much of the valley will pay more for pumped groundwater (an increase from \$179 per acre foot to \$191 the first year). Blended recycled water delivered in the coastal zone will increase from \$338/AF to \$348/AF the first year. An acre foot is about 326,000 gallons of water or enough water to cover a football field to a depth of one foot.

PV Water 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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