



PAJARO VALLEY WATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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PUBLIC NOTICE

**RELEASE AND AVAILABILITY OF FINAL SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT:
Watsonville Slough System Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Projects**

Date of Notice: January 8, 2021

By this notice, the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PV Water or Agency), as California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency, is announcing the availability of the **Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the Watsonville Slough System Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Projects (SCH#2019059130)**. The Draft EIR was released for public review on September 1, 2020. The Draft and Final EIR are available on <https://www.pvwater.org>.

This Notice is intended to inform interested parties of the release of the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Watsonville Slough System Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Projects. This notice also provides information on a meeting to be held regarding the Project. An upcoming public hearing is scheduled for January 20, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. by the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency Board of Directors.

Due to COVID-19, the January 20, 2021, 7:00 p.m. meeting of the PV Water Board of Directors will be held by teleconference. The public hearing will take place during this virtual meeting. To attend, please use the following link and or phone numbers: <https://www.gotomeet.me/PVWater/board-of-directors>
Toll Free: 1 (877) 309-2073, Access Code: 347-473-301#.

Questions on the hearing or requests for additional information should be directed to Marcus Mendiola, at (831) 722-9292, or E-mail: Mendiola@pvwater.org.

Project Description: Throughout much of the Pajaro Valley Groundwater Basin, groundwater levels have declined as a result of long-term groundwater overdraft. Overdraft conditions result in seawater intrusion, groundwater quality degradation, and groundwater storage depletion. The primary purpose of the Watsonville Slough System Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Projects (comprised of the Harkins Slough Facilities Upgrades Project and Struve Slough Project) is to help balance the groundwater basin, prevent further seawater intrusion, and help meet the water supply needs in the Pajaro Valley. The Projects are located in unincorporated Santa Cruz County. The Harkins Slough Project would include upgrades at the Harkins Slough pump station, installation of filter screens, installation of a backwash and raw water pipeline from the filter plant at the Harkins Slough pump station to an existing gravity sewer in West Beach Street, and construction of two new recharge basins and associated recovery wells, monitoring wells, and pipelines. The Struve Slough Project would develop Struve Slough as a water supply source by installing a new screened intake, new pump station, a pipeline to connect the new pump station at Struve Slough to the Harkins Slough pump station, a pipeline to connect the Harkins Slough pump station to the recharge basins, and a new recharge basin and associated recovery wells, monitoring wells, and pipelines.

Environmental Resources and Impacts: The EIR finds that the Projects would result in significant or potentially significant environmental impacts related to surface water, groundwater, and water quality; biological resources; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; noise and vibration; transportation and traffic; cultural resources; tribal cultural resources; and aesthetics, and recommends the implementation of feasible mitigation measures to either avoid or reduce impacts to a less-than-significant levels. The EIR also determines that Project implementation would have a significant and unavoidable impact related to the conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural use. None of the Project components are on sites listed under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

The Agency prepared the Draft EIR and released this document for public review and comment on September 1, 2020. The formal comment period closed on October 19, 2020. Pursuant to the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15088, the Agency has evaluated comments on environmental issues received from persons who received the Draft EIR and prepared written responses to those comments. These responses are presented in the Watsonville Slough System Managed Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Projects Responses to Comments on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Responses to Comments document). The Draft EIR and the Responses to Comments document comprise the Final EIR for the Projects.

The Agency invites interested members of the public to review the Final EIR and attend meetings related to the Agency's consideration of this project.

Address Where Copy of Draft Supplemental EIR and Responses to Comments document are Available for Review:

PV Water Office*
36 Brennan St.
Watsonville, CA 95076

*Reference documents are available for review at this location upon request.

The Draft EIR and Responses to Comments document is available on the PV Water website:

<http://www.pvwater.org/>.

