



CITY OF SALINAS COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: APRIL 22, 2025

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS

FROM: DAVID JACOBS, DIRECTOR

TITLE: AGREEMENT WITH MONTEREY ONE WATER FOR
TREATMENT OF POND 3 INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a resolution delegating authority to the City Manager to execute agreement with Monterey One Water for the temporary diversion of industrial wastewater from the City's Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility using the pond 3 pump station to Monterey One Water.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The ponds at the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility (IWTF) have reduced percolation and continue to come close to the freeboard limits in the discharge permit. To maintain freeboard, the City is working with Monterey One Water (M1W) and Monterey County Water Resources Agency to take water using the pond 3 pump station. Depending on the use and amount of water taken it is estimated the cost of diverting and treating the water is going to range between \$150,000 and \$250,000.

BACKGROUND:

The IWTF site was built in 1943 to serve as a vegetable wastewater treatment processing facility which initially consisted of a series of percolation ponds. The facility has been expanded over the years to include additional percolation ponds, an aeration lagoon, and drying beds. Currently, it spans approximately 280 acres with a permitted capacity of 4 million gallons per day (mgd).

The IWTF operates under a General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) (Order No. R3-2004-0066) from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The IWTF is specifically prohibited from discharging effluent to the Salinas River.

Currently, 23 industrial users contribute wastewater flow to the IWTF (the IWTF is located south of the City next to the Salinas River). These industrial users are primarily performing food processing, which includes vegetable packaging, ice manufacturing and produce refrigeration. Industrial wastewater flows vary seasonally. Peak flow within the system occurs during the summer months, which coincides with the peak harvesting season. Flows are lower in the winter, which coincides with decreased processing due to lower harvests.

A collaborative effort between the City and Monterey One Water (M1W) resulted in the installation of permanent facilities in 2016 to divert the industrial wastewater directly to the M1W Regional Treatment Plant (RTP). Further collaboration resulted in a Proposition 1 Storm Water Grant from the State Water Resources Control Board. The grant allowed construction of the stormwater diversion facilities and a pump station to convey both wastewater and stormwater to the RTP after treatment through the IWTF. These improvements were completed in 2020. Collectively, these improvements allow the system to transfer stormwater and industrial wastewater to the RTP for reuse and recycling.

In the past M1W has worked with the City to temporarily accept industrial wastewater to lower water levels at the IWTF due to operational concerns regarding regulatory requirements. This has occurred periodically over the last few years with a letter of agreement and terms executed each time. Each time a request has been made the terms of the agreement include reimbursement of costs incurred by M1W in accepting and treating these flows:

- January 2023: In response to severe weather and flooding of the ponds
- March 13, 2023 – May 1, 2023: Flooding shutdown use of the IWTF
- February 16, 2024 – April 21, 2024: In response to severe weather and freeboard concerns with the ponds
- November 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024: In response to freeboard concerns with the ponds

In an attempt to mitigate the freeboard issues that occur later in the year and to possibly use the water for beneficial uses M1W, MCWRA and the City met to develop the City of Salinas industrial wastewater treatment facility effluent interim agreement. This agreement is a stop gap agreement as the the City develops a long-term strategy and vision.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This project addresses the current City Council's Goals of "Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability" and "Effective and Culturally Responsive Government."

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The Public Works Department is collaborating with Legal and Administration Departments.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Funding is available and appropriated for the current fiscal year. Anything beyond this fiscal year will be included as part of the annual budget process and is subject to the appropriation of funds. However, while the City has some responsibility for the conveyance and treatment costs, section 5 e, f, and g, specifies which Agency will be responsible for the costs based on who uses the water.

Fund	Appropriation	Appropriation Name	Total Appropriation	Amount for recommendation	FY 24-25 Operating Budget Page	Last Budget Action (Date, Resolution)*
6200	50.5441 - 63.1081	Outside services-MRWPCA Wash Water	\$47,000	\$47,000	377	6/11/24, 22979

* The FY 24-25 Adopted Budget was adopted on June 11, 2024.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Interim City of Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility Effluent Agreement