What is the South County Ag Recycled Water Feasibility Study?

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) is studying the feasibility of providing tertiary treated recycled water to irrigate agriculture and wildlife habitat land south of Elk Grove and north of the Cosumnes River.

SRCSD may have an opportunity to deliver tertiary treated water to irrigate agriculture and wildlife habitat land. Recycled water could reduce the region’s dependence on groundwater and surface water, especially during droughts, periods of high demand and when water supply is low.

What is the purpose of this study?

When complete, the feasibility study will identify overall project benefits, constraints, solutions or mitigation measures and demonstrate the project’s viability based on technical, institutional, legal, economic and social considerations. The outcome of this study will help SRCSD determine whether or not to move forward with the project.

What is recycled water?

Recycled water is highly treated wastewater produced at SRCSD’s Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant in Elk Grove. This tertiary-treated water is virtually pathogen free and safe for use on select agricultural products.

Is recycled water safe?

Yes. Recycled water has a long history of safe use in California and throughout the country. There has never been a documented health-related problem traced back to recycled water when used in accordance with state guidelines.

What are the key benefits of a potential South County Ag recycled water project?

If constructed, this project could:

- Provide a stable water supply for irrigation
- Restore natural water flow in the Cosumnes River
- Recharge groundwater supplies
- Protect surface water
- Reduce discharge of treated effluent to the Sacramento River
- Help promote wildlife habitat and Delta ecosystem restoration efforts

How could recycled water be delivered?

The feasibility study will evaluate various alternatives to deliver recycled water to the south county area. Installing a pipeline from SRCSD’s wastewater treatment plant to the area is one alternative.
Who might benefit from this potential project?

As part of the feasibility study, SRCSD and its representatives are meeting with potential water users in the south Sacramento County area, south of Elk Grove and north of the Cosumnes River. Up to 42,000 acres of agriculture and wildlife habitat land would potentially have access to the tertiary-treated water. In the future, the boundaries could be expanded to include other areas of Sacramento County.

How much would recycled water cost?

The ultimate cost of recycled water will depend on a number of factors including the cost of pipelines, wastewater treatment plant upgrades and final size of the system.

How soon could recycled water be available?

It is too early to say when recycled water will be available in the south county area. The feasibility study is the first phase. The study is expected to be completed in late 2012, after which SRCSD will evaluate the project and decide whether or not to proceed to design and construction.

What are SRCSD’s next steps?

During the feasibility study, SRCSD’s team is examining various factors. SRCSD is meeting with stakeholder agencies and potential recycled water users to determine their land use, seasonal water use needs, parcel sizes, permit and environmental requirements and infrastructure needs.

How SRCSD proceeds will depend on the outcome of the feasibility study. If the project is deemed feasible based on cost and market considerations, SRCSD may move forward with design and the eventual construction of the project.

Where is recycled water currently used to irrigate agriculture and habitat lands?

- **City of Santa Rosa** – Nearly a third of Santa Rosa’s 8.1 billion gallons of recycled water is used to irrigate more than 5,800 acres of agricultural land including pastures, hay and silage crops, vineyards, vegetables and specialty crops.

- **City of Lodi** – More than 900 acres of land for the cultivation and harvesting of feed and fodder crops are irrigated with recycled water. In recent years, Lodi has also supplied recycled water to produce steam for a 49-megawatt power generator and to replenish mosquitofish-rearing ponds.

- **Castroville** – Recycled water is currently used to irrigate 12,000 acres of Castroville farmland. Crops include a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Want more information?

Visit [www.srcsd.com/swrc-projects.php](http://www.srcsd.com/swrc-projects.php) or contact Jose Ramirez at ramirezj@sacsewer.com or (916) 876-6059.

For information about SRCSD’s water recycling program, visit [www.srcsd.com/water-recycling-environment.php](http://www.srcsd.com/water-recycling-environment.php)