

Water management plans move forward

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LOS ANGELES - The Board of Supervisors unanimously and without discussion Tuesday voted to prepare two water management plans for the Antelope Valley, process that has already been in the works for about 18 months but still needed formal board approval.

The county's Department of Public Works, Waterworks District No. 40 has been the lead county agency in the creation of an Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and Groundwater Management Plan.

Although the district has already been working on the projects for more than a year, the board of supervisors had to hold a public hearing and pass a resolution saying it would work on the plans.

No members of the public commented during the board's public hearing, which was during Tuesday's board meeting.

"Part of doing an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan is there's a requirement that you get a resolution from your governing board and have a public hearing," said Melinda Barrett, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles County Waterworks.

Other entities and agencies involved in creating the plan, including the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster, have already passed their resolutions, she said.

"We're the last entity to get ours done, but the board has know what we were doing," she said.

The Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, a draft of which was released in May 2006, will eventually combine efforts and resources from local water purveyors, cities, the county and other agencies for the purposes of working on major water projects.

In 2002, the state set aside \$380 million in grants for projects related to such plans.

"This is an extraordinary, positive step for the Antelope Valley Region," said Norm Hickling, aide to 5th District County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich. "This plan, for

the first time, brings all the parties and stakeholders together to create two plans that have a significant impact on the future growth of the Antelope Valley."

Hickling said the draft plan should be reviewed and ready for approval by the county and other stakeholders by sometime in 2008.

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