



**STAFF REPORT**  
**1/26/2022**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Cástulo R. Estrada, Utilities Manager

**SUBJECT:** Resolution No. WA-2022-02, a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Coachella Water Authority Authorizing the Grant Application, Acceptance, and Execution for the Groundwater Well Project

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt Resolution No. WA-2022-02, a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Coachella Water Authority Authorizing the Grant Application, Acceptance, and Execution for the Groundwater Well Project

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

DWR is administering approximately \$200 million in drought relief funding to support projects that provide interim and immediate drought relief to urban communities and for multibenefit projects. The grants are intended to provide water to communities that face the loss or contamination of water supplies, to address immediate impacts on human health and safety, and to protect fish and wildlife resources. The Final Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) for the Urban and Multibenefit Drought Grants was released on October 28, 2021.

Coachella Water Authority (CWA) is a joint powers authority formed by the City of Coachella and Coachella Redevelopment Agency to provide potable water service to the City of Coachella and surrounding areas. CWA's water supply consists solely of groundwater, which is pumped from six wells within the Indio Subbasin of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. CWA recently partnered with the three other water purveyors in the Indio Subbasin to prepare the Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan Update ([www.IndioSubbasinSGMA.org](http://www.IndioSubbasinSGMA.org)) that will guide sustainable basin management, including protection of groundwater quality and reliability.

To ensure safe, clean drinking water for residents within its service area, CWA is in the process of consolidating small water systems (SWSs) that rely on individual, private groundwater wells into its potable water system. These SWSs often have poor water quality, poor water supply reliability, lack redundancy, and are small, disadvantaged communities (DACs). In the next year, CWA is planning to consolidate Shady Lane Mobile Home Park (MHP), Mesquite Mutual Water Company (MMWC), and Castro's Mobile Home Community. All three SWSs previously relied

on private, on-site wells to provide domestic water to a total of approximately 102 residential connections, as well as irrigation services. However, all three private wells exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for the hexavalent chromium drinking water standard and have failed in the past six years leaving the residents with no water supply. Temporary emergency water supplies have since been provided by CWA and adjacent parcels; for example, two of these SWS are currently being served by a high line from nearby CWA fire hydrants. As the lack of dedicated water supplies and lack of redundancy put the residents of each of the SWSs at risk, consolidation into CWA's water system was found to be the most feasible and long-lasting alternative. The SWSs are at risk of experiencing more severe drought impacts since they already have limited and unreliable supplies and poor water quality – issues that can be further exacerbated during times of drought.

The CWA Groundwater Well Project (Project) consists of the construction of one new groundwater well, which will increase CWA's overall capacity, improve operational flexibility by increasing the number of wells CWA has access to and can pump as needed to meet demands, and assist CWA in responding to drought impacts within its service area. The Project will ensure SWSs can be served with a high-quality, reliable water supply while alleviating the SWSs' susceptibility to drought conditions, as many lack the ability to purchase alternative water supplies, drill deeper wells, or repair wells should issues arise. Furthermore, the improved water supply reliability resulting from the Project will benefit all customers served by CWA and ensure adequate supply for new, planned connections including those for low and very low income populations.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No fiscal impact at this time.