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**Date:** August 25, 2023

**From:** The Camrosa Water District

**To:** The Honorable Kevin G. DeNoce, Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California, County of Ventura

**Subject:** Camrosa Water District Response to the 2022-2023 Ventura County Grand Jury Water Availability for Wildfires in Ventura County, June 12, 2023, Final Report.

As required by California Penal Code Section 933.05, the following is in response to Findings and Recommendation of said report pertaining to the Camrosa Water District, namely:

**FINDINGS**

**F-01. The Grand Jury finds that an adequate supply of water is essential for successful suppression of wildfires. (SF-01, SF-02, SF-03, SF-04)**

**Response:** A wildfire, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is "a sweeping and destructive conflagration especially in a wilderness or a rural area." It should be noted in the report that potable water systems are not designed or intended to fight wildfires. They are designed to provide domestic water service to the customer base and supply water to fire service in the event of urban structure fires and to meet the requirements of the local fire department. Agreeing to the finding should not imply that domestic water agencies are in any way responsible for the supply needed to fight wildfires. With that stated, Camrosa does make every effort to maximize water supply and water delivery during wildfire events. This includes topping-off all storage facilities and deploying portable generators as needed. Additionally, we open our Incident Command Center and coordinate with the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services.

**F-02. The Grand Jury finds that the limited number of Fire Weather Watch (FWW) advisories amplifies the importance of establishing written procedures, protocols, and training. (SF-01, SF-05, SF-07, SF-10)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with findings F-02.

**F-03. The Grand Jury finds that written procedures for actions taken by water purveyors during a Fire Weather Watch event is a best practice that is lacking in Ventura County. (SF-01, SF-05, SF-07, SF-10)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District does not know the extent of written procedures of other agencies. Camrosa has an Emergency Response Plan in place that outlines priority actions during emergency events, including wildfires, and coordinates with the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services during all emergencies. That coordination includes the opening of Camrosa's Incident Command Center and placing a Camrosa employee in the Ventura OES Command Center.

**F-04. The Grand Jury finds that the limited number of Red Flag Warning (RFW) events amplifies the importance of establishing written procedures, protocols, and training. (SF-01, SF-06, SF-07, SF-10)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with findings F-04.

**F-05. The Grand Jury finds that written procedures for actions taken by water purveyors during a Red Flag Warning event is a best practice that is lacking in Ventura County. (SF-01, SF-06, SF-07, SF-10)**

**Response:** Camrosa does not know the extent of written procedures for other agencies. While Camrosa's Emergency Response Plan does not have specific written procedures regarding a Red Flag Warning (RFW) event, it does include operational practices during RFW's, such as maximizing storage, water availability, and the stationing of mobile generators in critical locations. Specific RFW procedures will be developed and incorporated into the next revision of District's existing Emergency Response Plan.

**F-06. The Grand Jury finds that written procedures for actions taken by water purveyors during an active fire event is a best practice that is lacking in Ventura County. (SF-01, SF-08, SF-10)**

**Response:** Camrosa does not know the extent of other agencies written procedures. Camrosa has an Emergency Response Plan in place that outlines priority actions during emergency events and coordinates with the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services in the event of any disaster. The emergency response plan identifies actions and priorities to be followed during all emergency events, including active fire events.

**F-07. The Grand Jury finds that written procedures for actions taken by water purveyors during Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events is a best practice that is lacking in Ventura County. (SF-01, SF-09, SF-10)**

**Response:** Camrosa does not know the extent of other agencies written procedures. While the district currently does not have specific written procedures for actions to be taken in the event of a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) event, the district maintains high-power, diesel fuel generators at all critical infrastructure sites including pump stations that deliver water from ground wells, surface water, and import sources (Calleguas meter stations) to its many reservoir sites with the intended purpose of mitigating any emergency condition which would hamper its ability to serve water. Additionally, the district maintains a fleet of standby high-power mobile generators that can be rapidly deployed at any location as needed in the event of a PSPS event. The district will consider incorporating specific written procedures relating to PSPS events into the next revision of its existing Emergency Response Plan.

**F-08. The Grand Jury finds that backup power to critical infrastructure is not always available. (SF-01, SF-11)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with findings F-08. The district maintains high-power, diesel fuel generators at all critical infrastructure sites including pump stations that deliver water from ground wells, surface water, and import sources (Calleguas meter stations) to its many reservoir sites with the intended purpose of mitigating any emergency condition which would hamper its ability to serve water. Additionally, the district maintains a fleet of standby high-power mobile generators that can be rapidly deployed at any location as needed.

**F-09. The Grand Jury finds that SCADA systems are not equipped with backup power in all instances. (SF-01, SF-12).**

**Response:** Camrosa does not know the extent that other agencies have backup power for their SCADA systems. The district maintains backup power in the form of UPS batteries and/or electrical generators for all critical SCADA systems. Additionally, the district maintains a fault-tolerant, partial-mesh, microwave network to maintain critical SCADA communications.

**F-10. The Grand Jury finds that inadequate communication between adjoining water purveyors limits the ability to coordinate needed actions such as available water transfers. (SF-13, SF-14)**

**Response:** Camrosa does not know the extent of communication that the other agencies have with each other. It is our understanding the Ventura County Office of Emergency Service prefers that emergency coordination goes through their office because they have a better county wide view of the need and how to best distribute the resources. It is good for adjoining water purveyors to have a good line of communication with neighboring agencies. Camrosa's adjoining purveyors include the cities of Moorpark, Camarillo, and Thousand Oaks, the unincorporated areas of the Pleasant Valley County Water District and the district's wholesale water purveyor, Calleguas Municipal Water District. The establishment of written procedures that outline communication protocols to be followed during active fire, FWW, RFW, and PSPS events would be beneficial.

**F-12. The Grand Jury finds that enrolling in GETS and WPS would allow Ventura County water purveyors priority access to landline and cellular telephone networks in emergency situations. (SF-16, SF-17)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with findings F-12. During the 2017 Thomas Fire and 2018 Hill and Woolsey fires, the district experienced both cellular and landline voice communication disruptions related to these fire events. However, during these critical times, Camrosa staff (operations and administrative personnel) were able to remain in contact with each other via the districts backup UHF (ultra-high frequency) radio and satellite communication systems. The district is taking action to evaluate enrollment in the PTS and GETS services offered to organizations within Water and Wastewater Critical Infrastructure Sector. Camrosa also maintains satellite phones that are to be used during emergencies including communication with the Ventura County Office of Emergency Services.

**F-13. The Grand Jury finds that enrolling in CalWARN would allow Ventura County water purveyors access to statewide resources. (SF-18)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with findings F-13. The district is currently a signatory of Region I (Southern Region) of the CalWARN system.

**F-14. The Grand Jury finds that Ventura County Fire Code section 4907.8 regarding brush clearance around water tanks, water supply pumps, pump houses and related infrastructure applies to all rural and unincorporated communities, and all cities except Fillmore, Oxnard and Ventura. (SF-19, SF-20, SF-21)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with findings F-14.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**R-01. The Grand Jury recommends that water purveyors establish written operational procedures and training to provide for increased water supply for fire flow during FWWs, RFWs, active fires and PSPS. (F-01, F-02, F-03, F-04, F-05, F-06, F-07)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-01.

**R-02. The Grand Jury recommends that water purveyors have emergency power on site for all critical water infrastructure including SCADA systems. (F-08, F-09)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-02.

**R-03. The Grand Jury recommends that water purveyors establish common communication protocols with adjoining water purveyors to coordinate needed actions, including water transfers during active fires. (F-10)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-03.

**R-05. The Grand Jury recommends that water purveyors enroll their employees in the FCC Wireless Priority Service (WPS) providing cell phone priority in emergencies. (F-12)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-05.

**R-06. The Grand Jury recommends that water purveyors enroll in the Government Emergency Telecommunications System (GETS) providing landline phone priority in emergencies. (F-12)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-06.

**R-07. The Grand Jury recommends that all water purveyors enroll in CalWARN, a network of water and wastewater agencies that can provide emergency resources. (F-13)**

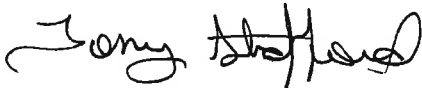
**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-07.

**R-08. The Grand Jury recommends that all water purveyors provide brush clearance around water tanks, water supply pumps, pump houses and related infrastructure. (F-14)**

**Response:** The Camrosa Water District agrees with Recommendation R-08.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Tony L. Stafford

General Manager

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cc: Ventura County Grand Jury



# COUNTY of VENTURA

## Grand Jury

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### Response to 2022-2023 Ventura County Grand Jury Report Form (Please See California Penal Code Section 933.05)

Report Title: Water Availability for Wildfires in Ventura County

Responding Entity: President Eugene West, Camrosa Water District

#### FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: F-02, F-04, F-08, F-12, F-13, F-14
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered: F-01, F-03, F-05, F-06, F-07, F-09, F-10, F-11  
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the Findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons.)

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R-02, R-07 have been implemented.  
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered R-01 have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.  
(Attach a summary indicating the timeframe for implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered R-03, R-05, R-06, R-08 require further analysis.  
(Attach an explanation to include: scope and parameters of the analysis or study and timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion with the agency or department head. The timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the report.)
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: August 25, 2023

Signed: 

Title: President, Board of Directors

Number of pages attached: 4