



WHEELER RIDGE-MARICOPA WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

12109 Highway 166, Bakersfield, CA 93313-9630

Telephone: 661.858.2281 ♦ Fax: 661.858.2643 ♦ Water Orders: 661.858.2296
www.wrmwsd.com

SHERIDAN NICHOLAS
ENGINEER-MANAGER

May 16, 2023

JAMES D. SMITH
CONTROLLER

Re: Proposed Groundwater Service Charge

Dear Landowner,

This letter is to inform you of a potential charge that may be levied on groundwater use within the Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District (District) boundary beginning in 2023. Please read this document in its entirety. Please note that all matters and dates discussed in this notice are subject to change.

For the past 18-months, the District has been working on a potential groundwater service charge to be imposed on groundwater used within the District. This is a District charge being developed to address and alleviate certain cost inequities between Water Service Contract holders and groundwater-only users within the District. The District's current system of rates and charges places nearly the entire financial burden of importing water into the District on contract Water Users. It is not the intention of the District to collect any additional money from landowners beyond what is currently accounted for within its annual budget, nor is the aim to completely equalize all costs between surface water and groundwater users. Instead, the intention is to equitably shift some of the cost burden that contract Water Users bear for the District's importation of water into the District, which service benefits not merely lands directly served with surface water but all lands that pump and benefit from the use of groundwater within the District

At its regularly scheduled Board meeting on May 10th, 2023, staff reviewed the proposed Groundwater Service Charge (GWSC) along with a presentation from the Engineer-Manager. A copy of the presentation is available on our website at www.wrmwsd.com.

On May 24th, 2023, at 8:00 am, the District will conduct a Special Board meeting, which is open to the public, at which the Board intends to consider adoption of a resolution beginning the 45-day public notice and hearing process associated with the potential approval of the imposition of said groundwater charge. Formal notices and protest forms will be mailed following the May 24th Special Board meeting.

Staff have also scheduled a series of landowner workshops to be held at our District headquarters to further review the proposed GWSC and its impact on Water Users. These workshops are scheduled for:

- May 31st, 2023, 9:00 am
- Jun 5th, 2023, 1:00 pm
- Jun 7th, 2023, 9:00 am
- Jun 7th, 2023, 1:00 pm

While the proposed GWSC charge has not been finalized (draft rates are shown in the presentation), the full rate study, proposed charges, and methodology will be reviewed at the May 24th Board meeting and the landowner workshops.

The District strongly encourages all landowners to attend at least one of the above scheduled workshops. Additionally, District staff would be happy to schedule any meetings with Water Users, should you wish to have one-on-one conversations regarding the proposed charge and its specific financial impact to your operations.

Please feel welcome to contact District Engineer-Manager Sheridan Nicholas (661-527-6075) or Water Resources Manager Eric McDaris (661-527-6069) with any questions, or should you wish to schedule a meeting.

Respectfully,

Sheridan Nicholas, Engineer-Manager