

State permit paves way for CCWD, golf course to end watering dispute

By Nick Baptista/ The Valley Springs News/ Dec. 28, 2012

A legal squabble between the Calaveras County Water District and La Contenta Golf Club over the use of treated water to irrigate the golf course is likely a thing of the past with issuance of a new permit from the State Water Resource Control Board.

The water board on Dec. 13 issued a Notice of Applicability permit. The notice provides coverage for the district under general waste discharge requirements for landscape irrigation uses of municipal recycled water. In laymen's terms, the long, sought-after permit for the La Contenta Golf Course was finally issued.

Marty Davis, director of golf at La Contenta Golf Club, hailed the permit as "good for the community and good for the golf course."

The permit allows CCWD to discharge tertiary treated effluent directly into one storage pond at the golf course and gives CCWD the ability to empty the recycled water storage pond every year. It will also allow more efficient use of the recycled water since the golf course will be able to vary their irrigation schedule.

According to CCWD, obtaining the permit is a tremendous benefit to the entire La Contenta community ensuring CCWD can maximize the use of recycled water.

"This solves our earlier problems," Davis said. With the ability to store treated water in one of the golf course's ponds, instead of relying on a small-line feed directly from the treatment plant, "we can now use as much (treated) water as CCWD can provide and we can water the course more efficiently."

He estimates he can irrigate the 18-hole course in four hours or less a night, instead of running sprinklers from dusk to dawn as in the past.

"All previous issues (with CCWD) are mute" with issuance of the permit, Davis added.

The legal battle between CCWD and La Contenta began in mid-2011 when CCWD cut off the golf course's supply of raw water from New Hogan Lake to force golf course management to use more recycled water from CCWD's treatment plant.

La Contenta management contended CCWD was unable to deliver enough treated water through a small pipe system to meet the course's watering needs during the summer months.

Final details are being worked out, Davis said, and La Contenta still needs raw water for irrigation purposes and the other ponds, but most of the infrastructure is in place to comply with the permit.

The permit is the first such issued for a golf course by the State Water Resources Board since a general order was first adopted in 2009, CCWD said.

“The district is very pleased and looks forward to working with the La Contenta Golf Course management to ensure that use of recycled water is maximized,” CCWD said in a release.

“The executive officer of the Central Valley Regional Quality Control Board, Pamela Creedon, and her staff were instrumental in the district obtaining the permit,” CCWD added. “Ms. Creedon and her staff worked hand in hand with the district to compile the necessary documents, complete the required studies and help CCWD negotiate with the State Water Resources Control Board for the permit.”