

Do You Practice “Smart Gardening?”

Smart gardening is a form of landscaping that uses drought-tolerant plants and planting techniques to reduce the amount of water needed for landscaping purposes by up to 50 percent. A typical landscape consumes 50 to 70 percent of residential water use. A key consideration when planting a landscape is to group plants together that require similar watering needs, which makes it a lot easier to connect them up

to a single valve that will water them at equal amounts on an as-needed basis. Preparing soil with additional amendments will help the soil retain water and prevent evaporation.

Casitas encourages the public to visit our sponsored Water Wise Gardening in Ventura website at www.ventura.watersavingplants.com to get more information on landscape design and plants. Users can build a database of plants that will be available for repeated visits to the site.



Free Landscape Classes

With our limited local water supply it is becoming more essential to use water more wisely in Ojai, Ventura and the surrounding areas of western Ventura County. More customers are becoming interested in converting their thirsty lawns to low-water-use gardens and using other methods such as rain barrels, gray water systems, and new irrigation technologies.

Please join us at one of our free Saturday morning classes and learn how to create a beautiful, water-smart garden.

- Laundry to Landscape: Gray water Workshop - Sat., January 28, 2012 from 9 a.m. to noon
- How to Use Drip Irrigation and Smart Controllers Workshop - Sat., April 28, 2012 from 9 a.m. to noon

- Soils, Mulches and Amendments Workshop - Sat., July 28, 2012 from 9 a.m. to noon
- California Friendly Plant Choices Workshop - Sat., October 27, 2012 from 9 a.m. to noon

Attendance is limited to 40 people per class so please RSVP early at rmerckling@casitaswater.com or (805) 649-2251, extension 118. All workshops will be held in the boardroom at the Casitas main offices located at 1055 Ventura Ave. in Oak View.

The Casitas Speakers Bureau provides an opportunity for customers and the community to learn more about water issues in the Western Ventura County area. Please contact Ron Merckling, Water Conservation and Public Affairs Manager, 805-649-2251, extension 118, to invite a speaker to your next community group or organizational meeting.

The Casitas Board of Directors is scheduled to meet at 3:00 p.m. in the board room located in the main office at 1055 Ventura Ave., Oak View, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month.

Bill Hicks, Division I
James W. Word, Division II
Pete Kaiser, Division III
Mary Bergen, Division IV
Russ Bagerly, Division V

Your Board in Action

Join the Casitas Municipal Water District Facebook page to get the latest updates on water conservation and the Lake Casitas Recreation Area at: www.facebook.com/fbsitecasitasmunicipalwaterdistrict.



1055 Ventura Ave.
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CASITAS WATER NEWS

Casitas Municipal Water District

Winter 2012

Casitas Saves \$1.4 Million on Innovative Pipeline Replacement Project

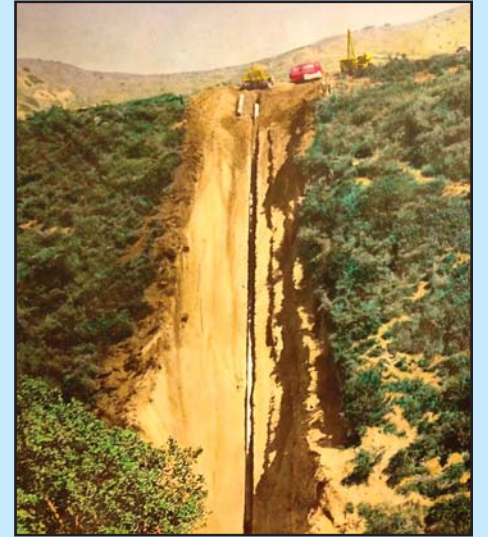
One of the larger projects that Casitas is currently undertaking is the replacement of a critical section of water pipe that serves the beach communities between the Santa Barbara County line and the City of Ventura. In January 2005, the pipe was damaged at the bottom of one of these ravines during the large rainfall event. Casitas staff made significant efforts to repair the pipeline, but the condition of the pipe warranted its replacement.

The specific section of pipe is in a deep and broad canyon north of La Conchita, making this replacement a challenge.

“The difficult terrain surrounding this pipe required significant

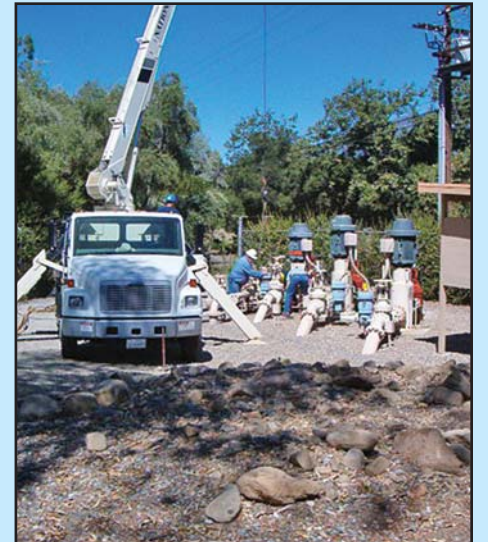
analysis to determine how best to replace it,” said Neil Cole, Casitas Principal Engineer. He added, “The ‘open cut’ method that was used to install the pipe originally (see the picture at right) is no longer safe or practical.” Casitas consulted with Hasan & Associates and Water Resources Engineering Associates to evaluate replacement options. The options ranged from spanning the canyon at \$6 million to directional boring at \$2 million. On December 14, 2011, the Board of Directors awarded the project to Toro Enterprises to construct the directional bore replacement pipe for approximately \$600,000, a cost savings of \$1.4 million from the original estimates.

The pipe replacement project



Casitas’ staff and contractors worked to install pipeline in 1960.

will begin in late January of 2012 and will continue through May 2012.



Casitas’ staff and contractors continually make significant efforts to repair or replace aging pipelines in the District’s water system.

Casitas Hires New Water Conservation Specialist

Cinnamon McIntosh joined the Casitas team in September. Her primary goal is to help customers use their water more efficiently.

“Cinnamon's background in water conservation makes her well-suited to her new role in meeting Casitas' water conservation commitments,” said Ron Merckling, Water Conservation Manager.

“I look forward to working closely with Casitas' residents and business owners to help them achieve their water efficiency goals, particularly in areas like landscaping. Water-efficient landscaping, when done well, provides a lush and beautiful environment that ends up saving many customers money on both their water bills and maintenance costs. Even using just a few simple water conservation methods can make a big difference in the garden,” McIntosh said.

McIntosh has spent more than 10 years working in water conservation. Most recently, she held a water conservation position with the County of Santa Barbara, where she advanced water conservation through partnerships and programs with local water providers, regional programs like the Green Business

Program of Santa Barbara County, and statewide collaboration on water resource education and conservation committees. McIntosh holds a Master's degree focused on California Water Resources from Humboldt State University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is also a Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor through the Irrigation Association and serves on the Department of Water Resources Education Committee.



Cinnamon McIntosh,
Water Conservation Specialist

Casitas offers free water surveys to customers that include a complete review of indoor and outdoor water usage. A report is created that provides specific recommendations to the customer detailing ways they can improve their water usage. To learn more about Casitas' water conservation programs, please visit www.casitaswater.org.

Takings Case to Be Appealed

The Casitas Municipal Water District filed a lawsuit against the federal government in 2005 after the federal government ordered water releases that Casitas believes jeopardized Casitas' ability to maintain water supplies throughout a repeated historical long-term drought. The federal government requires water releases at the Robles Fish Passage Facility to assist the endangered steelhead trout.

On December 5, 2011, U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge John Wiese ruled that Casitas' cause of

action “is not ripe,” that is, that there have been no damages to Casitas or the District at this point to date. Therefore, the judge did not award the District any damages until perhaps sometime in the future when the judge believes the District has experienced water-loss damages. Casitas' Board on December 14 voted to agree with their attorney and appeal the ruling that dismissed Casitas' claim. The legal actions are being handled through a cost contingency agreement with Marzulla Law.

Don't Miss Out on This Year's Kid's Fishing Day



Lake Casitas Recreation Area will be hosting this year's Free Kids Fishing Day on Saturday, March 24, 2012. There will be a fish planting of the famous “Nebraska Tailwalkers.” The event is scheduled from 9 a.m. to noon and includes a hot dog lunch while supplies last!

Youths under the age of 16 can enjoy some fishing for free and they don't need a license. Anglers ages 16 and 17 are welcome, but they must possess a valid fishing license required by the Department of Fish and Game.



Lake Casitas Recreation Area Free Kids Fishing Day is Saturday, March 24, 2012.

Registration begins at 8:45 a.m. on the day of the event and fishing begins at 9 a.m. Register on site; no pre-registration accepted. The fishing is free, but Lake Casitas Recreation Area vehicle entry fees apply. Walk-ins and bicycles enter for free.

The Lake Casitas Recreation Area will host the event rain or shine, unless winds present a problem. Email Park Services Officer Rob Weinerth at rweinerth@casitaswater.com for more information.

Lifeguards Needed!



Casitas Water Adventure is looking forward to the 2012 season with great youth summer employment opportunities. What better way to enjoy your summer than with a lifeguard job at your local family-friendly water park. Casitas offers part-time seasonal employment that fits right into your summer school schedule. We are NOW accepting applications! Download yours at www.casitaswater.org under the employment tab. Applications can be mailed or turned in by hand to the front entrance at Lake Casitas Recreation Area, 11311 Santa Ana Road Ventura, CA 93010, from now until the end of May.

Lifeguard Requirements:

- Applicants must be 15 years old by February 1, 2012
- You will have had to successfully complete an American Red Cross Lifeguarding course
- You'll need a great attitude
- Applicants will have to pass a successful Live Scan background check



- Applicants must be able to work well with your friends
- Applicants have to pass a drug screen

For additional information please contact Matt Benitez, Waterpark Coordinator, at mbenitez@casitaswater.com or 805-649-2233 extension 116.