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## DISTRICT UPDATE - 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER 2024

The Los Olivos Community Services District (LOCSO) continues to methodically evaluate technical approaches, obtain cost estimates, engage our community, and pursue grant opportunities for feasible, cost-effective wastewater treatment solutions for our community. This past quarter the District:

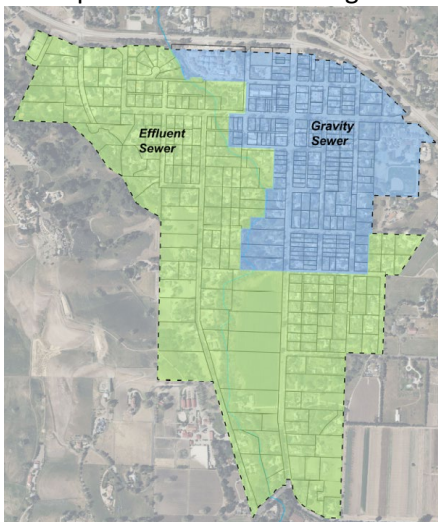
- Received a report for the 30% engineering design and cost estimate on hybrid collection approaches, with a focus on the use of effluent-only collection technologies
- Moved forward with two contracts to evaluate the costs and technical challenges of potentially connecting to the City of Solvang's wastewater treatment facilities
- Performed extensive sampling of all five of the District's groundwater monitoring wells, in cooperation with the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the County of Santa Barbara Public Health Environmental Health Services
- Focused on expanded public outreach through community meetings and social media

As noted in prior updates, any final wastewater treatment and water reclamation solution put forth by the Board will be the result of significant community input, environmental review and then subject to a vote by District property owners in accordance with Proposition 218. Since the District is still evaluating technical solutions, no specific timeline for the property owner vote has been established.

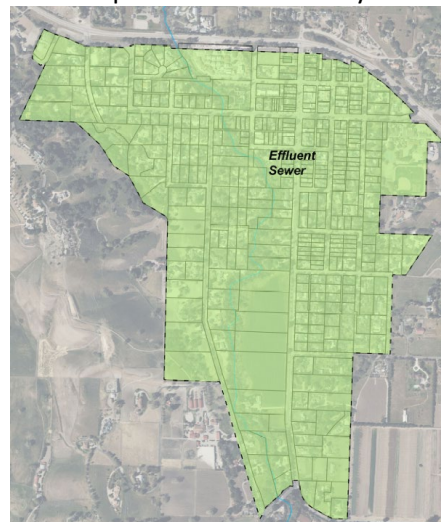
### **Final Report - 30% Engineering Design and Cost Estimate – Effluent Only & Hybrid Collection**

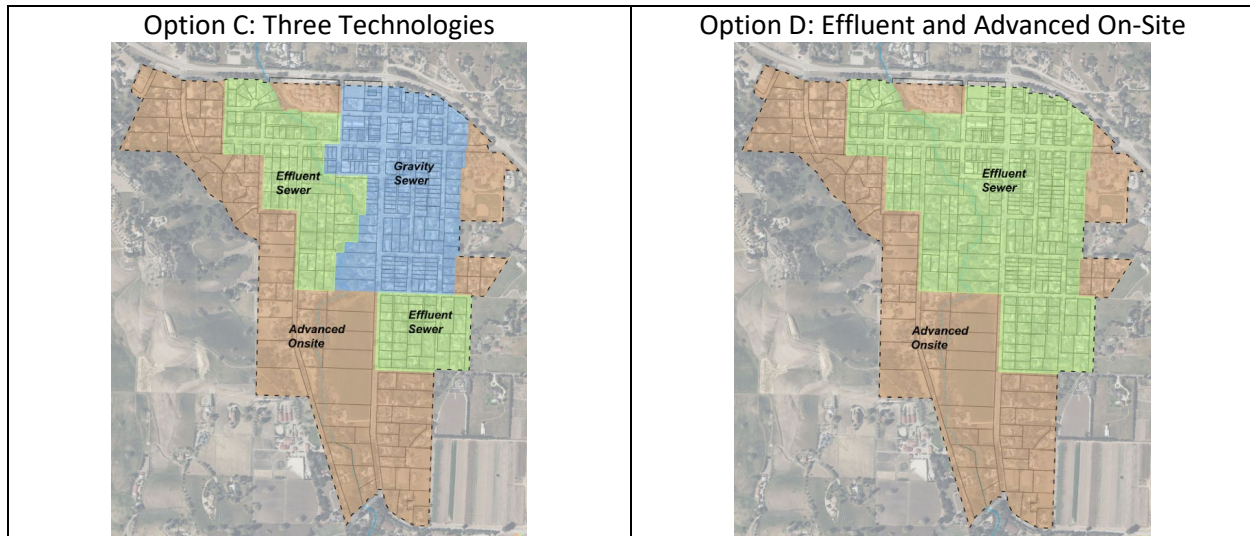
On May 15, the Board of Directors and public heard an overview of the final report on hybrid wastewater collection approaches. The report was completed and presented by REGEN, PLLC. and touched on the differences between gravity fed sewer collection approaches and effluent-only technologies, but also considered the use of advanced on-site systems on larger lots within the District. The full report can be found at: <https://www.losolivoscscsd.com/technical-studies-and-reports>.

Option A: Two Technologies



Option B: Effluent Only





**Figure 1: Possible deployments of Gravity, Effluent, and Advanced On-Site Technologies**

As part of its report, REGEN examined the legally required setbacks between drinking water lines and effluent tanks. Although REGEN identified a few parcels that will require further examination, the report notes that effluent technologies could likely be used throughout the District without major concern regarding proximity to drinking water lines.

REGEN’s cost estimates for the hybrid collection approaches ranged from \$19.2M to \$25.7M, depending on the mix of gravity / effluent / and advanced on-site technologies used. This represents a potential savings of \$5.7M to \$12.2M when compared to the gravity only solution. The District will be completing a full cost comparison to understand the differences between the approaches. Once the comparison is completed, a public workshop will be held where the public can ask questions and provide comments on the potential approaches.

The REGEN engineering and cost estimating effort was being made possible by a generous grant from Preservation of Los Olivos, a 501(c)4 organization.

**Studying Use of the City of Solvang’s Wastewater Treatment Facilities and Related Costs**

The District continues to meet with City of Solvang representatives to discuss the possibility of the LOCSD using the City’s wastewater treatment infrastructure. On January 22, the Solvang City Council agreed that exploring such a connection could make sense for both entities. At the City’s recommendation, the District has engaged Water Systems Consulting (WSC) and Carollo Engineering to understand the impacts of adding District wastewater flows to the City’s existing infrastructure. WSC will focus on the components leading up to the treatment plant (e.g. pipes, lift stations, and pumps), while Carollo will examine the potential impacts to the City’s wastewater treatment plant. Both consultants will provide cost estimates for any changes that may be required to upgrade the City’s infrastructure in order to handle the District’s wastewater.

No commitments have been made by either organization, beyond exploring the technical feasibility and potential costs of sending LOCSD wastewater to the City facilities for treatment. The approach being examined would result in the LOCSD connecting to existing City collection pipes near Sunny Fields Park on Alamo Pintado Road. This location represents the closest connection point between City’s

wastewater infrastructure and the LOCSD district’s boundaries. Wastewater would then travel via the City’s infrastructure to the City’s treatment plant.

Final reports from WSC and Carollo are expected to be heard by the District in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of this year.

**Sampling Groundwater Monitoring Wells**

Earlier this year, the District completed the installation of three new groundwater monitoring wells. This brings the total number of monitoring wells installed within District boundaries since November 2022 to five.

Recall that one of the key reasons the District lies within a Special Problems Area is due to high nitrate levels in the groundwater table. Having five monitoring wells within the District’s boundaries will help us better understand what is happening in the shallow groundwater table and the impacts of our septic tanks on our groundwater. Table 1 shows the test results from March 2024 and November 2022. The “nitrate as N” allowed maximum contaminant level (MCL) for drinking water in the State of California is 10 mg/L. This means that Monitoring Well (MW)-1, MW-3, and MW-5 tested below MCL, while MW-2 and MW-4 exceeded the MCL.

Well	Nov 2022	March 2024
MW-1	2.6	2.5
MW-2	10	11
MW-3		6.3
MW-4		11
MW-5		4.5

**Table 1 – Test Results**

Numbers represent Nitrate concentrations.

In addition to twice a year testing, additional testing of the monitoring wells occurred on May 16<sup>th</sup>. Results from the testing will be posted as soon as they are received. Installation and testing of the wells was made possible through a grant from the [County of Santa Barbara Environmental Health Services \(EHS\)](#).

**Twice Monthly Coffee with a District Board Member at Lefty’s**

Beginning on June 21<sup>th</sup>, a Board Member will be available for an hour of “open table” discussion with community members. Lefty’s Coffee Co. in Los Olivos has graciously offered to let Board Members use a table for these informal conversations. All you need to do is show up, no appointment necessary. As a general rule, the meetings will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month. The dates and times currently planned are shown below.

Date	Time
Friday - June 21	8:30 AM
Friday - July 5	9:00 AM
Friday - July 19	8:30 AM
Friday - August 2	9:00 AM
Friday - August 16	8:30 AM

**Table 2 – One-on-One Opportunities**

## **Grant Funding May Be Available to Help You Offset the Costs of Replacing Your Septic System**

A grant program has been established by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help individuals with low to moderate incomes finance the costs of household water wells and individually owned decentralized wastewater systems that they own or will own. Individual households may use the loan and/or sub-grant funds to construct, refurbish, rehabilitate, or replace decentralized water systems up to the point of entry to a home. Point of entry for the well system is the junction where water enters into a home water delivery system after being pumped from a well. For septic systems, in lieu of the point of entry, the point of exit is substituted. The point of exit is the junction where wastewater exits out of the home wastewater collection system into the septic tank and drain field.

<https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/353704>

### **UPCOMING WORK**

**Community Workshops** – The District’s Board of Directors is keenly interested in obtaining community input on potential wastewater solutions. In the next few months, the Board of Directors intends to host community workshops on:

- The Property Owner Vote (Proposition 218) Process
- Collection and Treatment Options and Costs

The timing of the workshops will be heavily dependent on receiving the final report from REGEN and information from the City of Solvang in order to have informed discussion.

**ABOUT THE DISTRICT:** The [Los Olivos CSD](#) was formed by voters in 2018 to give Los Olivos residents and property owners within the district local control over a local wastewater management solution and to provide a funding mechanism for the construction and operation of the facilities needed to collect, treat, and dispose of sewage, wastewater, and recycled water in Los Olivos.

**Stay Informed:** [Attend our monthly meetings](#) in person or virtually to stay current with our efforts to determine the best wastewater solution for Los Olivos. This is the most effective way for you to stay informed, to ask questions and get answers, and to ensure your ideas and concerns are heard. We usually post video of meetings on our website within 48 hours should you be unable to attend a meeting in person.

Check the District’s website for meeting agendas and materials at [losolivoscscsd.com](http://losolivoscscsd.com).

Visit <https://www.losolivoscscsd.com/subscribe> to sign up for email updates. Please encourage your neighbors, local property owners and other interested community members to sign up as well.

If you have any questions about our District’s efforts, please contact Guy Savage, General Manager, at [gm.locsd@gmail.com](mailto:gm.locsd@gmail.com) or call him at (805) 500-4098.