

## MAYORS' CONSULTANT: CAL AM PROJECT COULD BE BUILT FASTEST BUT WOULD COST MORE

By KELLY NIX

A CONSULTANT tasked with analyzing the three water project proposals for the Monterey Peninsula found that none of them would be able to meet a crucial 2016 deadline, although California American Water's plan could be up and running the quickest.

A 60-page report by consultant Separation Processes Inc. released Tuesday indicates Cal Am's proposed water project could be operating by the fourth quarter of 2017.

The Monterey Peninsula Regional Water Authority, a group composed of the six Peninsula mayors to find the most feasible water project for the Peninsula, commissioned the detailed analysis.

A deepwater desal operation north of Elkhorn Slough in Moss Landing couldn't be operational until the third quarter of 2018, while another desal plant in Moss Landing proposed by developer Nader Agha, called the People's Moss Landing Water Desal Project, couldn't be operational until the third quarter of 2019, according to SPI.

The consultant evaluated each proposal in terms of "project purpose, customers identified, adequacy of treatment approach, residuals handling, feed water characterization, quality of project information and any omissions or fatal flaws." None of the projects was fatally flawed, according to SPI.

Cal Am spokeswoman Catherine Bowie said the company is still reviewing the lengthy document, but said it appeared to be "very fair and thorough."

"There was a lot of effort to do an apples-to-apples comparison, and we appreciate that," Bowie said.

In October 2009, the State Water Resources Control Board imposed a deadline of Dec. 31, 2016, to secure an alternative water supply source to the Carmel River, the

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## Mystery helicopter ID'd



PHOTO/COURTESY LASER TECHNOLOGY

Was your weekend disrupted by a low-flying helicopter over Monterey, Pebble Beach and Carmel? The rumor mill was flying about what the chopper was up to, but it turned out not to be drug surveillance, Google mapping or pilot training. To find out what it was, and what the sinister-looking black box on the helicopter's belly was for, see page 11A.

## Feds also want Los Padres Dam removed

By CHRIS COUNTS

WHILE THE removal of the San Clemente Dam has been postponed over concerns about how the project's construction traffic will affect nearby residential communities, the National Marine Fisheries Service is stepping up efforts to tear down Los Padres Dam, too.

NMFS is seeking public comment on a new "recovery plan" for steelhead trout that live along what it calls the "South-Central California Coast." It held a little noticed public hearing on the issue in Monterey Oct. 30.

Soliciting public comment is one step toward adopting the plan. But it's unclear how much weight the plan will carry. Representatives from NMFS and Congressman Sam Farr's office were unavailable this week to talk about it. But Dave Stoldt, general manager of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, said the plan is something local residents should pay attention to.

"You won't find any time-lines or cost estimates in the plan," Stoldt said. "But once [the idea of removing Los Padres Dam] gets into a document as a solution, it becomes more real."

Stoldt suggested the removal of the dam could create more problems than it solves.

"Without a regulated flow in the river, significant stretches could dry up," he continued. "That's not necessarily a healthy situation from a fisheries standpoint."

And if the river dries up, the water rights of property owners who live alongside it could be jeopardized, he said.

Jeanne Byrne, a MPWMD board member, also encouraged local residents to learn more about the plan to tear down Los Padres Dam.

"People should be aware that this is on the radar," Byrne said. "It forebodes a problem down the road."

Built in 1948, Los Padres Dam is located about 25 miles

**Both dams should go, the feds say, to protect the Carmel River's population of steelhead trout**



PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

Amid widespread controversy over the planned removal of San Clemente Dam in Carmel Valley, federal officials say they also want the much larger Los Padres Dam (above) removed to improve fish habitat.

## Council green-lights 'Carmel-by-the-Glass'

By MARY SCHLEY

RESTAURATEUR RICH Pepe can have his proposed Carmel-by-the-Glass wine tasting in Devendorf Park Thursday, Dec. 13, the city council unanimously decided Tuesday night, saying it would serve as a pilot test for holding such events in the park and learning what works and what doesn't.

"I trust Rich Pepe to put this thing on and do it right," commented councilman Steve Hillyard. "It's a pilot program. Let's not stand too much in his way. Let's let him do it and see how it works out."

The event, which will run from 5 to 8 p.m., will "feature approximately seven to 10 local wine tasting rooms, light classical guitar or soft amplified music, lighting installed for safety and ambiance, and small food samples from local

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## Potter turns back big-money challenge from Del Piero

■ Opponent won't concede because numerous ballots remain uncounted

By KELLY NIX

WHILE LONGTERM Monterey County 5th District Supervisor Dave Potter celebrated his reelection this week, challenger Marc Del Piero refused to concede, pointing to thousands of uncounted absentee and provisional ballots.

Potter received 15,200 votes to Del Piero's 12,786, according to preliminary results from the Monterey County Elections office, giving Potter a healthy lead over his challenger.

Despite the early numbers that heavily favor Potter, Del Piero was defiant during a brief interview with the Pine Cone, saying tens of thousands of votes have yet to be counted.

"I know there are 26,000 vote-by-mail ballots that haven't been counted, probably another 7,000 envelopes that were dropped off at the precincts that haven't been counted, and potentially 7,000 provisional ballots," Del Piero said Wednesday. "I don't have any comments on anything at this point."

The county elections office has 28 days to certify the election, including counting absentee and other ballots.

Meanwhile, Potter, who has been supervisor for 16 years, said he didn't think the uncounted votes would help Del Piero

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## P.G. mayor loses in landslide to councilman

By KELLY NIX

PACIFIC GROVE City Councilman Bill Kampe overwhelmingly defeated incumbent Mayor Carmelita Garcia in Tuesday's election, while a Naval Postgraduate School professor won a council seat and two incumbents were reelected.

Kampe's crushing victory landed him more than 71 percent of the vote, receiving 3,731 votes to Garcia's 1,494, according to semi-official results released by the Monterey County elections office.

Kampe, who was pleased with the results, said there was a message behind the upset.

"I think the voters were saying they wanted to see something different happening, that they want to see a change in the way we do business as a council," Kampe told The Pine Cone Wednesday.

Kampe thanked his supporters and urged them to stay involved in the three biggest issues facing the city — the high cost of public pensions, water supply and business vitality.

"I look forward to representing everybody and making

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## Voters decisively favor city's sales tax increase

By MARY SCHLEY

MORE THAN 75 percent of the residents who cast ballots in the Nov. 6 election voted in favor of a 1 percent sales tax increase in the City of Carmel.

The increase will begin appearing on register receipts in town April 1, 2013; the new tax will bring in an estimated \$2 million per year for the general fund and will be in effect for a decade.

According to semifinal results issued by Monterey County Registrar of Voters Linda Tulett early Wednesday morning, 1,333 of the city's 2,789 registered voters decided

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