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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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AUBURN-- Directors of the Placer County Water Agency on Thursday (Nov. 6) approved adjustments in the agency's water rates, fees and charges for 2009. The changes take effect Jan. 1.

The board's vote followed a staff presentation on the agency's financial costs of service needs in keeping up with increasing costs and system maintenance and reliability. A public hearing on the adjustment was attended by about 30 people, 12 of whom addressed the board.

PCWA Director of Financial Services Joseph H. Parker said the agency's continued transition to a volume-based rate schedule will result in reductions for some customers using minimal amounts of water and higher increases for those using greater amounts of water.

Parker said a typical PCWA treated water user in Zone 1, with a 5/8-inch meter and using 20 units of water, will see a monthly increase of \$1.60, or 3 percent. He noted that the increases compare favorably with a recent 4.9 percent rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Three components make up the total PCWA water charge. The monthly service charge was raised by 45 cents. The renewal and replacement charge increased by 50 cents and the commodity tiers for usage were raised by varying amounts depending upon customer usage. And one of the flat rate components, the state and federal mandate charge, was eliminated and rolled into the volumetric portion of the rates.

Irrigation water users in western Placer County will see an overall 3.25 percent increase. In eastern Placer County where PCWA supplies groundwater to 542 customers, the monthly service charge was raised by 3.25 percent and the renewal and replacement charge by \$1.57.

The rate adjustments apply to service zones 1, 3 and 5 in western Placer County and Zone 4 in eastern Placer County.

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Adjustments to Zone 2, which supplies 46 customers in Bianchi Estates west of Roseville, were postponed. Agency staff and local residents will meet and staff report back to the board on Dec. 8.

District 1 Director Gray Allen said the agency worked long and hard to develop a fair and equitable approach to the adjustments. "We're very sympathetic to your concerns but our number-one responsibility is to maintain this water agency," he said. "We did the best we could. This is a cost of service operation."

Customers with questions about PCWA's water rates, fees and charges are welcome to contact the PCWA Customer Service Center at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030.

In other business, directors:

- authorized staff to monitor and investigate opportunities relating to the State Water Resources Control Board's proposed revocation of the federal government's unused water rights for the Auburn Dam. PCWA General Manager David Breninger said, "The agency's goal is to protect and preserve, for the benefit of our county and local American River Water purveyors, any unappropriated water to meet present and future area of origin needs."

- heard a report from Director of Strategic Affairs Einar Maisch on the state's establishment of a Drought Water Bank for 2009. The agency has notified state officials that, depending on this year's precipitation, the agency could make up to 20,000 acre-feet of water available to the water bank next year.

- approved and recommended to the Middle Fork Project Finance Authority a 2009 budget for the Middle Fork Project Relicensing Project, for energy marketing and business planning, and for Middle Fork Project betterments and improvements.

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 2 p.m. on Nov. 20 at the PCWA Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.

Information on PCWA board meetings may be obtained through the Clerk to the Board at (530) 823-4850.