



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL WATER RATES

Hearing Date & Time: August 8, 2022 at 11 AM

Hearing Location:

The Lodge at Riverstone

370 Lodge Road South Madera, California 93636

Why Am I Receiving This Notice?

The Root Creek Water District (RCWD or District) is proposing increases in agricultural water rates, effective January 1, 2023. You are receiving this notice because you are either a District customer or you own property receiving District services. The RCWD Board of Directors will hold a public majority protest hearing on **August 8, 2022, at 11am** to consider rate changes for the next five years. If the proposed maximum rates are adopted, the District may collect rates at or below the proposed maximum as needed to meet the District’s financial needs.

This notice is intended to provide you with information on the services provided by RCWD, the reasons for the changes in the agricultural water service rates, and the methods by which you can protest this rate increase if you so desire.

What do the proposed rates look like?

RCWD charges agricultural water users a land-based assessment as well as usage rates for water supply. The new rates do not propose changes to the assessment, which will continue to increase annually based on previously authorized inflationary adjustments. The public hearing is regarding the District's water rates. The District has two water service rates—one for groundwater pumping and one for surface water delivery. Both rates fund sustainable water supply costs, debt service expenses from the installment sale agreement, and cover expenses for additional imported supply infrastructure. Rate adjustments are needed to fund inflationary increases for these expenses as well as accumulate appropriate reserves. The District’s imported water costs vary significantly based on weather conditions. By developing a water supply reserve, the District can stabilize its cash flow, fund any spikes in water costs, and mitigate year to year rate impacts on customers. The proposed rates cover the five-year period beginning in 2023 through 2027.

Table 1 identifies current and proposed rates for agricultural service. The initial rate increase is proposed to become effective on January 1, 2023, with subsequent annual rate adjustments to become effective on January 1st of each of the following four years (2024 to 2027).

**Table 1
Proposed Agricultural Water Rate Adjustments**

Category (\$/acre foot)	Current	PROPOSED				
	January 1, 2022	January 1, 2023	January 1, 2024	January 1, 2025	January 1, 2026	January 1, 2027
Groundwater Recharge Fee	\$100.94	\$114.68	\$125.61	\$135.17	\$142.32	\$149.91
Surface Water Fee	\$142.14	\$162.23	\$178.22	\$192.33	\$203.06	\$214.44

A copy of the Rate Study that calculates these rates can be found on the District's website at rootcreekwd.com or at the District's office at 1616 W. Shaw #B-6, Fresno, CA 93711.

How do I file a protest or participate in the public hearing?

The provisions of Proposition 218 provide that certain types of “Property Related Fees” such as water rates are subject to a “majority protest” process. Under the majority protest process, any property owner or customer of record may submit a written protest for the proposed increases; provided, however, that only one protest will be counted per identified parcel. If protests are filed on behalf of a majority of the parcels subject to the rates, the District cannot adopt the proposed rates.

Every written protest MUST include ALL of the following to be counted:

- 1. A statement against the proposed charge that is the subject of the hearing;**
- 2. Name of the recorded owner or customer of record who is submitting the protest;**
- 3. Identification of assessor’s parcel number(s), street address, or account number of the parcel with respect to which the protest is made; and**
- 4. Original signature and legibly printed name of the record owner or customer of record who is submitting the protest.**

Written protests may be submitted by:

1. Mail to the Root Creek WD District Secretary, P.O. Box 27950, Fresno, CA 93729;
2. In-person delivery to 455 W. Fir, Clovis, CA 93611 during published business hours; or
3. In-person at the public hearing, prior to the conclusion of the public hearing.

Regardless of how the written protest is submitted, it must be received by the District prior to the conclusion of the public comment portion of the Public Hearing on August 8, 2022. (Postmark dates will not be accepted.) Any protest submitted via e-mail or other electronic means will not be accepted. Please identify on the front of the envelope for any written protest, whether mailed or submitted in person to the District Secretary, that the enclosed protest is for the Public Hearing on the Proposed Rate Changes - Agricultural Water Service Fees.

The District will hold the Public Hearing on August 8, 2022, at 11am. The Board will review the amount of the rates as well as the methodology for calculating the proposed rates. At the conclusion of the hearing, protests will be counted and validated. If protests are filed on behalf of a majority of the parcels subject to the rates before the end of the Public Hearing, the District cannot adopt the proposed rates. If a majority of the parcels do not protest the proposed increase, the District has the authority to adopt the proposed rates. The first year rate change, if enacted, will go into effect on or after January 1, 2023.

Additionally, pursuant to California Government Code 53759, there is a 120-day statute of limitations for challenging any new, increased, or extended fee, adopted, modified, or amended after January 1, 2022.