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P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Santa Barbara County Joins State in Proclaiming a Local Drought
Emergency**

Santa Barbara, CA – January 17, 2014

Today, County Executive Officer Mona Miyasato, acting as the Director of Emergency Services, proclaimed a local emergency following action taken earlier today by California Governor Brown in declaring a statewide State of Emergency for Drought. On January 15, 2014, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) also declared 27 Counties in California, including Santa Barbara County, to be designated as primary natural disaster areas due to drought conditions.

Ratification of the Proclamation of a Local Emergency will be considered by the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, January 21st, 2014.

“For many of our water purveyors, as well as our agricultural industry, the lack of rainfall is causing some serious concern”, said Miyasato. “With the long term prospects of significant rain looking dim, and with our local supplies significantly strained, we need to all be aware of the reality”.

Part of the Governor’s Declaration, as well as the County’s, includes a call for an immediate voluntary 20% water reduction by residents. Lake Cachuma is currently less than 40% capacity and lower water levels will result in emergency pumping of water to the South Coast to maintain deliveries.

Furthermore, these extremely dry conditions and high temperatures in conjunction with depleted water resources add significant risk for wildfire and the potential for dangerous conditions that can threaten the safety of persons and property in the County.

Information on conservation efforts can be found at www.sbwater.org or www.saveourh20.org.

Current and historic rainfall and reservoir conditions can be found at:
<http://www.countyofsb.org/pwd/pwwater.aspx?id=3582>

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