

Post Event Summary

Event: Saticoy WaterTalk

IRWM Region	Ventura County	Date and Time	February 13, 2020 6:00 PM
Community Engagement Partner	CAUSE	Location	Jose R. Flores Saticoy Community Center 11168 Violeta St Ventura, CA 93004
Event Facilitator Contact	Cameron Yee	Community Member Attendance	Under 18 years old: (1-5) Over 18 years old: (11-20)
Event Facilitator Contact Email	cyee@causenow.org	Water Service Provider Attendance	Ventura Water Laureen Tan, Environmental Services Specialist & Amanda DeLeon, Environmental Services Specialist

CAUSE hosted their fourth WaterTalk, this one in Saticoy on February 13, 2020, from 6:00 to 7:00 pm at the Jose R. Flores Saticoy Community Center. This event focused on educating the Saticoy community on local water issues and systems. Prior to the WaterTalk through door to door outreach, CAUSE had conversations in Spanish and English about the WaterTalk with over 150 residents, of whom 134 provided their contact information. CAUSE called each one to remind them about the meeting. The residents that attended were made up of 20 adults ranging in age from their 20's to their 70's and two children. The participants were mostly English speakers with a few Spanish speakers. English and Spanish translation was provided to the participants based on the presenters that were speaking.

The event's agenda began with an introduction to WaterTalks by CAUSE Organizer, Alex Garcia, where she explained the objectives of the meeting: to share information about WaterTalks and local water issues, empower community members to engage in water planning, and discuss community strengths and needs. An icebreaker followed where everyone formed a circle formation to introduce themselves and answer the question, "what is a memory you have about growing up near a body of water?" This icebreaker allowed participants to connect with the material that was being presented, and express their concerns pertaining to water. Many of the residents mentioned how growing up they would often go to their local rivers and play or swim there, or little games they would play at home with water. However, many also expressed their concerns on how little water seemed to remain in the nearby Santa Clara River.

The next part of our agenda had participants rotate among three informational and interactive stations: (1) Our water in Saticoy, (2) Flooding, and (3) Rain, surface water, and groundwater. We split the participants up into two groups (one Spanish speaking and the other English speaking) to rotate among these three stations where attendees could interact directly with presenters and ask questions in a smaller setting. Ocil Herrejon, Associate Organizing Director

from CAUSE, led the presentation on the water in Saticoy with a detailed report on where Saticoy's water comes from. She explained how all of Saticoy's water is local and underscored the importance of keeping the land free from pollution. Ocil also went into detail about how much water people typically use and the costs of different types of drinking water. Then, Laureen Tan and Amanda DeLeon from Ventura Water discussed programs as well as the incentives and tools available that help promote the conservation of water. After their presentation, they answered several questions. Residents wanted to know whether it is safe to drink water directly from the faucet and if a water softener helps conserve water/cleans it. Laureen emphasized that the water is completely safe to drink from the faucet and that a water softener actually uses more water and does not make the water any cleaner.

The next station was led by Alex Garcia and Sergio Barns and Angela Bonfiglio from the Ventura County Watershed Protection District (WPD). Alex began the discussion on existing land use showing a small chart that detailed the effects land use has on how water moves. She showed how untreated water and urban runoff can carry automotive fluids, trash, pesticides, and other pollutants into our rivers and oceans. Sergio then presented the 100-year flood map for the Saticoy area, the extreme situation with only a 1% chance of this happening every year. As for the history of this flood map, in 2012 the WPD conducted a study for Ventura County to see what flood paths could be found. They identified some level of flooding in Saticoy but wanted a more detailed analysis. This study produced the flood map that Sergio presented to participants. The flood map is especially important to the Saticoy community because homeowners in the possible flood plain are charged extra for flood insurance. Additional flood protection could change the flood plain but funding is needed. During his presentation, residents expressed concern regarding the low levels of water in the Santa Clara River. However, Sergio assured them that the changing flows of the river is natural and the low levels of water are normal during certain times of the year. Residents were also worried about the Highway 118 bridge collapsing again, and Sergio explained how this reconstructed bridge was designed to withstand current flow. However, when asked about what the WPD is doing in regards to climate change, he wasn't too sure and said changes like that are hard to predict, but they are trying their best by doing a climate change prediction every ten years.

The third station was hosted by CAUSE WaterTalks interns Jazmin Jacquez and Evelyn Espinoza along with Kat Selm from the Nature Conservancy. Evelyn provided an overview of where our water comes from, where it goes, and ways in which our water can become contaminated. Then, Jazmin presented on how to capture and store water through the creation of rain gardens, ponds, protection of our open spaces and collecting water with cisterns. Kat then shared with participants on the Nature Conservancy's current project regarding to restore the Santa Clara River Watershed. She began by talking about the Hanson restoration project located five miles away from Saticoy. For the last few years, they have been removing Arundo, an invasive plant negatively impacting the watershed. Its removal through the careful spraying of herbicide, cutting, and mowing has resulted in decreasing the risk of fire and flood, improving the riparian habitat for native species, and the increase of native wildlife. The next phase of the project is to create public access at this Hanson site, providing a picnic area, a two-mile trail, and a bus turnaround in hopes of making this an educational area. Residents raised concerns about the Arundo plant and whether using herbicide contaminates the environment, to which

Kat responded that the benefits outweigh the cons. In addition, residents expressed great interest in this project and knowing exactly where the conservation project was located.

At each station, the participants were actively engaged, listening and asking questions. Notetakers recorded any questions that were brought up along with the answers that were provided by the presenters. The residents appreciated how informative the event was, and the number of bilingual presenters. However, some critical comments included: the desire for more community members to be involved, for the paper material to be more accurately translated, and for the presenters to speak a bit louder. The majority of the residents revealed a strong interest in staying informed and engaged with the local projects in regards to water.

Overall, the event was successful. All of the participants were grateful for the information that was provided to them. The only issue that presented itself was with the translation devices at the beginning of the event. However, it was fixed quickly and the presentations ran smoothly for the rest of the event. Once all of the presentations were over, food was provided and one of the residents won a shower flower in a raffle. All the invited presenters expressed their gratitude in being included in WaterTalks, and expressed an openness to working with CAUSE again.