

Supervisors approve property purchase for Monson water well

By Luis Hernandez

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A project to bring a well to Monson took a step forward Tuesday.

And Lala Luengas, who has lived in the northern Tulare County community for 42 years, couldn't be happier.

"We are thankful to all the people who have done so much and for all the help we have received," she said.

On Tuesday, county supervisors approved the purchase of an .81-acre property at 10736 Simpson Drive, where a municipal well will be built. The purchase is for \$35,000 and the county will use emergency funds that will be replaced with grants.

Supervisor Steve Worthley said the water system to be installed in Monson will eventually be connected to the water system in Sultana. The communities of Monson, East Oroquieta, Oroquieta, Seville and Yettem will all be connected, eventually, Worthley said.

Luengas said the site for the proposed well is across the street from her home. The proposed well in Monson is similar to the project approved for East Porterville residents, Worthley said.

Administrator Michael Spata said Tulare County is playing a role as facilitator in the project. There are no plans for the county to end up owning the water system in Monson.

"Our intent is not to repeat the past," he said.

Already, Tulare County has applied for grants from the United States Department of Agriculture, the Department of Water Resources and the State Water Board to help pay for the project.

Self-Help Enterprises' Maria Herrera, a California Water Commissioner, said the project to bring the municipal well to Monson has been on-going for years. Construction could begin next month.

The start of construction can't come soon enough for Cervando Quintanilla.

A property owner in Monson, Quintanilla said the community would have a difficult time continuing without a reliable water source.

"The town couldn't continue. The town would become a forgotten town," he said. "We wouldn't have people living there."