

MEMORANDUM

To: Water Advisory Committee

April 28, 2021

From: Susan Harvey, WAC Chair
Drew McIntyre, TAC Chair

Subject: Approve - WAC Resolution Seeking 20% Voluntary Conservation from SMWSP Members
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Due to critically low rainfall over the last two years, water storage levels are at historic lows in both Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma. Most critical is Lake Mendocino currently at 43 percent of water supply storage capacity. Lake Sonoma's water supply capacity is currently 62 percent, the lowest on record for this time of year.

At the April 22, 2021 Water Supply Coordination Council meeting for establishing the May 3, 2021 WAC/TAC agenda, it was agreed to include an agenda item for the WAC to consider approval of a resolution seeking 20% voluntary conservation from members of the Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members have reviewed this Resolution and shared the information with each respective WAC member so that they are prepared to vote.

Recommendation

That the WAC approve this Resolution.

WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SEEKING 20% VOLUNTARY
CONSERVATION FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE SONOMA MARIN SAVING
WATER PARTNERSHIP

WHEREAS, the Restructured Agreement for Water Supply (RA), was executed on June 23, 2006, by and between the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), the Cities of Cotati, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sonoma and Forestville, the North Marin and Valley of the Moon Water Districts and the Town of Windsor; and

WHEREAS, the Restructured Agreement defines Water Contractors as the signatories to the Restructured Agreement except SCWA and Forestville and creates the Water Advisory Committee (WAC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC); and

WHEREAS, the Water Contractors, along with SCWA, Cal-American Water, City of Healdsburg and Marin Municipal Water District, are members of the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership (Partnership), through which these members have joined together to provide a regional approach to water use efficiency; and

WHEREAS, these Partnership members recognize that establishing common water conservation projects on a regional basis and applicable across the political and jurisdictional boundaries of each member efficiently and cost effectively conserves more water than would otherwise be conserved on an individual member-by-member basis; and

WHEREAS, the Partnership, through its many water efficiency programs, educational seminars and outreach campaigns, is working to educate our communities about the importance of conserving water resources and eliminating water-wasting behaviors; and

WHEREAS, the Partnership in 2020 received its fourth WaterSense Excellence Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for promoting water efficient irrigation practices through implementation of the Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper Program (QWEL). The Partnership also received its third WaterSense Excellence Award for efforts in promoting water efficient products; and

WHEREAS, the Partnership members have taken a regional approach to comply with the Water Conservation Act of 2009 (SBx7-7) requiring a 20% reduction in per capita water use by year 2020, and the individual members and regional effort has resulted in exceeding this target by achieving a 28% reduction in per capita water use in the year 2020: and

WHEREAS, in Summer 2020 the Partnership developed a Summer outreach campaign “Saving Water Ensures Water for What you Love” followed by a strategic 2021 Winter outreach campaign “It’s a Dry Year. Save Water With Us”. These campaigns were promoted throughout the Russian River Watershed including the Partnership’s expanded reach into Mendocino County; and

WHEREAS, Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma, the regions water storage reservoirs, are at unprecedented low levels due to two consecutive critically dry years; and

WHEREAS, the historical dry conditions have resulted in severely low storage levels in Lake Mendocino (43% of capacity) which required SCWA to file a Temporary Urgency Change Petition resulting in issuance of a Temporary Urgency Change Order by the State Water Resources Control Board enabling lower in stream releases to the Russian River and preserving lake storage; and

WHEREAS, storage level in Lake Sonoma on Dry Creek (62% of capacity) is significantly below average and it will be necessary for SCWA to file a Temporary Urgency Change Petition to address Lake Sonoma storage conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Partnership members have embarked on a robust multi-media regional water use efficiency outreach campaign throughout the winter months entitled: “ It’s a Dry Year. Save Water With Us” designed to increase awareness and reduce water use; and

WHEREAS, on March 22, 2021 the State Water Resources Control Board reported that 95% of California is experiencing Moderate to Exceptional Drought and called upon all water users to prepare for drought impacts; and

WHEREAS, on April 21, 2021 the Governor proclaimed a regional drought emergency for the Russian River watershed in Sonoma and Mendocino counties, where reservoirs are at record lows following two critically dry years and accelerated action may be needed to protect public health, safety and the environment; and

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2021 Sonoma County proclaimed a local emergency due to drought conditions covering the entire Sonoma County Operational Area including nine cities and special districts; and

WHEREAS, in preparation for drought impacts, the Partnership members have begun transitioning from the winter dry year campaign to drought messaging, launching “The Drought Is Here. Save Water” media campaign later this month.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Water Advisory Committee hereby pledges to support the Partnership efforts; and

Requests all water users increase water use efficiency by fixing leaks and eliminating water waste to help protect and preserve reliable drinking water supplies stored in Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma; and

Urges water customers to reduce water use by 20%.

ADOPTED this 3rd day of May, 2021 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: