

DRAFT MINUTES OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Utilities Field Operations Training Center
35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA
October 2, 2023

Attendees: Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma
Matt Fullner, Valley of The Moon Water District
Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa
Tony Williams, North Marin Water District
Pam Jeane, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)
Craig Scott, City of Cotati
Matt Wargula, City of Sonoma
Mike Berger, City of Sonoma
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District
Christina Goulart, Town of Windsor
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: Mike Thompson, SCWA
Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA
Don Seymour, SCWA
Paul Piazza, SCWA
Brad Sherwood, SCWA
Kent Gylfe, SCWA
Jake Spaulding, SCWA
Ann DuBay, SCWA
Daniella Favela, City of Petaluma
Colin Close, City of Santa Rosa

Public: Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection
Dick Dowd

1. Check In

Jennifer Burke, TAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Recap from the September 11, 2023 TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes

Moved by Tony Williams, North Marin Water District, seconded by Matt Wargula, City of Sonoma.

No public comment.

Minutes approved as submitted with all Committee members voting yes, with City of Cotati and City of Rohnert Park absent and Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, and Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma, abstaining. Peter Martin, Santa Rosa Water, voted for Santa Rosa Water as the alternate.

4. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order

Don Seymour, SCWA, presented.

Lake Mendocino is a little over 76,000 acre-ft and Lake Sonoma is a little over 231,000 acre-ft. In mid-September there was a drop in flows from the Eel River through the Potter Valley Project per PG&E's operating license, dropping from 75 cfs (cubic feet per second) to 35 cfs.

The Temporary Urgency Change Order (Order) that Sonoma Water is currently operating under ends on October 15, which means the flows in the upper Russian River will increase from 125 cfs to 150 cfs and from 85 cfs to 125 cfs on the lower Russian River. Chinook will be migrating into the system soon and will benefit from the higher flow.

FERC has still not acted on PG&E's temporary flow variance. FERC has also not noticed PG&E's long-term flow variance request.

No public comment.

5. Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership

a. 2023 Water Production Relative to 2013 Benchmark

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, presented.

August 2023 water usage compared to August 2013 is down by 19% total for the partnership. Water usage to date 2023 compared to 2013 is down 28% total for partnership.

No public comment.

b. Water Use Efficiency Messaging

Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA, presented.

The Summer 2023 campaign has ended. Moving into the Fall/Winter 2023 campaigns. Highlights include Flora Fridays, Water Smart Plant Label program, Garden Sense program, irrigation scheduling tool, Water Smart Gardens Maintenance manual, and Water Smart plant picker tool.

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked what Flora Friday is.

Paul Piazza, SCWA, shared that Flora Friday are informational engagement posts on low water use plant choices that are available.

No public comment.

6. Biological Opinion Status Update

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

Fish Flow Project – No update.

Dry Creek Habitat – Phase IV is anticipated to be complete this year, Phase V is anticipated to be complete next year, and Phase VI is tentatively planned for construction

in 2024 and 2025. For Phase VI, issues getting right of way. Construction is complete on Reach 13 sites, except for the inlet to the 13B site, and post-construction monitoring has begun. Construction of the nine Reach 10 sites is currently underway and scheduled for completion by October 15th.

Habitat Monitoring and Maintenance – Sonoma Water environmental staff continue to evaluate and monitor previously constructed and maintained sites to quantify the habitat areas and identify changes or maintenance needs.

Fish Monitoring – Preparing to monitor the 2023-24 adult Chinook salmon run in the Russian River. An underwater video camera was installed in the fish ladder that will be used to record Chinook, coho and steelhead as they move upstream past the inflatable dam.

Russian River Estuary Management Project – The mouth of Russian River is open, and the lagoon management season will end on October 15.

Biological Assessment for New Biological Opinion - A revised Biological Assessment was submitted on August 23, 2023 and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be reviewing.

Brenda Adelman asked if public comments are taken on the biological opinion and what the schedule would be.

Pam Jeane, said there is no official public comment period, but the public can submit comments to SCWA and they would be happy to pass it on.

7. Potter Valley Project Update

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

PG&E has submitted a flow variance request and there has been no response from FERC. PG&E also submitted a longer-term variance request, which amounts to a license amendment, to change minimum flows. PG&E license surrender application is still on track to release a document in November, that will serve as a draft license surrender application. This will be high level, without a lot of detail, but the plan is to collect public comment on it. The hope is that the draft will include an option for the diversion to continue through the project into the Russian River. Three pieces are being worked on under the Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant. One is the assessment of the project facilities and looking at options to replace the existing diversion works with upgraded or new diversion works. As part of the proposal submitted to PG&E, Sonoma Water is working with a Technical Advisory Group on 3 different design options for migration and water supply diversion, with two design options as the main focus. All three options will be taken to 30% design, anticipated by next spring. The second piece is the work being done

up in Potter Valley, including looking into ground water banking or active storage recovery. The third piece funded under the DWR grant is the Russian River Water Forum.

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked what the process or mechanism will be for PG&E to collect comments on the draft application.

Pam Jeane, SCWA, said that it is not an official submittal to FERC, but anticipates they will begin a more public process.

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked what the deliverables are going to be on the Potter Valley investigation and if there are plans for implementation if there are recommendations.

Pam Jeane, SCWA, said that Potter Valley folks would be responsible for any implementation that needs to take place. Don Seymour, SCWA, added that the deliverables would be a report of the findings, work performed, and recommendations. There will also be five new wells going in that will contribute to the data collection.

Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District, asked if ASR (Aquifer Storage and Recovery) can be done in Potter Valley and if so, what the proposed source of water would be.

Don Seymour, SCWA, answered that there is natural inflow and also considering the wintertime diversion.

Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District, asked if it would be a direct injection ASR where it would need to be brought up to drinking water standards.

Don Seymour, SCWA, said that right now they are just looking at the feasibility of whether it would be ASR or on farm recharge project, also looking at opportunities for surface water storage.

No public comment.

8. **Russian River Water Forum Update**

Mike Thompson, SCWA, presented.

The next meeting will be Wednesday in Ukiah. There will be updates from the Water Rights working group and the Russian River Watershed Resiliency Subcommittee. There will also be updates on the proponents proposal. The main component of the meeting will be a presentation and discussion from the Lake Pillsbury Alliance.

No public comment.

9. **Community and Government Affairs Update**

Brad Sherwood, SCWA, presented.

Federal funding that supports weather service forecasting was cut. Working to get that funding restored to keep FIRO (Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations) in existence. House appropriation meeting went well to the point that staff have included the funding in the next fiscal year's bill. Sonoma Water staff met with the new official at the Army Corps. headquarters, Susan J. Kennedy Smith, who is the new inner corps. district resource manager. Her predecessor helped with the Biological Opinion funding and process. 40th anniversary of Lake Sonoma was in paper the last week. Congratulations to Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, was elected as Vice Chair of ACWA (Association of California Water Agencies) Region 1 Board. David Rabbit, County of Sonoma, was also elected to the ACWA Region 1 board.

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked about any plans for another day in Sacramento. Brad Sherwood, SCWA, said that they are working on state and legislative platforms, and will be taking them to their board in December. Would like input on priorities, and an email will be sent to TAC members by November 15 to solicit comments and ideas. GSA funding coalition will provide opportunity to have a meeting up in Sacramento. Not sure of timing as of now, possibly in January or February.

Jennifer Burke said ACWA spring conference will be in Sacramento and may want to work around that date.

No public comment.

10. Items for Next Agenda

Jennifer Burke, TAC Chair, gave a reminder that the next meeting will be a joint WAC TAC. No other items suggested.

No public comment.

11. Check Out

Jennifer Burke, TAC Chair, adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.