



# Annual Report

FY 2022-2023





## ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

The Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership (Partnership) represents 13 water utilities in Sonoma and Marin counties that have joined together to provide regional solutions for water use efficiency.

The utilities include the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Petaluma, Sonoma, Cotati, Healdsburg, and Cloverdale; North Marin and Valley of the Moon Water Districts; Town of Windsor, Marin Water and California American Water - Larkfield and Sonoma Water (Partners). Each of the Partners have water conservation programs that can assist customers in reducing their water use.

The Partnership was formed to identify and recommend implementation of water use efficiency projects, and maximize the cost-effectiveness of water-use efficiency programs in our region.

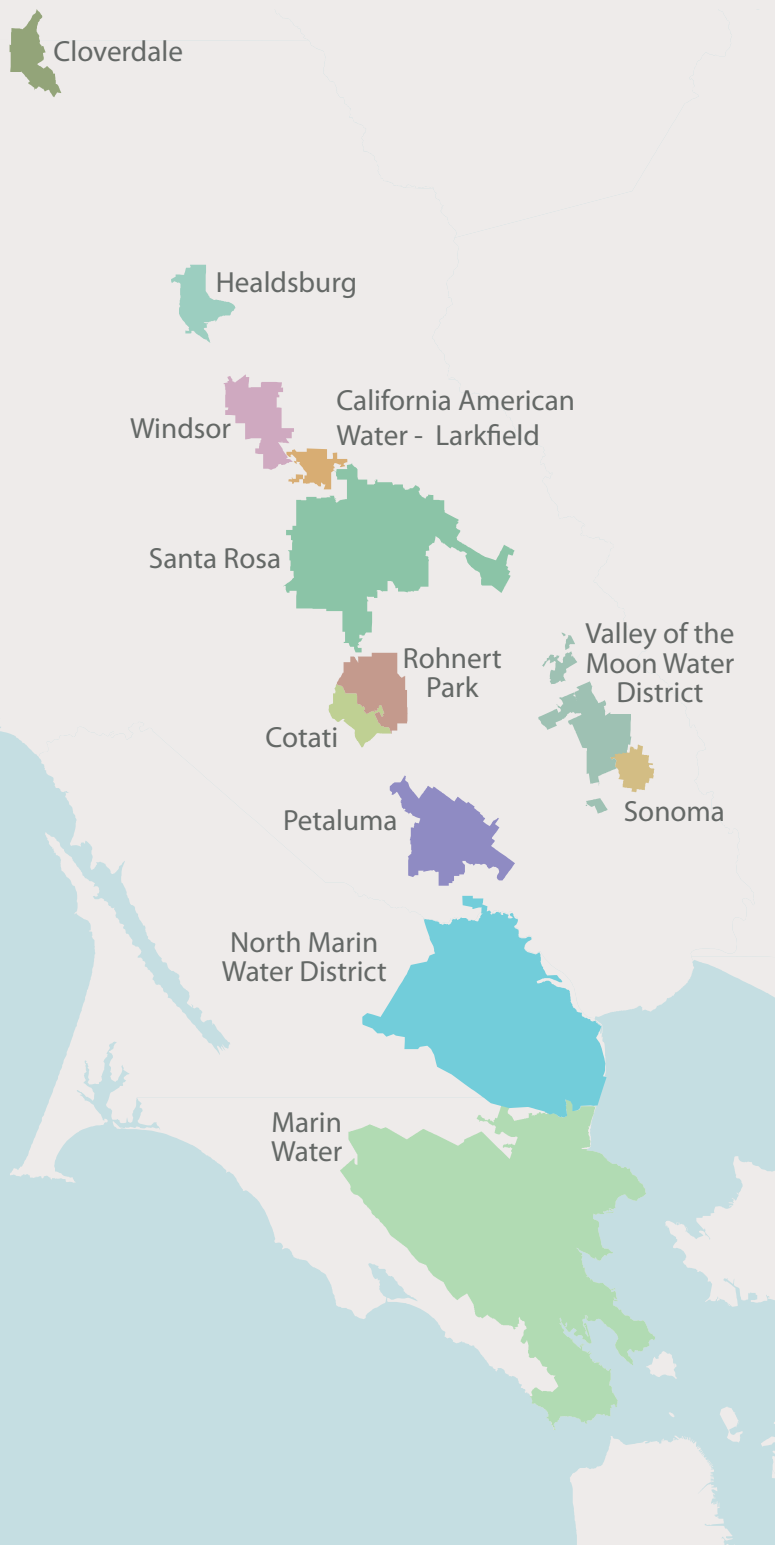
The Partners are committed to remaining members in good standing of the California Water Efficiency Partnership.

## OUR SERVICE AREA

More than 600,000 residents in Sonoma and Marin counties rely on the water delivered from the Russian River by Sonoma Water to nine of the cities and districts in the Partnership. The water provided by Sonoma Water is supplemented by local supplies including recycled water, groundwater from underground aquifers and surface water reservoirs.

Recreation, agriculture and wildlife, including threatened and endangered steelhead, coho and Chinook salmon, also rely on these same natural resources in order to thrive.

Realizing the importance of protecting and preserving water resources for future generations, the members of the Partnership have taken a proactive role in helping fund, maintain and implement an array of water supply, water-use efficiency and fishery recovery programs.



## THANK YOU FOR BEING WATER SMART

After multiple years of extremely low precipitation, weather patterns finally shifted and directed a series of atmospheric river storms to our region, providing much needed runoff to our local reservoirs. Watching the reservoir levels rise from record lows to the point of spilling in less than two months, and without flooding on the Russian River, was certainly a thing to celebrate. Thank you for being water smart and for taking actions to lower water use to help us get through the drought.

From record lows to full reservoirs, our surface water supply outlook can change seemingly in an instant. While we can breathe a sigh of relief this year, the Partnership reminded residents and businesses throughout the spring and summer months that we must continue to be water efficient and “Stay Water Smart”. Through print and digital advertising and social media posts, the Partnership promoted water efficient equipment and practices and replanting of drought ravaged landscapes with climate appropriate, drought tolerant and native low water use plants.

In May, the Eco-Friendly Garden Tour pivoted back from a pandemic inspired online virtual tour to an in-person event at 17 gardens in Sonoma and Marin counties. More than 3,700 people toured the gardens and saw firsthand that you can indeed grow a beautiful, vibrant garden with less water.

The Partnership’s outreach efforts have again garnered national recognition with one of the nine U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) 2023 WaterSense Promotional Partner of the Year Awards, our second in a row, for our efforts in promoting water use efficiency through the 2022 Water Saving Summer Pop Up series of events, and one of the thirteen 2023 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Awards for its Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program – an irrigation-professional certification and training program. This brings the total to an impressive seven consecutive EPA WaterSense Sustained Excellence Awards for QWEL.

While we have achieved great success, the path to long term resiliency is still ahead as we continue to take steps to make water conservation a California way of life.

Sincerely,



Michael Healy, Chair  
Water Advisory Committee



Chris Coursey, Chair  
Sonoma Water Board of Directors

# PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS

## OUTDOOR WATER USE PROGRAMS

232

IRRIGATION SYSTEMS  
RETROFITTED WITH SMART  
CONTROLLERS

677,913

SQUARE FEET OF LAWN  
REMOVED VIA CASH FOR  
GRASS / MULCH MADNESS

654

REBATES GIVEN FOR LAWN  
REMOVAL VIA CASH FOR  
GRASS / MULCH MADNESS

118

LANDSCAPE PLANS  
REVIEWED

6

RAINWATER HARVESTING  
WORKSHOPS

26

LOW WATER USE GARDEN  
DESIGN CLASSES

1,460

WATER WASTE  
ENFORCEMENTS

2

SHEET MULCHING  
WORKSHOPS

4

DRIP IRRIGATION  
CLASSES

88

IRRIGATION SYSTEM  
EFFICIENCY UPGRADE  
REBATES

76

POOL COVER  
REBATES

ECO-FRIENDLY GARDEN TOUR

3,700 PARTICIPANTS

70,280

GALLONS OF RAINWATER  
HARVESTING CAPACITY  
ADDED

52

RAINWATER HARVESTING  
REBATES

17 GARDENS



55

QWEL PROS CERTIFIED



FEATURED AT

33

NURSERIES



251

CONSULTATIONS

# BY THE NUMBERS

## RESIDENTIAL INDOOR WATER USE PROGRAMS

47

HOT WATER RECIRCULATION  
SYSTEM REBATES

919

WATER SMART  
HOME EVALUATIONS

292

FLUME WATER MONITORING  
INSTALLATIONS

278

HIGH-EFFICIENCY  
CLOTHES WASHER REBATES

24

LAUNDRY TO LANDSCAPE  
GRAYWATER SYSTEMS

353

RESIDENTIAL TOILET  
REPLACEMENTS

## COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

34

INDOOR SURVEYS  
COMPLETED

3

COMMERCIAL HIGH  
EFFICIENCY URINALS  
RETROFITTED

7

COMMERCIAL HIGH  
EFFICIENCY TOILETS  
RETROFITTED

## K-12 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

12,931

STUDENTS IN 521  
CLASSROOMS RECEIVED  
DIRECT INSTRUCTION

37,488

STUDENTS IN 1,391  
CLASSROOMS RECEIVED  
SCHOOL SUPPLIES FROM  
THE PROGRAM

53

STUDENTS PARTICIPATED  
IN THE WATER AWARENESS  
VIDEO CONTEST

86

CLASSROOMS PARTICIPATED  
IN THE STEELHEAD IN THE  
CLASSROOM PROGRAM

12,532

STUDENTS PARTICIPATED  
IN ZUNZUN MUSICAL  
ASSEMBLIES

26

VIDEOS WERE ENTERED IN  
THE WATER AWARENESS  
VIDEO CONTEST

# PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS



## Eco-Friendly Garden Tour

The Eco-Friendly Garden Tour (Tour) is a public outreach and education program that promotes sustainable landscaping practices by showcasing inspiring gardens throughout Sonoma and Marin counties. The Tour highlights Russian River-Friendly and Bay-Friendly landscaping practices and supports Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper certified professionals. The Tour continues to be a successful program for the Partnership and helps connect the community, the Partnership, and local non-profit organizations.

The 2023 Eco-Friendly Garden Tour returned as an in-person event for its 13th anniversary after being a virtual event since 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 3,700 people registered to attend the tour which featured 17 gardens in Cloverdale, Santa Rosa, Cotati, Petaluma, Novato, San Rafael, San Anselmo, and Corte Madera.

The Partnership collaborated with the Milo Baker chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) which hosted a native plant sale, the University of California Master Gardeners Program of Sonoma County which hosted a native plant scavenger hunt, Zero Waste Sonoma which provided a free compost giveaway, Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation which provided guided site tours and plant sales, and Home Ground Habitats which offered educational talks and a plant and seed sale. The UC Master Gardeners and their Garden Sense program also hosted tables at two gardens, showcasing their programs and answering garden related questions for visitors. Santa Rosa Water and Marin Water hosted tables at gardens in their service area to engage with residents and promote their landscape programs.

## Summer Outreach Campaign

This summer's outreach campaign "Stay Water Smart" focused on outdoor irrigation and landscape maintenance. Featuring print, digital, and social media ads and videos, the campaign kicked off by promoting the EPA WaterSense Program's Sprinkler Spruce up in June.

During July, in coordination with the Irrigation Association's Smart Irrigation month, the Partnership's Irrigation Scheduling Tool was promoted to help residents correctly program their irrigation controller. Newer irrigation technology was also a focus, like upgrading to a WaterSense labeled smart irrigation controller that can adjust run times automatically based on weather conditions.

In August, the Partnership's Water Smart Gardens Maintenance Manual was promoted. Originally published in 2021, the manual offers a comprehensive guide on how to maintain a low water use garden, including how to care for plants, operate the irrigation system, and how to choose and plant new plants.

## EPA WaterSense Program Spotlights Partnership Outreach

For the second year in a row, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership’s outreach activities with its **2023 Partner of the Year Award**. In the third year of drought, the Partnership’s “Saving Water Summer Pop Up” event series engaged with residents where they were: at farmers markets, summer concerts, home improvement stores, and other high traffic locations.

The Partnership’s Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program was also recognized with its seventh consecutive **Sustained Excellence Award**. QWEL is a WaterSense labeled professional landscape certification program that emphasizes a holistic approach to landscaping and landscape irrigation practices.



## PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

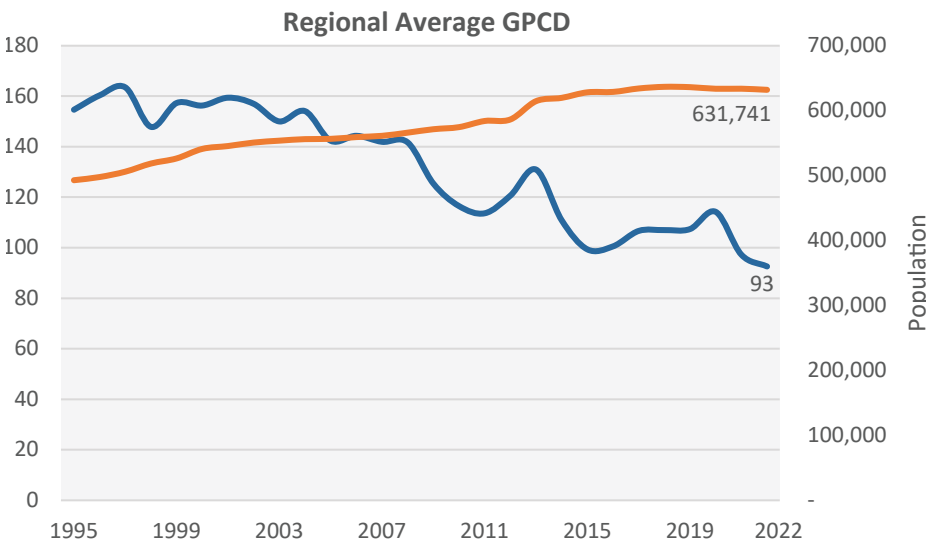
(In thousands of dollars)

	FY 22-23	Minimum
California American Water	\$62	\$21
City of Cloverdale	\$25	\$39
City of Cotati	\$9	\$18
City of Healdsburg	\$134	\$35
Marin Water	\$3,101	\$512
North Marin Water District	\$409	\$168
City of Petaluma	\$774	\$172
City of Rohnert Park	\$96	\$94
City of Santa Rosa	\$1,184	\$374
City of Sonoma	\$131	\$40
Valley of the Moon Water District	\$63	\$53
Town of Windsor	\$243	\$69
Sonoma Water	\$3,174	NA
Regional Total	\$9,405	\$1,595

Minimums are established for Partners in the MOU.

## Regional Water Use Continues Downward Trend During Drought

In 2022, the Partnership’s regional average gallons per capita per day (gpcd) decreased to 93 gpcd, which reflects customers continued efforts to reduce water use due to the ongoing drought.



The State’s task to develop a new water conservation framework for retail water agencies, called Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life, is anticipated to begin in earnest in Fall 2023 with a public rulemaking process and release of a draft regulation. This new framework was set in motion in 2018 by the passage of SB 606 and AB 1668 and includes updated Urban Water Use Objectives for retail water agencies to achieve beginning in 2025 and extending out beyond 2035. Although these new objectives are not yet fully adopted, the laws are clear in setting new standards for water agencies that go beyond the previous water saving targets in 2020. As such, we must continue our efforts to become more efficient to ensure that future goals are attainable.



[savingwaterpartnership.org](http://savingwaterpartnership.org)



Town of Windsor  
707-838-1004  
[townofwindsor.com](http://townofwindsor.com)



City of Sonoma  
707-933-2237  
[sonomacity.org](http://sonomacity.org)



City of Rohnert Park  
707-588-3300  
[www.rpcity.org](http://www.rpcity.org)



**NORTH MARIN  
WATER DISTRICT**  
North Marin Water District  
415-761-8933  
[nmwd.com](http://nmwd.com)



**MARIN  
WATER**  
Marin Water  
415-945-1520  
[marinwater.org](http://marinwater.org)



Valley of the Moon  
Water District  
707-996-1037  
[vomwd.com](http://vomwd.com)



City of Petaluma  
707-778-4507  
[cityofpetaluma.org](http://cityofpetaluma.org)  
[/water-conservation](http://water-conservation)



City of Santa Rosa  
707-543-3985  
[srcity.org/water](http://srcity.org/water)



City of Cotati  
707-665-3631  
[cityofcotati.org](http://cityofcotati.org)



**CALIFORNIA  
AMERICAN WATER**

California American Water  
Larkfield  
707-542-8329  
[calamwater.com](http://calamwater.com)



City of Healdsburg  
707-431-3122  
[smartlivinghealdsburg.org](http://smartlivinghealdsburg.org)



**CITY OF  
CLOVERDALE**

City of Cloverdale  
707-894-2521  
[cloverdale.net](http://cloverdale.net)



**Sonoma  
Water**

Sonoma Water  
707-547-1933  
[sonomawater.org](http://sonomawater.org)