

FINAL MINTUES - WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Utilities Field Operations (UFO) Training Center
35 Stony Point Road
August 7, 2023

Attendees: Jack Baker, North Marin Water District
Laura Sparks, City of Cotati
Grant Davis, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA or Sonoma Water)
Sam Salmon, Town of Windsor
Craig Scott, City of Cotati
Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma
Mike Healy, City of Petaluma
Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa
Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa
Matt Wargula, City of Sonoma
Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma
Emily Sanborn, Rohnert Park
Tony Williams, North Marin Water District
Cristina Goulart, Town of Windsor
Amanda Hudson, Valley of The Moon Water District
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: Lynne Rosselli, SCWA
Pam Jeane, SCWA
Robert Rogers, SCWA
Kent Gylfe, SCWA
Brad Sherwood, SCWA
Jake Spaulding, SCWA
Don Seymour, SCWA
Mike Thompson, SCWA
Brian Lee, SCWA
Dannielle Favela, City of Petaluma
Shannon Cotulla, Town of Windsor
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa
Colin Close, City of Santa Rosa
Armin Munevar, Jacobs Inc.

Public: Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection

1. Check In
Mike Healy, WAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.
2. Public Comment
No public comments.
3. Recap from the May 1, 2023 WAC/TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes
Moved by Sam Salmon, Town of Windsor, seconded by Jack Baker, North Marin Water District.
No public comments. Unanimously approved, with Valley of the Moon absent.
4. Recap from the July 10, 2023 TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes (TAC)
Moved by Craig Scott, City of Cotati, seconded by Cristina Goulart, Town of Windsor.
No public comment. Unanimously approved, with Rohnert Park absent.

5. Water Supply Coordination Council – July 31, 2023

Mike Healy, WAC Chair, presented. The Water Supply Council met on July 31, 2023 and set the agenda for today's WAC/TAC meeting.

No public comment.

6. Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study Update

Don Seymour, SCWA, and Armin Munevar, Jacobs. Inc. consultant for SCWA, presented. Provided an update on the Regional Resiliency Study that has been in progress over the last several years. Sonoma Water has been working on some on-going efforts regarding climate adaptation and resiliency. These efforts include: Partner in Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (CW3E) for Atmospheric River Forecasting, Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO), Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information (AQPI), Fire Camera Alert System (AlertWildfire), NOAA Habitat Blueprint Adaptive Management and Restoration, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), Climate Adaptation Plan (CAP), and the Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study. The Resiliency Study seeks to look at the regional system, outside of jurisdictions. Approach has been to identify major risk factors first, then evaluating the baseline of resilience, developing and evaluating adaptation strategies to improve resilience, and then report preparation, stakeholder engagement, and project management. The model integrates three major components including the Russian River system, Sonoma Water transmission system, and retail customer systems with the main model inputs being reservoir and river flows, member agency demands, and maximum member agency local supplies available. Worked with the TAC to look at the types of adaptation strategies that could be used. These included increasing supply, reducing demand, improving operations, and modifying policy and regulations. From there, near-term response actions were determined. Those actions included maximizing delivery of natural flows from the Russian River system, Kastania Booster Station rehabilitation, increasing Sonoma Water groundwater production, increasing retail customers' ground water , regulatory flexibility through temporary urgency change petitions (TUCPs), and water conservation and water use efficiency for retail customers and diverters. The other risks that are going to be evaluated throughout 2023 include seismic, wildfires, power loss, flooding, and the uncertainty of the Potter Valley Project. The next steps in this process are completing the additional risk scenarios, cascading risk scenarios, summarizing and recommending regional strategies, and preparing the study report.

No public comment

7. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order

Don Seymour, SCWA, presented.

Storage at Lake Mendocino is currently just under 90,000 acre-ft and is being drawn down by about 200 acre-ft per day. Lake Sonoma has storage at just over 250,000 acre-ft, which means the reservoir is still in the flood control pool, with the Army Corps of Engineers maintaining control of release. That will switch to Sonoma Water once it is in the water supply pool. This is remarkable for this time of year and is due to the forecast informed reservoir operations and the major deviation at Lake Mendocino, as well as the minor deviation at Lake Sonoma. Update for the Potter Valley Project, PG&E has updated seismic analysis for Scott Dam and found it to be at a higher risk of failure than originally thought. In order to protect against potential failure, the spillway gates will remain open, losing 20,000 acre-ft of storage. This has an impact on PG&E meeting their obligations for minimum releases into the Eel and Russian Rivers, their water supply obligations to the Potter Valley irrigation district, and their ESA (Endangered Species Act) obligations for water quality conditions in the Eel River. In May, PG&E filed for a temporary flow variance to reduce releases to the east branch of the Russian River to maintain better reservoir management at Lake Pillsbury, specifically for the steelhead salmon that need cold temperatures to survive. FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) noticed PG&E's

variance request in early July. Comments on the variance request were due on August 4. This variance asks that the current release of 75 cfs (cubic feet per second) with a 5 cfs buffer, be reduced to 25 cfs, and if temperatures go above 16 degrees Celsius, it be further reduced to 5 cfs. In July, PG&E filed another variance they called a "long-term flow request." This request is asking for what has been done on a temporary basis to be permanent, recognizing that the issue of not being able to close the spillway gate will continue. Another request was that if Scott Dam was spilling in winter and spring and requirements below the diversion are being met, PG&E would like to increase their diversions from 45 cfs to 135 cfs in winter and spring.

Tony Williams, North Marin Water District, asked for confirmation that it was not only PG&E's decision to keep the gate open, but that the Division of Dam Safety mandated it. Don Seymour, SCWA, confirmed that is correct, that it was the Division of Dam Safety. Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked about the changes to the license that PG&E filed with FERC regarding the increase of capacity from 45 cfs.

Don Seymour, SCWA, confirmed that, since the transformer bank failure, PG&E has not transferred more than that in the winter. However, in consultation with the resource agencies and the Round Valley Indian Tribes, an additional request has been made that releases may go up to 135 cfs, which PG&E has not been willing to do before. For this to occur certain requirements must be met including the reservoir must be spilling, as well as other conditions that will be determined through consultation.

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked if this amendment has been noticed by FERC, and if there is opportunity for comments.

Don Seymour, SCWA, confirmed that this request has just been filed and has not been noticed yet.

The Russian River system is currently being managed under a Temporary Urgency Change Order (TUCO) as required by the Biological Opinion as it is a normal water supply year. This means the flows on the Upper Russian River were reduced from 185 cfs to 125 cfs, and the flows on the Lower Russian River from 125 cfs to 70 cfs. The TUCO expires on October 15, and Sonoma Water is preparing to submit another Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) requesting that the water supply conditions be determined by storage thresholds at Lake Mendocino versus cumulative inflow into Lake Pillsbury. This would help make sure that the hydrologic index accurately reflects our reservoir and watershed conditions. The goal is to file the TUCP in September and have a new TUCO in place before the current TUCO expires.

Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection, shared that she tracks the flows at Hacienda due to concern about the lower river. It has been getting below 125 cfs, which is the level during normal rain years, but with the TUCO the level was dropping to 60 cfs. One day it rose to the 150 cfs range and has been there for a week and a half. Wondering what the explanation is when this wasn't expected to happen.

Don Seymour, SCWA, said that it is a balance of the water coming into the Upper Russian River above the confluence of Dry Creek. That minimum flow requirement is currently 125 cfs, and the minimum flow requirement on Dry Creek is 85 cfs. That is putting over 200 cfs into the Upper Russian River, plus diversions and the natural stream flow, keeps the flows higher and causes the jump that is seen. Does not expect to see flows drop below 125 cfs.

8. Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership (TAC)

a. 2023 Water Production Relative to 2013 Benchmark

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, presented.

Looking at 2013 our region has done significant conservation, with the current total delivers in May, compared to 2013, showing a reduction of 33%. Year- to-date water usage compared to 2013 is also down by 30%. Water conservations activities, along with the lower temperatures, have reduced demand. The gallons per capita per day over time is showing a significant rise in population with a significant reduction in water use.

No public comment.

b. **Water Use Efficiency Messaging**

Brian Lee, SCWA, presented.

August's outreach campaign will focus on the Water Smart garden maintenance manual. This manual will give information on maintaining a low water use landscape. Also promoting the Water Smart plant labels. There is a partnership with nurseries to label plants that meet water smart requirements. Eco-friendly garden tour in May had 17 gardens over 3,700 attendees and partnerships with California Native Plant Society, Zero Waste Sonoma, and the UC Master Gardeners. Over 20 garden hosts are interested in participating in the tour again next year. On July 29, the Rainwater Harvesting Tour took place in Healdsburg. The tour included 27 participants that featured rainwater catchment systems, graywater systems, and low water use plant gardens. There was a Fix-it-Clinic and Reuse Fair hosted in Rohnert Park on July 29. Buckets for water capture and reuse were distributed and had a turnout of about 100 people. Latest outreach is at the Sonoma County Fair. The Partnership and Master Gardeners collaborated on a sustainable landscape exhibit, efficient irrigation systems, water- smart plants, soil health, rainwater capture, and beneficial habitat.

No public comment.

9. **Biological Opinion Status Update**

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

Fish Flow Project – No changes on the project at this point.

Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Project – Currently constructing a portion of Phase IV and construction is beginning on Phase V this year. Sonoma Water's right-of-way staff are continuing to work with the Phase VI property owners to finalize the access routes and staging areas, obtain appraisals for the value of the right-of-way compensation amounts, and prepare compensation offers.

Habitat Monitoring Maintenance – Crews have completed pre-construction monitoring on an upcoming Phase V project site in Reach 2, and post-effective flow monitoring on past projects in reaches 13, 8, and 7. Crews also collected drone aerial photographs of past projects in reaches 8, 5, and 4. Also spent time documenting changes that happen on the creek due to high flows. Some changes ended up resulting in redesigns.

Fish Monitoring – All traps were pulled out by end of July. Did not look great for steelhead and Chinook, however, Coho was the highest on record and included many naturally spawned fish.

Russian River Estuary Management Project – Mouth of the Russian River is open. The lagoon management season runs from May 15 to October 15.

Biological Assessment for New Biological Opinion – Staff is currently working on revising the document based on comments received. Resubmittal should happen within the next couple weeks.

No public comment.

10. **Potter Valley Project Update**

Pam Jeane, SCWA, and Don Seymour, SCWA, presented.

Pam Jeane, SCWA, shared that work is happening on the Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant, which includes three tasks that are currently being worked on. One is looking at the diversion facilities that PG&E uses to transfer water to the Russian River. The other is an assessment of potential water supplies for Potter Valley.

Don Seymour, SCWA, shared that with the first task, there is an assessment of the diversion facility at Van Arsdale. The consultants are looking at three options, which are planned to be taken to a 30% design. One option is Cape Horn Dam remaining with significant changes and modifications, and complete replacement of the fish ladder to meet today's fish passage standards. The other two are substantially removing most of Cape Horn Dam and having remnants that would be used to tie in a rough-in channel.

That would include adding an 800-ft rock ramp, that would be able to withstand the dynamic flows of that area. The other option is a pumping station with fish screen and vertical pumps, similar to what is at Mirabel. The grant requires that this phase be completed by June 2024. Sonoma Water also applied for a Bureau of Recreation grant that would provide funding to take one of the scenarios to a 60% design.

No public comment.

11. Russian River Water Forum Update

Mike Thompson, SCWA, presented.

The Russian River Leadership Council has not met yet and is not yet scheduled to meet. The Planning group, which is made up by representatives from Mendocino, Lake, Humboldt, and Sonoma counties, as well as tribal interests, have met several times. The Working groups have also met several times.

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked if there was a sense of when the Leadership Council will meet.

Mike Thompson, SCWA, believes that group will meet by the end of year.

Mike Healy, City of Petaluma, asked who is on the leadership council.

Mike Thompson, SCWA, said a list could be provided as he did not have it with him currently.

No public comment.

a. Recommendation – WAC Interest Statement Regarding Russian River Water Forum (TAC)

Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, spoke on the WAC Interest Statement.

Summary of Interest Statement: supportive of the continuation of the diversion, recognize that the diversion provides different benefits and that proportionality is considered especially in regard to funding, supportive of modifications to water rights orders that can help align water rights and supply sources, continue to invest in resiliency for the Russian River and for our water supplies, make sure decisions are consistent with the Restructured Agreement with Sonoma Water, continue to support looking for funding options for this project, and continue to work closely and collaboratively with Sonoma Water. Reviewed by TAC members to ensure that the statement met their needs. Sonoma Water was also able to review and provide feedback.

Moved by Tony Williams, North Marin Water District, seconded by Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma.

No public comment. Unanimously recommended, with Rohnert Park absent.

b. Consideration of Adoption of WAC Interest Statement Regarding Russian River Water Forum

Moved by Jack Baker, North Marin Water District, seconded by Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa.

No public comment. Unanimously approved, with Valley of the Moon Water District absent.

12. Integrated Regional Water Management Plan(s) Update

Grant Davis, SCWA, presented.

North Coast Resource Partnership met last month. Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information (AQPI) program is making great progress and waiting on environment clearance to get the last one of the five the radars up. Biggest news is that the sea radar is going to be focused on the Pacific Ocean and will be located down by Mount Barnabe.

No public comment.

13. Community and Government Affairs Update

Brad Sherwood, SCWA, presented.

The bills that Sonoma Water helped sponsor will be on the Senate Floor, once they have reconvened after their recess. The bond work for the Integrated Regional Water Management Program is continuing, with support still being received. On the Community Engagement side, there are new ambassadors staffing Lake Sonoma Visitor's Center. Last July, there were over 2,000 visitors, so without this staff, people would not have been able to visit and learn more about where their water comes from. Top social media post was a Barbie post talking about FOG (fats, oils and grease). There is a great partnership with Land Path's to continue to provide bilingual tours. A new development dashboard has been created for Sonoma Water's strategic plan to report out on implementation. Would like to report out on it at the next WAC/TAC meeting. Attended National Association of Counties (NACO) and they authored a resolution for FIRO and subseasonal to seasonal work. The Denmark MOU is going to Sonoma County's board in September. Valley of the Moon, North Marin Water District, and Santa Rosa Water are taking the MOU to their boards as well. There is still time if anyone else would like to be a collaborator on this.

A video on the Sonoma Booster Station work was shared and can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9ngi-nUpYo>

Regarding the mussel inspection programs, it has been successful as there have been no mussels found in Lake Sonoma or Lake Mendocino and Sonoma Water has received over \$1 Million in grant funding from the state to support this program.

No public comment.

14. Items for Next Agenda (next combined WAC/TAC Meeting is November 6, 2023)
Jennifer Burke, Santa Rosa Water, asked clarification on if the Strategic Plan should be a TAC or WAC/TAC item and it was confirmed that it should be on the next WAC/TAC meeting in November.
15. Check Out
Mike Healy, WAC Chair, adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.