

DRAFT MINUTES OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Utilities Field Operations Training Center  
35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA  
March 4, 2024

Attendees: Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma  
Matt Fullner, Valley of The Moon Water District  
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa  
Tony Williams, North Marin Water District  
Grant Davis, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)  
Craig Scott, City of Cotati  
Mike Berger, City of Sonoma  
Christina Goulart, Town of Windsor  
Vanessa Garrett, City of Rohnert Park  
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District  
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: Don Seymour, SCWA  
Brad Sherwood, SCWA  
Pam Jeane, SCWA  
Paul Piazza, SCWA  
Jake Spaulding, SCWA  
Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA  
Lynne Rosselli, SCWA  
Don Seymour, SCWA  
Oriana Hart, City of Petaluma  
Stacie Hatfield, City of Santa Rosa  
Claire Nordlie, City of Santa Rosa

Public: Duane Dewitt  
Brenda Adelman  
Bob Anderson

1. Check In  
Matt Fullner, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.
2. Public Comment  
Duane Dewitt spoke regarding the growth and changes that have impacted the natural flow of Roseland Creek. Shared concerns that riparian corridors should remain natural without manual changes made.
3. Consider Recommendation – FY2024-25 Draft SCWA Water Transmission System Budget and Rates  
Jake Spaulding, SCWA, presented.  
The water transmission system has three main aqueducts which are the Santa Rosa, Petaluma, and Sonoma. The budget includes multiple water transmission system activities and funds including operations and maintenance, four subfunds, five capital funds, and debt service funds. Some of the challenges being faced are the fully volumetric rate, low water deliveries, aging infrastructure, maintenance needs, increased repairs, and natural hazard vulnerabilities.  
Accomplishments that have been made on key mitigation projects to reduce risks was presented, including the Santa Rosa Plain well project, with the goal to have all the wells operational by the end of fiscal year 2024-25. On the operations and maintenance side, some of the high priority projects include the aqueduct cathodic protection, collector well, vault, pump, pipeline, valve rehabilitation/replacements, emergency inventory

procurement, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) improvements, and the tank recoat and maintenance program. The Biological Opinion, Water Supply Planning and Water Conservation, as well as for the Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement project sub-funds all require ongoing funding.

The proposed budget for 2024/25 is \$74.43 million which is offset by \$18.13 in grants, use of fund balance, and bond proceeds. This is a \$6.14 million change from fiscal year 2023-24. Due to using a fully volumetric rate, budgeted deliveries have a significant impact on rate increases. Steps taken to reduce the budget and rate included deferred non-routine maintenance which equaled \$8.9 million dollars, budgeted using a 3-year annual average instead of the 12-month actual, and by the use of grants, bond proceeds, and fund balance which equaled \$18.13 million dollars which helped to reduce the rate increase from 14.57% to 9.88%.

Next steps are the Technical Advisory Vote today, then the Water Advisory Committee vote on April 8, presentations to water contractor Boards and Councils as requested, ending with adoption by Sonoma Water's Board on April 16.

Duane Dewitt shared that this information should be taken to the general public so that it is clear to rate payers that conservation causes higher rates. Also, shared that the Groundwater Banking Feasibility Study should be done sooner rather than later, since development is happening quickly.

Matt Fullner, TAC Vice Chair, confirmed that the public has access at the various Board and Council public meetings.

Christina Goulart, Town of Windsor, presented.

The TAC Ad Hoc met on February 28 to discuss the second draft of the budget. The Subcommittee members that were present, voted unanimously to recommend to the full TAC, that the TAC recommend to the WAC to approve the draft budget.

Moved by Peter Martin, Santa Rosa Water, seconded by, Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma. Unanimously approved.

4. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order

Don Seymour, SCWA, presented.

Lake Mendocino is up to 88,000 acre-ft, which is 2,000 acre-ft above the top of the deviation pool. Lake Sonoma is up to 270,000 acre-ft, which is 6,000 acre-ft above its deviation pool. Lake Mendocino's allowable storage pool begins increasing by 350 acre-ft per day in mid-March through May 10. Army Corps. will be looking for ways to strategically release water to get to top of the deviation pool. As of March 1, the current water supply condition is normal. Through the term of the Temporary Urgency Change Order, the water supply conditions will be assessed on the first and the sixteenth of every month. It is anticipated the water supply condition will remain normal through April 16.

Regarding Potter Valley, PG&E filed a variance which will have a significant impact on the transfer of Eel River water into the Russian River watershed. Based on this variance, 80 cubic feet per second (cfs) will go down to 25 cfs on July 1, with the possibility to reduce down to an absolute minimum of 5 cfs based on temperature modeling and consultation with resource agencies. Sonoma Water will be determining what type of temporary urgency change petitions they will be filing in April.

**No public comment.**

5. Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership

a. 2024 Water Production Relative to 2013 Benchmark

Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District, presented.

January water usage is showing a 17% savings, with the year to date also showing 17% savings. Gallons per capita per day still doing extremely well.

b. Water Use Efficiency Outreach Messaging

Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA, presented.

Still in winter messaging. Fix-a-leak week is March 18 -24. Again, partnering with Santa Rosa for the dye tab challenge which runs through March 31.

**No public comment.**

6. Biological Opinion Status Update

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

Fish Flow Project – No change.

Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Project – Phase IV -VI currently being worked on. In the process of construction of Phase IV and V. Phase IV includes reaches 10 and 13. Phase V includes reaches 4c and 2a. Eight of the nine sites on reach 10 are completed. One reach did have to be redesigned due to the recent high flows and that begins in June. For Phase V, the contractor had most of the features done but had to stop and winterize everything due to the rainy season. Phase VI still working with property owners to obtain appraisals and make offers for the rights-of-way.

Habitat Monitoring and Maintenance – Completed 2023 effectiveness monitoring in December to evaluate newly and previously constructed reaches, to quantify the habitat areas meeting desired conditions, and to identify maintenance needs in 2024.

Public Outreach – No public meetings as of yet, though one should be scheduled shortly.

Fish Monitoring – Mirabel Dam was taken down in December. Teams have been out in the field trying to monitor spawning, which has provided some challenges with the rain.

Russian River Estuary Management Project – Mouth of Russian River Estuary is open. Lagoon Management season will begin mid-May to October. The annual Pinniped Monitoring Volunteer Training was held in February.

Biological Assessment for New Biological Opinion – No change. The assessment is done and has been accepted by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Sonoma Water is in consultation with NMFS on the Biological Opinion.

Brenda Adelman asked about fish counts, as they did not seem too voluminous and asked if they are looking at creeks for the Biological Assessment. Also, asked about why there is Chinook in Green Valley.

Pam Jeane, SCWA, said that is correct. The counts at Mirabel Dam were not great this year but were better than during the drought. Confirmed that it is about the main stem Russian River for the Biological Opinion. Was unsure about why the Chinook were present in Green Valley and said that a fish person would have better information on why that is.

7. Potter Valley Project Update

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

The second meeting of the Eel Russian Project Authority will be held on March 19 in Ukiah. The main topic will be looking at moving forward on one of the two options that are being studied under the Department of Water Resources grant. The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) are working to make a recommendation on one of the two design options. That recommendation will move to the principal group that represents Sonoma Water, tribes, and other resource agencies, and hopefully provide a recommendation. Hoping to have consensus on this by middle of next week. The Russian River Water Forum will probably meet one more time in either April or May. There is no update on the water supply investigation happening in Potter Valley at this time, but the work is still ongoing.

**No public comment.**

8. SCWA Government Affairs Update

Brad Sherwood, SCWA, presented.

There is bad budget news from the State, with a projected deficit going from \$53 to \$73 billion dollars. However, the good news is that the Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) budget is intact, securing a majority of the funding. Climate bond is, with the Governor appointing Assemblymember Garcia to lead the working group with key stakeholders. Sonoma Water is in support of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) bond initiative. The ACWA Region 1 Board is very engaged and is putting

together a Region 1 state legislation subcommittee. Brad Sherwood, SCWA, along with Santa Rosa Water, and Elizabeth Salomone, who is the new ACWA Chair, is on committee.

On the Federal side, during the ACWA D.C. conference they were able to meet new head lobbyist for ACWA, Ian. He knows a lot about water issues and is fully supportive of what this region is doing. He is also interested in helping on Army Corps. issues, including fire management and vegetation management. Right now, the Army Corps. only receives \$120,000 per reservoir in our region for vegetation management. Sonoma Water contributes three times that to support vegetation management at the two reservoirs. Seeking help from the Congressional delegation to increase funding to a million and a half dollars for each reservoir. Senator Padilla has reintroduced, and is working on, an atmospheric river reconnaissance bill at the request of FIRO coalition. This would provide for west coast based planes for atmospheric rivers, however, funding is needed through the Air Force to help support that effort.

**No public comment.**

9. SCWA Communications Update

Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA, presented.

Sonoma Water's 2023 annual report came out last month and is available online at [SonomaWater.org/annual-report](http://SonomaWater.org/annual-report). The flood hotline was activated 14 times, in both English and Spanish, throughout February. The flood hotline information is also put out on NextDoor, with one post having over 11,000 impressions. Articles in the Press Democrat included information on the restoration of the Laguna de Santa Rosa and on the Steelhead Festival. Hatchery tours for schools at Lake Sonoma. This is in partnership with Army Corps. Of Engineers to bring students up to learn about steelhead.

**No public comment.**

10. Items for Special WAC/TAC meeting on April 8, 2024

None.

**No public comment.**

11. Check Out

Matt Fullner, TAC Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting at 9:56 a.m.