

FINAL MINUTES OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Utilities Field Operations Training Center
35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA
March 3, 2025

Attendees: Chelsea Thompson, City of Petaluma
Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District
Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa
Tony Williams, North Marin Water District
Mike Berger, City of Sonoma
Craig Scott, City of Cotati
Cristina Goulart, Town of Windsor
Vanessa Garrett, City of Rohnert Park
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: David Royall, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)
Grant Davis, SCWA
Jake Spaulding, SCWA
Don Seymour, SCWA
Paul Piazza, SCWA
Kent Gylfe, SCWA
Lynne Rosselli, SCWA
David Manning, SCWA
Cortney Bowser, City of Rohnert Park
Shannon Cotulla, Town of Windsor
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa
Nick Harvey, City of Santa Rosa
Claire Nordlie, City of Santa Rosa

Public: Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection Committee
Dick Dowd
Neil Hancock
Duane DeWitt, Roseland Action

1. Check In
Chair Burke called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.
2. Public Comment
Brenda Adleman commented on the Eel River Transfer and river diversions.
3. Marin Water Drought Resiliency Update (See Attachment)
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District, presented on the background of the Marin Water Drought Resiliency program, the Winter Water Resiliency Project, water supply agreement, and shared next steps.
Craig Scott, City of Cotati, asked what other agencies Marin Water is interested in partnering with.
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District, answered that there is interest in partnering with any of the water agencies.
Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked if there are capacity constraints along the transmission system or through North Marin's transmission system.
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District, answered that if we were looking at summertime demands, there would be concerns. However, this is a wintertime project, so there is not that concern.
Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked if the diversions will be taken every year during the winter, or is this only during dry years.

Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District, answered that this would not be a yearly request, unless they believe every year is going to be dry. The assumption as of now is every third year.

Brenda Adelman asked questions regarding atmospheric rivers.

4. Consider Recommendation – FY2025-26 Draft SCWA Water Transmission System Budget and Rates (See Attachment)

Cristina Goulart, Town of Windsor, gave a summary of the recent TAC Ad Hoc Finance Subcommittee meetings.

Jake Spaulding, SCWA, presented on the FY2025-2026 proposed water transmission system budget and rates, including operations and maintenance, four subfunds, five capital funds, and debt services funds, the asset condition assessment, highlights of Sonoma Water and water contractor achievements and collaborations, deliveries and rates, proposed rates for FY2025-26, and next steps.

Dick Dowd asked if there is a chart comparing our rates with other Northern California districts.

Jake Spaulding, SCWA, responded that all agencies have different rate structures, but that the trend is that rates are going up all over the Bay Area.

Tony Williams, North Marin Water District, moved approval of the FY2025-26 SCWA Water Transmission System Budget and Rates, seconded by Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District. Unanimously approved.

5. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order

Don Seymour, SCWA, presented on the current water supply conditions. Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma are at top of their deviation pools, which means that both reservoirs contain an additional 36,000 acre-ft.

Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District, asked if the deviation pools may change in the future.

Don Seymour, SCWA, answered that Lake Mendocino is set for now, but there may be opportunity to increase the pool at Lake Sonoma.

Temporary Urgency Change Orders – The current order puts the Russian River in a normal water supply condition. One change happening in March is that the water supply condition assessment will be done bi-monthly. Current order expires in May, and discussion is taking place on what the next temporary urgency change petition will look like.

No public comment.

6. Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership

a. 2025 Water Production Relative to 2013 Benchmark (See Attachment)

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, spoke on this topic.

For the month of January, the partnership saw a 16% reduction compared to 2013. The year-to-date compared to 2013 is also showing a 16% reduction.

b. Water Use Efficiency Outreach Messaging (See Attachment)

Paul Piazza, presented on Winter/Spring 2025 outreach, Sonoma Water social media campaigns, and the dye-tab challenge.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rose, reminded everyone that March 16, 2025 there is a 5k that will be kicking off Fix-A-Leak Week.

Duane DeWitt spoke regarding a grant that Santa Rosa Water received for waste receptacles along Sebastopol Ave. Suggested Sonoma Water add a flyer about water conservation to those receptacles.

7. Biological Opinion Status Update (See Attachment)

David Manning, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

The extended duration of the high flow flood control operations has rearranged the channels a bit. The jumping around of the stream channel can create good habitat conditions but can also increase sediment. For fish monitoring, radio telemetry has been implanted into steelhead smolt. This pilot program is aiming to look at survival behavior of steelhead, which has not been looked at before. Still waiting on the new Biological Opinion. Looking at May, but the National Marine Fisheries Service has been affected by the federal cuts, so things will be moving slowly.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked about the engineering estimate for sediment removal and when the last time sediment work was done.

David Manning, SCWA, shared that the area around Reach 8 is estimated to be half a million dollars and the other Reaches are estimated to be 10's of thousands of dollars, but some of that work can be done with SCWA crews. The last time sediment work was done was in 2017.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked for an update on the draft EIR and when will circulation happen.

David Manning, SCWA, answered that the draft Fish Flow Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is taking a pause., There will not be another document forthcoming in the short term to address instream flow.

Brenda Adelman shared concerns on length of time it has been since comments were submitted for the Biological Opinion. Would like a public review of work being done to share updates on toxins, water quality effects on fish, and low river flow so that the public has a sense of what is going on.

David Manning, SCWA, said there is an annual Public Policy Facilitating Committee meeting which is a public review meeting of all of the past year's relevant components of the Biological Opinion and the annual report and information is available online.

Duane DeWitt asked for a summary document of changes and updates, and shared that there should be the consideration of holding public meetings in the evening.

8. Eel Russian Project Authority and Potter Valley Project Update

David Manning, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Two Basin partners was signed on February 13, 2025. This MOU will guide development on how the New Eel-Russian Facility (NERF) will work. Final license surrender application will be filed in July by PG&E.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked about the changes happening at the federal level and if anything has been heard from Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on cuts.

David Manning, SCWA, shared they have heard nothing officially from Federal Government. The existing grant which is funding the 60% design work for NERF has been paused, which they are looking into. Also, paused is a federal commitment of \$15 million dollars for the project.

Duane DeWitt shared that the representing agencies should put in letters of protest to the federal government on the pauses that are happening and how these pauses effect operations.

9. SCWA Government Affairs Update (See Attachment)

Grant Davis, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Continuing to work to see what the threat of cuts may look like. There is support of forecast informed reservoirs operations (FIRO) and operating our two reservoirs with minor and major deviations. The concern is with the pausing of the funding for the 60% design for NERF, which could end up being very problematic. Working on monitoring language for Proposition 4.

Tony Williams, North Marin Water District, asked about Army Corps. operations and if they will be affected by the Federal cuts.

Grant Davis, SCWA, answered that he is not sure on cuts, but that the Army Corps. of Engineers have been wrapped up in a high-profile response to the administration directives. Fortunately, no one has been notified that their position is not needed as of yet. Duane DeWitt shared concerns on the possibility of cutting the National Environmental Protection Act, which will also end the Endangered Species Act, and said that this should be kept in mind when looking at the new Biological Opinion and finding ways to protect the work being done.

10. Items for Special WAC/TAC meeting on April 7, 2025

None.

No public comment.

11. Check Out

Chair Burke adjourned the meeting at 10:34 a.m.