

*Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control
& Water Conservation Improvement District*

General Manager's Report for February 2024

Presented at Regular Meeting of Monday, March 4, 2024

Priority 1: Security ~ Ensure reliable, resilient, and available sources of water.

(1: Improved river & reservoir operations. 2: Fair & reliable inter-basin. 3: Expanded water sources. 4: Increased storage capacity)

1- River & Reservoir Operations: PG&E submitted the 2024 Flow Variance Request to FERC and a notice for public comment before considering approval of the request. See Agenda Item 8 for more information.

1-Water Sharing Program: The Working Group began the 2024 series of meetings. Consensus was not to finalize the program for 2024, mostly because it would be too challenging to convince potential participants of the need, especially the senior water right holders needed to provide water. All present supported moving forward to develop the adaptations needed for the future.

2-Eel Russian Project Authority (ERPA) and the Trans Basin Diversion Future: The ERPA Board met on January 31st and ERPA representatives met with PG&E the following day. PG&E shared it has reviewed the proposal provided by the Project Proponents determining there are aspects of the proposal which do not align with PG&E's goal of completing the decommissioning of the Potter Valley Project within the schedule approved by FERC. Therefore, the proponent's request to construct the new Eel-Russian facility under FERC's jurisdiction will not be included in PG&E's Final Draft Surrender Application and Decommissioning Plan. PG&E is encouraged to see broad stakeholder support of the proposal and supports completion of the new facility in a separate but parallel path to PG&E's decommissioning. To facilitate that path, PG&E will include those portions of the proposal that will not otherwise delay dam removal and will continue to engage with the proponents on a solution which addresses both parties' goals. ERPA representatives believe a path forward for continued diversions still exists and the work continues. PG&E stated it will support and facilitate that work where it can and remains committed to continue working together. North Coast U.S. Rep. Jared Huffman is not dismayed, emphasizing his commitment to a Two Basin Solution and that continued diversion is not dependent on partnership with PG&E. www.eelrussianauthority.org.

Priority 2: Collaboration ~ Work with partners to achieve aligned goals for a common benefit.

(1: Trusted relationships with community partners for regional water security. 2: Improved diversity, equity, and inclusion in the stewardship of water resources. 3: Expanded relationships with non-traditional partners and stakeholders in pursuit of enhanced Environmental Stewardship.)

1-Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Board Meeting (2/13/24): Rate & Fee Study consultants provided feedback on the public workshop. An extensive presentation and discussion were held on the proposed rate and fee process. This did not include the actual cost basis (budget) which will be addressed at the next Board meeting. Details can be found in the presentation on the GSA website & recording available on YouTube. The Board passed a policy on social media use by Board members.

1-Ukiah Valley Water Supplier Proposed Consolidation: This City of Ukiah, Redwood Valley Water District, and Millview Water District formed the Ukiah Valley Water Authority, a new joint powers authority to manage water throughout the Ukiah Valley.

3-Expanded Relationships: Upon invitation, GM presented at the Russian River Property Owners Annual Meeting in Sonoma County, made up primarily of Alexander Valley landowning farmers, and shared about the formation, governance, and operations of the District as well as fielding questions on short and long term water supply, water rights, and water rates.

(Continued...)

Priority 3: Advocacy ~ Influence outreach, education, funding, regulation, and legislation in support of equitable water resource stewardship.

(1: Improved public awareness and understanding of the importance of water issues. 2: State and Federal governmental policy and funding support for the region.)

2-Legislative Representation: A State Assembly candidate forum was held in Ukiah in February, hosted by Mendocino Women's Political Coalition (MWPC) who noted the recording will be available on its website. The first question to candidates was regarding the future of the trans basin diversion (Potter Valley Project.)

Priority 4: Use ~ Ensure effective and beneficial use of water as a public resource.

(1: Maximum beneficial use of water under District water right license. 2: Strategic use of water by customers.)

1-Change Petition: A pre-petition proposal was submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board, as requested. Mapping work and information gathering from customers continues.

1-District License: The Alternative Compliance Plan for the Water Measurement & Reporting Regulation, approved at the February Board meeting, was filed.

Priority 5: Administration ~ Foster sustainable leadership and management of agency resources.

(1: Capable and high quality executive leadership. 2: Engaged, diverse, and knowledgeable Board leadership. 3: Effective systems and human resources to execute the strategic plan. 4: Sound and sustainable management of District finances.)

1-Executive Leadership: GM attended the following meetings/webinars: (1) CA Natural Resource Agency webinar: **Saving Salmon: State Actions Needed to Recover Salmon Populations in California** (unpacking the just-released California Salmon Strategy for a Hotter, Drier Future: Restoring Aquatic Ecosystems in the Age of Climate Change.) (2) Groundwater Accounting Platform presentation. (3) Ethics AB 1234 Compliance Training. (4) ACWA SGMA Implementation Subcommittee, State Legislative Committee, Region 1 Board Annual Business Meeting. (5) Mendocino County Planning & Health Depts stakeholder meeting. (6) Form 700 - A Guide to SEI Disclosure webinar. (7) State Assembly candidate forum in Ukiah. (8) Groundwater Resources Association annual conference: The Future of Water. (9) 2024 CA Water Law Symposium.

1-Human Resources: The GM Evaluation Ad Hoc committee met with the new HR Consultant and the process is now underway.

3-Metering: The Resource Conservation District continues to assist the District in meter maintenance and data collection/management.

4-Finances: The 2022-2023 Financial Audit is considered in another agenda item.

Community Meetings

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) (2/5/24): Nothing to note.

Upper Russian River Water Agency (URRWA) (2/7/24): Willow GM Walker provided the Board with an update on the negotiations between the Eel River Project Authority (ERPA) and PG&E. Walker gave a report on the most recent proposed consolidation meeting, noting the individual Boards and City Council have yet to formally voted to participate in the consolidation path. The next step would be to form a new Joint Powers Authority with the negotiating members called Ukiah Valley Water Authority (UVWA) which would be run by the City of Ukiah. Some discussion was held regarding the Ukiah Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency rate & fee study process.

(Continued...)

Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (2/8/24): Engineering Consultant Tom Johnson gave a detailed presentation on the possible Eel River diversion infrastructure. Legal Counsel Scott Shapiro provided an update on the recent PG&E meeting. City Staff Sean White introduced Alison MacLeod, who presented on outreach, stressing a unified message, and a draft document outlining suggested actions. A motion was passed to support ongoing feasibility study support for the raising of Coyote Valley Dam.

Hopland PUD (2/8/24): No one from the District attended.

Willow Water District (2/12/24): The Board received an update on the local proposal to PG&E for the decommissioning plan. GM Walker mentioned meetings with the Farm Bureau and CLSI to determine how much water will be needed through the diversion in the future. The Board received a report on the proposed consolidation; a revised draft is being reviewed by the participating Boards. Redwood Valley and Millview are voting next week on approving the formation of the JPA with the City of Ukiah. Calpella and Willow are currently declining to join JPA.

Redwood Valley Water District (1/18/24): The Board approved joining the Ukiah Valley Water Authority JPA and appointed Adam Gaska and Tom Schoneman to serve on the Water Executive Committee. An anonymous approval formed an Ad Hoc Committee to explore annexation of Redwood Valley into the Flood Control District with Bree Klotter and Ken Todd being appointed. Consultants proposed an additional phase of groundwater drilling at the Masonite site under the awarded DWR grant funding. The Board received updates on PG&E decommissioning, the Eel Russian Project Authority, Groundwater Sustainability Agency Rate & Fee Study, and approved a joint information letter with Inland Water & Power Commission.

Millview Water District (2/20/24): The main order of business was the approval of execution of Joint Powers Agreement with Redwood Valley and the City of Ukiah for the Ukiah Valley Water Authority. The Board appointed Jerry Cardoza and Tim Price to represent Millview CWD on the Water Executive Committee pursuant to the Ukiah Valley Water Authority (UVWA) JPA. Redwood Valley is anticipated to join when they meet. Calpella and Willow have chosen not to join at this time. There is a mechanism for new members should that change. During the discussion, the question of how this might affect rates came up. Recognition was given to the fact that taking steps to upgrade and improve facilities to provide long term water security will not be free.

City of Ukiah (2/21/24): The Council approved joining the Ukiah Valley Water Authority JPA and appointed Doug Crane and Juan Orosco to serve on the Water Executive Committee. The Council received an update on climate initiatives.

Calpella Water District (2/21/24): A public hearing was held for the adoption of the rate study.

* * * *

Prepared and submitted to the Board of Trustees by: *Elizabeth Salomone, General Manager*