

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

STAFF REPORT

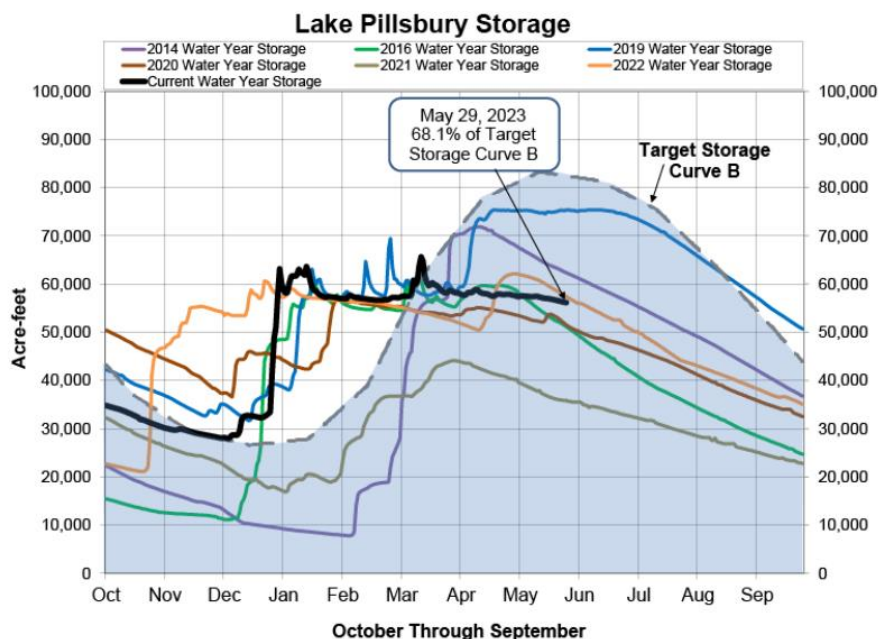
To: Board of Trustees
From: E. Salomone, General Manager
Meeting: Monday, June 5, 2023
RE: Agenda Item 4: Water Supply Conditions Update & District Response

The Strategic Plan relevant priorities are: **Security** through ensuring reliable, resilient, and available sources of water; **Advocacy** in support of equitable water resource stewardship; and **Use** of water in effective and beneficial ways as a public resource, all in alignment with the District’s Mission to steward water resources for the benefit of people and the environment.

Operations of the Inter-Basin Diversion of Water Through PG&E Owned “Potter Valley Project”

Upon request by Senator Mike Thompson, PG&E held a Town Hall on April 27, 2023. PG&E Staff reviewed dam safety specs as required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and Division of Dam Safety. PG&E had announced in a March 16, 2023 press release that due to seismic issues and public safety concerns, it would not engage spillway gates that allow for additional storage in Lake Pillsbury and would reduce stored water by 26% compared to a full reservoir. Water availability is expected to be similar to 2021 operations under the flow variance. There were questions regarding decommissioning, water supply, etc. and while PG&E staff did answer many, they noted additional town halls will be held to address those topics now that they are aware of the public interest.

PG&E held the first Drought Working Group meeting for 2023 to discuss the draft short term flow variance before submitting to FERC later in the month. Minimum Lake Pillsbury storage threshold is set at 12,000 af. The East Fork RR minimum flow will start at 25 cfs upon approval of the variance (estimated in July) and then will be adjusted between 5 cfs and 25 cfs based on PG&E and resource agency determination when daily average reservoir release water temperatures just below Scott Dam exceeds 16 degrees Celsius and/or if Lake Pillsbury storage forecast shows a reduction in flow releases is needed to maintain reservoir storage above concerning levels for facility safety. The variance ends with Lake Pillsbury storage exceeds 36k af after 10/1/23. See the attached agency report reporting PVP flows.



(Continued...)

Lake Mendocino and the Mainstem Upper Russian River

Lake Mendocino storage level was 99,325 acre feet (af) on May 30, 2023, down from 100,039 af on April 24, 2023.

| Lake Mendocino | 5/30 |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Current Storage (acre-feet) | 99,325 |
| FIRO Storage Curve (acre-feet) | 111,000 |
| % of FIRO Storage Curve | 89.48% |
| 7-day change (acre-feet) | +115 |

Russian River Temporary Urgency Change Petition

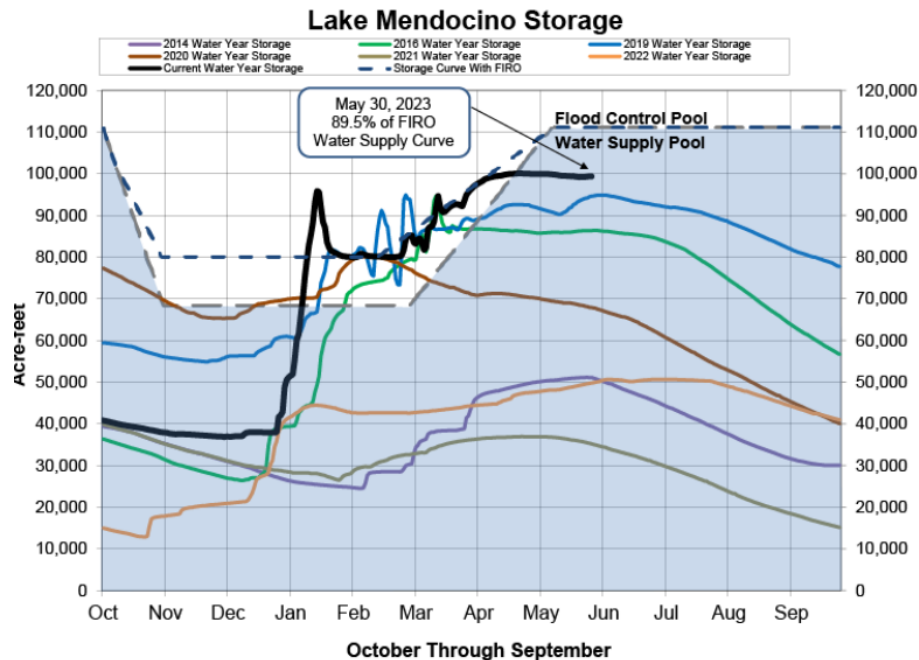
The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) recently approved a request by Sonoma Water Agency to modify Russian River instream flows. The Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) filed by Sonoma Water in April, and approved by SWRCB on May 19, amends Sonoma Water’s water rights permits and State Board Decision 1610 in order to comply with the 2008 Russian River Biological Opinion and to enhance salmonid habitat in Dry Creek and the mainstem Russian River. www.sonomawater.org/tucp

The approved modifications include the following changes:

- From May 1 through October 15, 2023, the instream flow requirements for the upper Russian River will be reduced from 185 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 125 cfs.
- From May 1 through October 15, 2023, the instream flow requirements for the lower Russian River will be reduced from 125 cfs to 70 cfs.

Sonoma Water will implement the minimum instream flows using a five-day running average of daily stream flows, with the requirement that flows don’t drop below 110 cfs on the upper Russian River and 60 cfs on the lower Russian River. For example, upper river flows may be higher than 125 cfs on some days and lower than 125 cfs (but no lower than 110 cfs) on other days, as long as over a five-day period, minimum flows average 125 cfs. The changes allow Sonoma Water to manage instream flows more effectively to meet the objectives in the 2008 Russian River Biological Opinion.

Sonoma Water will continue consultations with staff from the State Board, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, National Marine Fisheries Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to address any water quality, fishery, or public health and safety concerns.

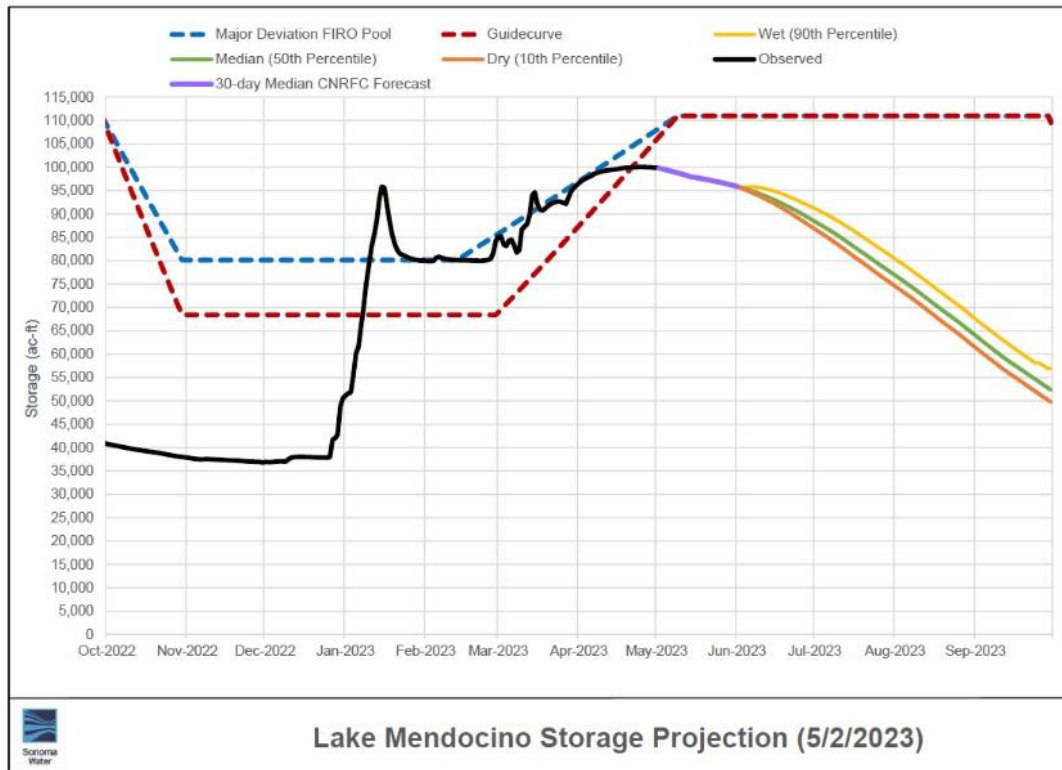


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Technical Memo on Lake Mendocino Storage & Russian River Management

The March 2022 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the District and Sonoma Water concerning Lake Mendocino Storage Planning and Russian River Management outlines determinations for an annual Technical Memo. In early May, Sonoma Water submitted the **attached** correspondence to SWRCB regarding the Tech Memo and meeting a requirement of its Temporary Urgency Change Order.

LAKE MENDOCINO



Public Policy Facilitating Committee

Sonoma Water held its annual Public Policy Facilitating Committee meeting, providing an update on the Russian River Biological Opinion and related issues. The current Biological Opinion (BO) expires in September 2023.

District 2023 Water Supply & District Response:

The District does not currently have any water shortage declarations in place. Redwood Valley County Water District was sent the **attached** notice of Availability of Surplus Water, which will be updated for the remaining 2023 calendar year as customer responses are received and analyzed.

Attachments & Links:

- 2023 Technical Memo
- Redwood Valley County Water District Availability of Surplus Water

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

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

Technical Memorandum

Correspondence Serving Requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding of March 2022

In accordance with the requirements of the order issued on December 14, 2022 approving Sonoma Water's Temporary Urgency Change Petitions on Permits 12947A, 12949, 12950, and 16596 (Applications 12919A, 15736, 15737, and 19351), Sonoma Water submits this response to meet the requirement of Term 12 of the order.

The MOU dated March 21, 2022 on Lake Mendocino Storage Planning and Russian River Management between Sonoma Water and the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District (District) describes water supply planning efforts and analysis to assess the adequacy of stored water to meet the anticipated demands. Accordingly, Sonoma Water has developed reservoir level projections for Lake Mendocino for the current water year. The reservoir projection is currently updated monthly and published on Sonoma Water's website at <https://www.sonomawater.org/WaterSupplyProjections>.

As the dry season approaches, the hydrologic conditions in the Russian River are above normal for this time of year. Flows in the Russian River are above the median flow rates for the observed record. Many of the tributary stream gages are also above median flow rates as well. Lake Mendocino reservoir levels are currently at 99,900 ac-ft, the second highest level for this time of year since it initially filled in 1959. Lake Sonoma reservoir levels are currently at 264,800 ac-ft, the highest level for this time of year since it initially filled in 1986. This, in particular, represents a dramatic recovery for Lake Sonoma which was at its all-time lowest point of just under 98,000 ac-ft on December 25, 2022.

With significant tributary flows at this time and the anticipated forthcoming reduction in minimum instream flow requirements to satisfy the Russian River Biological Opinion, the storage water supplies in Lake Mendocino will be more than sufficient to fully meet the requirements of the following authorized uses of storage releases:

- a) minimum instream flow requirements on the Russian River
- b) rediversion by the District pursuant to License No. 13898
- c) rediversion by Sonoma Water pursuant to its Permit No. 12947A
- d) rediversion by post-1949 water-right permittees and licensees within Sonoma County that are under the 10,000 acre-foot storage reservation.

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The seasonal drying of tributary flows is anticipated to be later than average this year. As tributary flows nearly cease, storage releases will increase to support the beneficial uses in the mainstem of the Russian River. An additional burden for maintaining instream flows will be shifted to storage releases as it is anticipated that PG&E will be filing a variance to significantly reduce the East Fork Russian River minimum instream flow requirements under their FERC license for the Potter Valley Project. Under a 'Normal' water year classification, the East Fork Russian River minimum instream flows are passed through Lake Mendocino and are sufficient enough to meet pre-1949 water rights and provide additional water to Sonoma Water to offset some of the storage releases needed to meet the minimum instream flows of the Upper Russian River.

***Submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board
By Sonoma Water on May 8, 2023
Meeting Term 12 of the December 2022 TUCO***

Mendocino County

Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District

304 N. State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482 707.462.5278 Website: RRFC.net DistrictManager@rrfc.net

May 1, 2023

Redwood Valley County Water District
Att: Board of Directors & General Manager
151 Laws Avenue
Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Directors and GM Walker,

RE: Availability of Surplus Water

This letter is to confirm availability of 60 acre feet of surplus water for May 2023 to Redwood Valley County Water District under the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District's water right license 13898. This amount was determined from an email received from Jared Walker on behalf of RVCWD with 2023 surplus water request projections.

Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Yours Sincerely,



Elizabeth Salomone, General Manager
On behalf of the Board of Trustees

Enc:

- RVCWD Surplus Water 2023 Projections- requests dated February 2, 2023

Mendocino County

Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District

304 N. State Street #2, Ukiah, CA 95482 707.462.5278 www.RRFC.net DistrictManager@rrfc.net

February 1, 2023

Redwood Valley County Water District
Att: Jared Walker
151 Laws Avenue, Suite A
Ukiah, CA 95482

2023 Water Request Projections

Instructions: Please provide surplus water request projection in the table below.

| | A | B |
|----------------|---|--|
| Month | Projected water use in acre feet | Projected AF Amount reporting as RRFC |
| January | 0 | 0 |
| February | 40 | 40 |
| March | 60 | 60 |
| April | 60 | 60 |
| May | 60 | 60 |
| June | 60 | 60 |
| July | 150 | 150 |
| August | 150 | 150 |
| September | 150 | 150 |
| October | 100 | 100 |
| November | 40 | 40 |
| December | 0 | 0 |
| Totals: | 870 | 870 |

Signature Jared Walker

Date 2/2/2023