

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

General Manager's Report for April 2023

Presented at Regular Meeting of Monday, May 1, 2023

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)

See also the Agenda Item on Water Supply Conditions

1-Water Sharing Program: The Steering Committee met to discuss Program adaptations with the issuance of The Governor's Executive Order N-5-23 terminates portions of prior drought orders including the ability of the State Water Resources Control Board to issue emergency regulations in the Russian River watershed, therefore the water sharing program will not be able to run as originally designed. The Steering Committee continues to work on alternatives for 2023 and beyond while awaiting more information on Potter Valley Project operations for 2023.

2-Russian River Water Forum: The Project Management Advisory Team continued to meet and steer the process for Leadership Council, working groups, and caucus formation. Mendocino County submitted all regular and alternate representatives for the Planning Group. The first Planning Group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 17, 2023, in Ukiah and will also be broadcast on zoom. More information to come.

<https://russianriverwaterforum.org/>

4-Coyote Valley Dam Improvements: Congressman Huffman announced he had "the opportunity to once again select community projects for consideration by the House Appropriations Committee for possible funding. Despite limitations set by the new Majority setting a tight timeline, early deadlines, and severely limiting the number of eligible accounts for project consideration, my office still received over 55 competitive applications by communities and organizations across California's 2nd District, all worthy of funding and recognition." Huffman selected the IWPC application for Coyote Valley Dam General Investigation/ Feasibility study as one of 15 projects to advance to the House Appropriations Committee for consideration. Please note, this submission does not guarantee funding for the project. The timeline for consideration is uncertain and funding is not guaranteed.

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): GM served on an ad hoc committee to prepare for the well permitting workshop #2 which was held Monday, April 17, 2023. Updates were provided by the County of Mendocino and the GSA with the public providing input and questions.

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.)

1-Public Awareness of Water Issues: The Public Policy Institute (PPIC) is filming a documentary on the future of the Eel & Russian trans-basin diversion; Janet Pauli and GM Salomone were interviewed on location in Potter Valley. GM Salomone also provided quotes, interviews, and background to various media outlets.

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2-ACWA: The ACWA Region 1 Board met twice. ACWA held a Leadership to Leadership meeting with Region 1 ACWA members which was well attended by Mendocino County and Russian River Watershed representatives.

2-Government Funding: GM Salomone was invited to join a small statewide Water Telemetry Technical Group to assist the State Water Resources Control Board in better understanding the needs of water use data collection and reporting for several project that are underway. Several funded pilot projects are being discussed, including in the Russian River watershed. The first meeting was held in April.

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-Customer water use: As per the District contract, customers have been offered surplus water, asked for by-month projections/updates for 2023, and offered opportunity to identify contract quantities available to transfer to the District to sell as surplus.

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 Salomone attended several workshops and webinars.

presented to Leadership Mendocino, Mendocino County Resource Conservation District Board meeting, took several days off, attended several webinars.

2-Human Resources: A new Office Administrator was hired and started. GM Evaluation process update continues.

4-Finances: Met with Accountant several times to set up new employee payroll and address several other issues.

Community Meetings

Upper Russian River Water Agency (URRWA) (4/5/23): Staff reported on Willow's service contracts with the other water districts. GM Salomone gave a presentation on the Russian River Water Forum. The proposed consolidation of services between the City of Ukiah and Ukiah Valley Water Districts was discussed. Issues of governance still remain unresolved though it is proposed that the City would annex one district at a time given the complexity of the process. URRWA discussion was centered on resistance to proceeding without a clear understanding of cost changes that would occur.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) (4/3/23): GM Salomone provided an update on GSA and the Commission held a budget workshop.

Willow County Water District (4/20/23): Closed session re consolidation ad hoc. Willow and Hopland Annual SWRCB inspection scheduled for April 17. New inspectors. Bella Visit subdivision (171 homes) goes before County BOS tomorrow. PGE announced PVP gates will remain open. Will reduce summer and fall releases to the Eel. Russian River water forum is new venue for working towards future water allocation. Water district services contracts - basic ongoing maintenance. SWRCB announced all RR water curtailments rescinded. URRWA consolidation ad hoc meeting monthly. Opening LAIF account - initiated by recent bank collapses. \$17M cap on federal insurance. Pays higher interest. Consensus.

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Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (MCIWPC): Jacobs Engineering coming to PV April 25 for site visit. Special PVID meeting 9:30 am Apr 25 meeting to introduce Jacobs and their study plan. Larger public meeting in PV after results are developed.

RR Water Forum update- two Mendocino caucus meetings for representation on planning committee. List is finalized and sent to consultant. First planning meeting 10am on May 17th at Ukiah Valley Conference Center. Several presentations on objectives. Reference library on existing relevant info is being developed. PVP - updated NDA in place for IWPC/SCWA facilities assessment team. Simplistic seismic study shows increased risk of uncontrolled release from earthquake damage from 1-5000 yrs to 1-900 years. In response PGE states spillway gates will remain open to reduce risk. Letters from congressperson Thompson to FERC and FERC letter to PGE. PGE and FERC engineers are discussing. Current snow pack measurement is 217% of normal. Without variances flows to go from 45-90 and then to 125 cfs if no variance. If variance expected to have 2021 type flow thru project, i.e. 55-60 cfs in summer. This is significant impact on water rights in RR. Prospective DWR grant will require matching funds and SCWA putting in \$600K. SCWA asking IWPC to put in \$150k which is \$30k per member. Consideration of sending letter to FERC about Scott Dam gates. Currently no public comment period. Janet expects to have formal public comment period after PGE and FERC engineers conclude their discussions. Coyote Dam raise feasibility study - funding not in 2023 omnibus bill but IWPC submitted application through another source \$500k, likely no match required. One of 15 out of 50 applications which goes forward to appropriations committee.

Millview County Water District (4/28/23): Updates given on the PG&E operations of PVP, Water Forum development, general district operations, Well #6 progress moving very slowly. Legal Counsel Neary provided an update on the efforts of small water districts and City of Ukiah to consolidate resources/services. The latest plan is to develop another JPA (NOT URRWA) and eventually, the City of Ukiah would annex in each of the districts over time.

Redwood Valley CWD (4/20/23): Cancelled due to lack of quorum.

Hopland Public Utility District (4/13/23): No one from the District attended.

Calpella Water District (4/19/23): No one from the District attended.

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