

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

STAFF REPORT

**Agenda Item 9: UPDATED Strategic and Annual Operations Planning
Monday, May 4, 2026**

Strategic Planning:

- Communicates priorities, goals, and implementation methods to the public and partners.
- Supports proactive and informed decision-making.
- Provides direction to Executive staff in District operations.
- Guides resource allocation.
- Strengthens trust and transparency through clear expectations

Background

The District has used strategic planning since 2016, maintaining periodic reviews and updates. The systematic processes through which an organization agrees on are essential to its mission and are responsive to current conditions. Strategic planning guides the acquisition and allocation of resources to achieve these priorities.

The Board held a planning meeting with a consultant in December to review the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, exploring opportunities to renew commitment to long term planning goals and discuss new ones.

At the March 3, 2026 Regular Board meeting, the Board approved the proposed 2026-2028 Strategic Plan and the proposed 2026 Annual Operations Plan. Since then, Staff has discovered some inconsistencies between draft versions and requests consideration to adopt the updated Plans.

Discussion

The Board can provide feedback and direction to Staff.

Recommendation:

Strategic Plan:

- Provide feedback to Staff on the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan to return with an updated draft;
or
- Move to adopt the updated 2026-2028 Strategic Plan as presented.

Operations Plan:

- Provide feedback to Staff on the 2026 Annual Operations Plan to return with an updated draft;
or
- Move to adopt the 2026 Annual Operations Plan as presented.

Attachments:

- Proposed updated 2026-2028 Strategic Plan, redlined
- Proposed updated 2026-2028 Strategic Plan, clean
- Proposed updated 2026 Annual Operations Plan with additional changes from updated Strategic Plan in yellow highlighting.

Linked on website:

- 2023-2025 Strategic Plan: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/strategic-planning>

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

2026 – 2028 Strategic Plan

Priorities & Goals:

Priority 1: ~~Long-Term~~ Water Supply Security

Ensure reliable, resilient, and available sources of water.

- Goal 1: Improve river and reservoir operations.
- Goal 2: ~~Support~~ **Advance** fair and reliable trans basin diversions.
- Goal 3: Increased storage capacity.
- Goal 4: ~~Maintain health of District Water Rights.~~ **Ensure effective and beneficial use of District water as a public resource.**

Priority 2: Strategic Partnerships

Collaborate with partners to achieve aligned goals for a mutual benefit.

- Goal 1: **Cultivate** trusted relationships with community partners for regional water security.
- Goal 2: Expanded relationships with non-traditional partners and stakeholders in pursuit of enhanced Environmental Stewardship.
- Goal 3: **Promote clarity on shared goals and initiatives with our strategic partners.**

Priority 3: Advocacy and Engagement

Be an influential voice for our region ~~by influencing~~ through outreach, education, funding, regulation, and legislation.

- Goal 1: Improve public awareness and understanding of the importance of water issues.
- Goal 2: ~~Promote accountability and transparency with our strategic partners.~~
- Goal 3: Pursue State and Federal governmental policy and funding support.

Priority 4: Governance and Operational Excellence

Foster sustainable leadership and management of agency resources.

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

2026 – 2028 Strategic Plan

Mission

The District’s mission is to steward water resources for the benefit of people and environment.

Vision

Our vision is to ensure available, reliable, and resilient water resources.

Values

Values serve as guiding principles for the District as it invests time and energy to meet the Mission and Vision over the next three years.

Trust:	We are a consistent and reliable resource.
Knowledge:	We apply the insight and expertise required to steward water resources.
Advocacy:	We support and raise awareness of water resource issues.
Inclusivity:	We elevate equitable access to opportunities and resources.
Transparency:	We practice and encourage open communication and engagement.

3-Year Target

We will lead our community to help ensure consistent, affordable, and reliable water supply for the region.

Annual Action Plan

The strategic plan has a corresponding annual action plan approved by the Board each year. It sets tactics and performance metrics for implementing the strategic plan goals and supporting the annual General Manager performance evaluation.

2026 – 2028 Strategic Plan

Priorities & Goals:

Priority 1: Water Supply Security

Ensure reliable, resilient, and available sources of water.

- Goal 1: Improve river and reservoir operations.
- Goal 2: Advance fair and reliable trans basin diversions.
- Goal 3: Increased storage capacity.
- Goal 4: Ensure effective and beneficial use of District water as a public resource.

Priority 2: Strategic Partnerships

Collaborate with partners to achieve aligned goals for a mutual benefit.

- Goal 1: Cultivate trusted relationships with community partners for regional water security.
- Goal 2: Expanded relationships with non-traditional partners and stakeholders in pursuit of enhanced Environmental Stewardship.
- Goal 3: Promote clarity on shared goals and initiatives with our strategic partners.

Priority 3: Advocacy and Engagement

Be an influential voice for our region through outreach, education, funding, regulation, and legislation.

- Goal 1: Improve public awareness and understanding of the importance of water issues.
- Goal 2: Pursue State and Federal governmental policy and funding support.

Priority 4: Governance and Operational Excellence

Foster sustainable leadership and management of agency resources.

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

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2026 Annual Operations Plan

Priority 1: Water Supply Security

Ensure reliable, resilient, and available sources of water.

Goal 1: Improve river and reservoir operations.

Approach:	Contribute to the success of coordinated regional water management efforts such as FIRO, TUCPs, Biological Opinion, Water Sharing Program, reservoir storage planning, and channel maintenance through policy and funding support.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue regular meetings and information sharing with Sonoma Water. ○ Monitor and contribute to TUCP filings and implementation. ○ Participate in Russian River Reservoir Operations Workgroup meetings. ○ Be a leader in Voluntary Water Sharing Program working group. ○ Explore opportunities within channel maintenance obligations.

Goal 2: Advance fair and reliable trans basin diversions.

Approach:	Contribute to collaborative efforts in securing both short and long term water supply reliability in cooperation with Inland Water & Power Commission, Eel Russian Project Authority, PG&E, and other regional partners.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pursue State and Federal governmental policy and funding support. ○ Meet with Eel River stakeholders to identify aligned values and goals. ○ Actively promote and support transparent financial planning.

Goal 3: Increased storage capacity.

Approach:	Commit District resources to bolster collaborative efforts and to explore additional storage opportunities.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Renew incentive based pricing development efforts. ○ Remain proactive in IWPC USACE Lake Mendocino Study Ad Hoc. ○ Pursue State and Federal governmental funding, legislative, and regulatory support.

Goal 4: Ensure effective and beneficial use of District water as a public resource.

Approach:	Maximize strategic and beneficial use of water under District water rights.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue cooperating with SWRCB on change petition filed in 2025. ○ Support success of the LAFCo application for annexation of RVCWD. ○ Cooperate with SWRCB to advance RR Telemetry Pilot. ○ Explore and assess additional strategies and opportunities.

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2026 Annual Operations Plan

Priority 2: Strategic Partnerships

Collaborate with partners to achieve aligned goals for a mutual benefit.

Goal 1: Cultivate trusted relationships with community partners for regional water security.

Approach:	Identify shared values and concerns with community interest groups, stakeholders, and organizations.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage Farm Bureau on opportunities for agricultural water use efficiencies, increased storage, and individual water right security. ○ Explore collaborations for cost-effective, multi-benefit sustainability programs and actions to support.

Goal 2: Expanded relationships with non-traditional partners and stakeholders in pursuit of enhanced Environmental Stewardship.

Approach:	Deepen connections with groups such as Indigenous Tribes and communities, academia, and local constituents.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend trainings, meetings, and events to identify opportunities. ○ Explore and assess additional strategies.

Goal 3: Promote clarity on shared goals and initiatives with our strategic partners.

Approach:	Support development of written policies and resolutions as action items at IWPC and GSA.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IWPC and GSA approve and implement strategic plans and policies which guide expenditures of resources and board positions.

Priority 3: Advocacy and Engagement

Be an influential voice for our region through outreach, education, funding, regulation, and legislation.

Goal 1: Improve public awareness and understanding of the importance of water issues.

Approach:	Serve as a knowledgeable and reliable resource for information.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hold local, regional, and statewide advisory roles and positions. ○ Improve dialogue and collaborations with Indigenous Tribes and communities. ○ Establish relationships with key individuals and groups through dialogue, tours, information sharing, etc. ○ Continue expanding website resources and issuing weekly newsletter.

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2026 Annual Operations Plan

Priority 3: Advocacy and Engagement (continued)

Be an influential voice for our region through outreach, education, funding, regulation, and legislation.

Goal 2: Pursue State and Federal governmental policy and funding support.

Approach:	Utilize our identity and reputation to build collaborative relationships and improve awareness of regional issues.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meet with key representatives to communicate District priorities. ○ Collaborate with partners on strategy for enhancing attention for funding and legislation to support the watershed.

Priority 4: Governance and Operational Excellence

Foster sustainable leadership and management of agency resources.

Goal 1: Capable and high quality executive leadership.

Approach:	Cultivate an enriching organizational culture including professional development, incentivization, open dialogue, and supportive resources.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify key elements of a succession plan and begin outlining.

Goal 2: Engaged, diverse, and knowledgeable Board leadership.

Approach:	Cultivate an attractive and collaborative public service opportunity.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify key elements of a succession plan and begin outreach. ○ Provide training and development opportunities in governance, engagement, and water related issues.

Goal 3: Effective systems, administration, and human resources to execute the strategic plan.

Approach:	Enhanced transparency, accountability, and consistency across the District.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain effective and relevant policies, procedures, and governing documents. ○ Provide high value customer service.

Goal 4: Sound and sustainable management of District finances.

Approach:	Commit District financial resources to align with and implement Strategic Plan priorities.
Performance Metrics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Board workshop to assess and prioritize internal and external water supply reliability projects. ○ Develop policy for budgeting, investing, and rate setting. ○ Identify projects to develop for grant funding opportunities.