

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

**STAFF REPORT**

**Agenda Item 8, Water Supply Conditions**

**Monday, October 7, 2024**

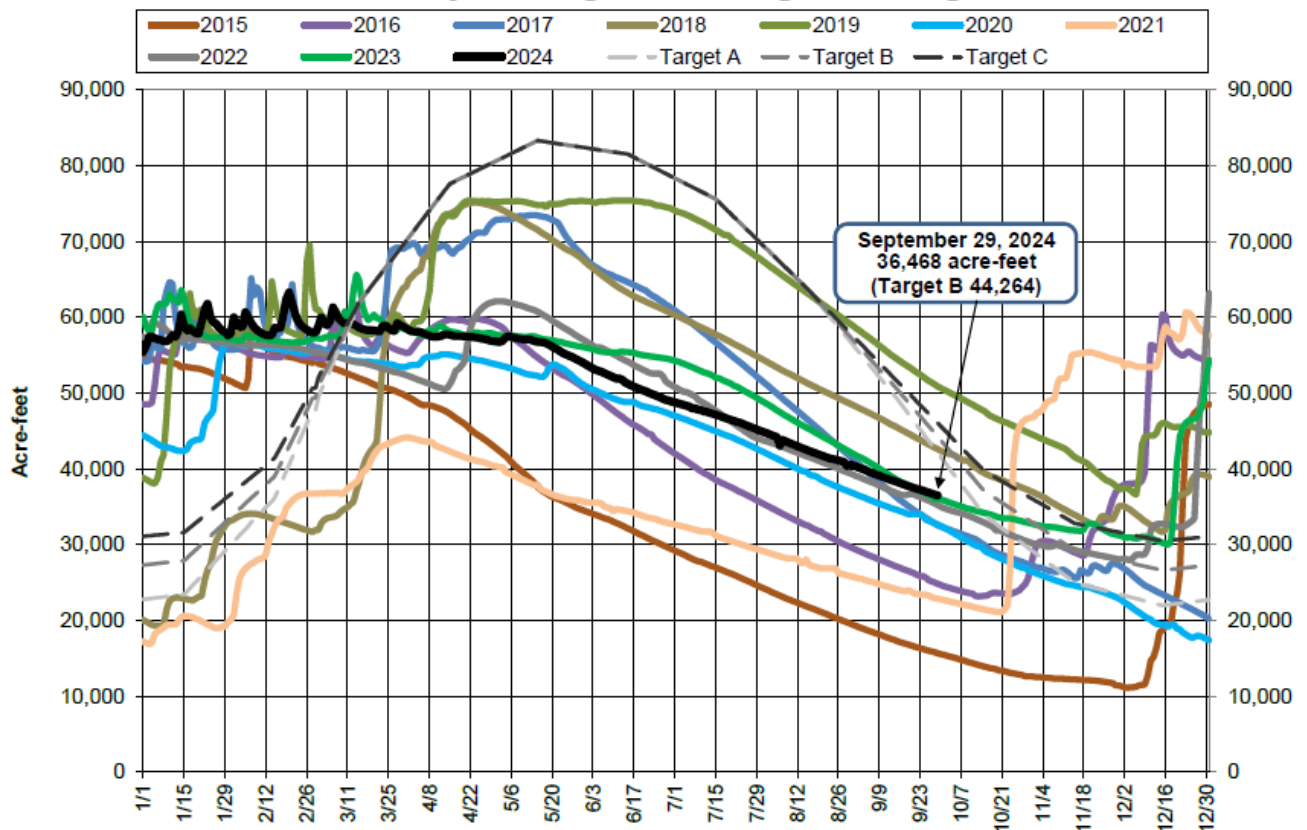
**The Strategic Plan** relevant priorities are: **Security** through ensuring reliable, resilient, and available sources of water; **Advocacy** in support of equitable water resource stewardship; and **Use** of water in effective and beneficial ways as a public resource, all in alignment with the District’s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

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

The Federal Energy Resources Commission (FERC) approved the 2024 flow variance submitted by PG&E in late June. At the most recent PG&E Drought Working Group meeting, PG&E reminded Group members that the current flow variance will end when Lake Pillsbury storage is at or above 36,000 acre feet (af) after October 1, 2024. At the time of the PG&E meeting, storage at lake Pillsbury was around 37,000 af. For the Russian River diversion, the minimum flow for the East Branch RR above Lake Mendocino was 5 cfs but will automatically increase to 25 cfs on Oct 1 per the variance. Beginning Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>, PG&E will evaluate storage levels for potential exit of variance.

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, PG&E announced the termination of the 2024 Flow Variance due to Lake Pillsbury storage exceeding 36,000 acre feet. More information: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/updates>

**Lake Pillsbury Storage and Target Storage Scenarios**

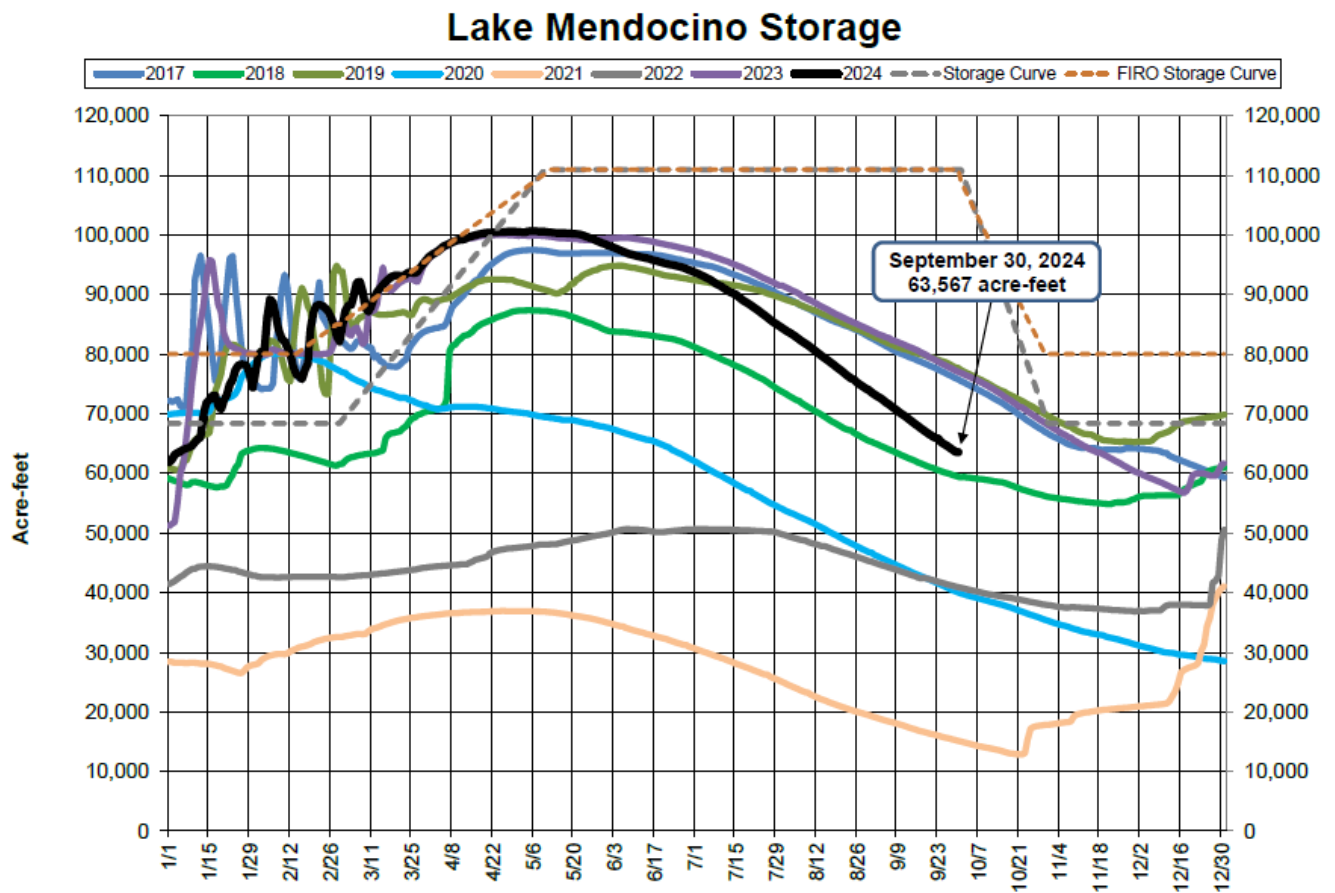


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### Lake Mendocino and the Mainstem Upper Russian River

Lake Mendocino storage level was 63,567 acre feet (af) on September 30, 2024, down from 72,876 af on September 3, 2024. As of October 1, 2024, the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights has not yet responded to the Sonoma Water filed temporary urgency change petitions. The petitions seek authorization to implement a hydrologic index based on Lake Mendocino storage values, rather than the current index based on cumulative inflow into Lake Pillsbury, starting November 1, 2024. In the absence of the proposed changes, the applicable minimum instream flow requirements may require releases of water from Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma at levels that would risk significant depletions of storage levels that could cause impacts to human health and welfare and reduce water supplies needed for protection of listed salmon species in the Russian River. Therefore, Sonoma Water proposes alternative monthly storage values, in lieu of cumulative Lake Pillsbury inflow, to define the water supply conditions that determine which minimum instream flow requirements. The current Temporary Urgency Change Order is in effect until October 15, 2024 or superseded by another Order.

For more information, visit Sonoma Water’s TUCP webpage: [www.sonomawater.org/tucp](http://www.sonomawater.org/tucp).



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