

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

## **General Manager's Report for May 2023**

*Presented at Regular Meeting of Monday, June 5, 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: (1)** The Steering Committee met, going over current conditions and sub-committee work progress. It was decided not to pursue a 2023 Program implementation but to continue working on the alternative pathway to run the Program without emergency regulations and be prepared for 2024 onward.

**2-Russian River Water Forum:** See also Agenda Item 5. Sonoma County Supervisors approved a \$350,000 contribution as match/bridge funding for the Forum. Sonoma Water has not yet heard if we received the \$2 million DWR grant to continue the Forum facilitation and work. Sonoma Water retailers are contributing \$150,000 and Mendocino County (through IWPC) is hoping to provide the remaining \$150,000 through member contributions. At a May Supervisors meeting, Supervisor McGourty provided an update on the trans-basin diversion. A discussion of a workshop at the Board of Supervisors level was discussed and later scheduled for July 2023.

**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) (5/3/23):** The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met in May. TAC members provided updates on projects and management actions relating to GSA. A report of the recent well permitting workshop was given, and discussion held on the most recent draft ordinance. Water quality sampling will take place in August 2023. The rate and fee study consultant selection is scheduled for GSA Board approval in June 2023 and slated to begin work immediately with public workshops as soon as August 2023. The rate and fee study could take up to 2 years to complete and approve for implementation. Fiscal Year 2024 TAC meeting scheduling was discussed, and Sean White was appointed Vice Chair. Deborah Edelman announced it was her last TAC meeting before leaving RCD and Adam Gaska noted there is a plan to appoint a new ag representative since he is now on the GSA Board.

**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 District's weekly email has been transitioned to a weekly Russian River Water Update on the District's website and distributed from the website which allows tracking of how many recipients open the documents.

**2-ACWA:** The ACWA Spring Conference was held in Monterey and, as always, provided an exciting array of keynote speakers, panel discussions, and networking opportunities. Region 1 Board also held a meeting at conference. More information can be provided upon request.

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**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.)

GM attended several virtual workshops and ACWA Spring Conference sessions on water use. GM also met with District's legal counsel and engineers to discuss various projects.

**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 virtual workshops and the ACWA Spring Conference.

**3-Human Resources:** The District's new Office Administrator is now providing a staff report in the packet, see Item 10.

**4-Finances:** Some customer invoices remain unpaid, and reminders have been issued. The ad hoc committee met to provide feedback to GM on budget workshop.

**Community Meetings**

**Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) (5/1/23):** The Commission held a budget public hearing, discussed progress of a legal services RFP, and reviewed the work plan.

**Upper Russian River Water Agency (URRWA) (5/3/23):** Willow GM Walker announced the first Russian River Water forum meeting date, time and place. The Board discussed the need to continue to advocate for conservation in spite of the wet year and full lake. The topic of the consolidation efforts became an extended discussion that took the majority of the meeting time. The short time window for applying for funding (July 1) seemed to be a major obstacle to getting it done. Grants may dry up. The preliminary engineering necessary for the grant application will take 6-8 months, so the deadline will not be met. All agree that consolidation is needed. It may need to be done piecemeal if it can't be done at one go. Some frustration was expressed about the fog of lawyer speak and the pages of obscure text being created.

**City of Ukiah Council (5/3/23):** No related items to report.

**Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (MCIWPC) (5/11/23):** Commissioner reports: Chair Pauli (Potter Valley) shared that the financial ad hoc group continues to work on a financial workshop for the Commission. Commissioner Rodin (City of Ukiah) asked if that presentation could be given to the Ukiah City Council. Schoeneman (Redwood Valley) noted the proposed service consolidation effort of small water districts and City of Ukiah continues, but there is concern regarding the timeline to obtain the SAFER Program funding. Questions were presented regarding staffing, timeline, information sharing. Redwood Valley plans to start up the water treatment plant next week for testing, which has been offline for some time. Commissioner Reardan (RRFC) gave a report from the last Board meeting including the US Army Corp of Engineers staff presentation. Pauli provided an update on the recent meeting with consultants working on the water storage project in PV. Pauli provided a reminder of the first Water Forum Planning Group meeting and reviewed the PG&E Town Hall regarding the seismic study and decommissioning plans. She discussed potential future operations and touched upon the grant Sonoma Water is submitting to take a project to 60% build. Pauli noted the scheduled PG&E Drought Working Group meeting to discuss the 2023 flow variance announced Sonoma Water's Public Policy Facilitating Committee (PPFC) meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 24, 2023.

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**Hopland Public Utility District (5/11/23):** No one from the District attended.

**Willow Water District (5/8/23):** No one from the District attended.

**Calpella Water District (5/17/23):** No one from the District attended.

**City of Ukiah (5/17/23):** Mayor Mari Rodin provided an update from the IWPC meeting, specifically the request for financial contributions from the members and a report that IWPC is working on a broader budget for the mid to long term efforts to maintain the diversion. She also shared comments regarding the lack of funding for the feasibility study on raising Coyote Valley Dam. Some Councilmembers are waiting for a break in the weather to go on a tour of City water facilities. The Council received a presentation on the Riverside Park floodplain regeneration project, which could have benefits to groundwater sustainability efforts. It was funded by the Natural Resources Agency. Councilmember Crane noted discussions continue with the City of Ukiah and small water districts and he is hopeful for a positive solution – no details given.

**Millview Water District (5/16/23):** Millview is bringing their percolation ponds back into service and will begin taking water from the river to feed them. It will consider removing water restrictions next meeting. Income needed for maintenance projects. Well 6 pump house is exceedingly slow to progress. Engineers are moving at a snail's pace. Consolidation efforts: recent meeting outlined a plan in concept for the City to become a member of URRWA and take the lead in that organization. SAFER grant money is still available, but the clock is ticking. First steps would be to construct the interties between Willow, the City and Millview. Tank elevations will need to be brought into parity. Discussion of future capital improvements: the treatment plant upgrades have brought it into good mechanical shape. The building, however, is in bad shape inside and out. The customers water meters are getting old and the electronic readers are starting to fail. They need to purchase a supply of new ones and replace as needed. It was noted that Redwood Valley water treatment plant SCADA upgrades have been completed and they expect to be starting operation by the end of the week. (Millview sells domestically treated water to RV but the infrastructure limits quantity to approx. 55 gallons per person per day in RV. Tx plant will provide addtl supply.)

**Redwood Valley Water District (5/18/23):** Consultant LACO provided an update on the project for drilling a groundwater well on the Masonite site, funded through the Small Community Drought Relief Grant. The annual invoice for 2022 water from RRFC was approved. RV water treatment plant improvements were discussed and Willow GM Jared Walker suggested lifting the 55 gallons per person per day cap on domestic customers. Discussion was held regarding the first RR Water Forum Planning Group meeting. Proposed consolidation of services with City of Ukiah and small water districts: Report from Hildebrand on proposed rates

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