

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

General Manager's Report for October 2025
Presented at Regular Meeting of Monday, November 3, 2025

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)

1-Russian River Rainfall and Reservoirs, Water Year Wrap-Up: Sonoma Water hosted a webinar which is posted on the Sonoma Water YouTube channel here: sonomawater.org/water-year.

1-Russian River Reservoir Ops Workgroup: This Sonoma Water hosted meeting stemming from the recently approved Biological Opinion was cancelled at the last minute due to the government shutdown and NMFS staff being unable to attend.

2-Potter Valley Project Future: *On July 25, 2025, Pacific Gas and Electric Company filed its Final Surrender Application and Final Non-Project Use of Project Lands Application for the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. P-77) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC.)* **October Updates:** (1) An attorney filed a lawsuit on behalf of three local families against PG&E regarding its water rights and decommissioning. (2) The State Water Resources Control Board held an in-person scoping meeting in Ukiah. There was a brief presentation by the SWRCB staff and comments from the public. (3) The Mendocino Board of Supervisors held an agenda item the Potter Valley Project decommissioning. No presentation was provided. A large number of the public spoke. The Board of Supervisors are expected to continue discussing the topic at their November 4, 2025 meeting. (4) A collective community letter was submitted to various Federal agencies including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regarding PG&E's proposed surrender and decommissioning plan for the Potter Valley Project. More information can be found on the District's website:

<https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/future-of-the-cel-river-to-russian-river-trans-basin-diversion-potter-valley-project>

4-USACE Coyote Valley Dam General Investigation Study to increase the storage capacity of Lake Mendocino: The Inland Water & Power Commission (IWPC) Ad Hoc committee for this project met and discussed outreach/education, scope of work on project alternatives, and USACE's approach. The consultants will provide a monthly written update at IWPC meetings which all agency members can take back to their full Boards. This will be included in future meeting materials when available. The US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) staff were scheduled to attend the IWPC October meeting to give a briefing but this was postponed. It is possible project staff are furloughed at the end of October, though not yet confirmed.

4-Lake Mendocino FIRO Water Control Manual Signing

Representatives gathered on Wednesday, October 22nd to celebrate the signing of the water management strategy known as FIRO – the Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations. The Water Control Manual (WCM) update represents over a decade of collaborative work across multiple agencies. In addition to Sonoma Water and the Corps, this coordinated effort included the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Scripps Institute of Oceanography Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Water Resource, local partners, and the community. Lake Mendocino will be the first reservoir to have an updated WCM that implements FIRO, which provided an additional 11,000 acre feet of stored water in the drought conditions of 2021. The efforts at Lake Mendocino have now led to the evaluation of FIRO at multiple reservoirs throughout the West. More information:

<https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/forecast-informed-reservoir-operations-firo>

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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-Water Sharing Program: The working group met to continue discussions of the goals for adapting and possibly expanding the program.

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.)

1/2-ACWA: (1) ACWA statewide Board met to restart the Executive Director selection, after which the following statement was issued to the membership: After thoughtful consideration, the ACWA Board of Directors has decided to re-open the recruitment effort for a new Executive Director and retain a new executive search firm to support this important process. (2) The SGMA Implementation committee met, discussing annual and periodic evaluations, Interconnected Surface Water issues, and developing topics for a future meeting with DWR staff. (3) The District has won the Region 1 Outreach Recognition Award which will be presented at the San Diego conference in December 2025. One of the ten regional award winners will be selected as the overall winner and announced at conference.

2-SWRCB Funded Telemetry Pilot: A film crew came to Ukiah to interview two early pilot participants. SWRCB staff and consultant engineers have started a series of field visits to inspect specific sites for equipment and expect to be installing equipment within weeks and throughout the winter and spring. Work continues on getting agreements signed with property owners. The San Francisco Estuary Institute and Water Data Consortium are working with regional partners regarding the telemetry pilot and how the work of telemetered data collection could continue after the pilot.

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-Annexation of Redwood Valley County Water District Service Area: LAFCo published the application referral to interested parties. More information: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/proposed-application-for-annexation-of-redwood-valley-county-water-district-2025>

1-State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Change Petition: The District received notification that CA Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) does not have any comments or recommendations regarding the Districts proposed change petitions and thanked the District for the consultation request.

1-Meter Downloads: The annual meter downloads started.

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: Attended or watched: (1) Watched the CalWATRS informational item at the State Water Board meeting. (2) North Coast Resource Partnership Quarterly meeting. (3) Lake Mendocino FIRO Manul Signing Ceremony (4) Field visit with SWRCB for Telemetry Pilot (5) Field visit by film crew for Telemetry Pilot.

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Community Meetings

Note: District Board members and GM will no longer be attending all community meetings and reporting here. Please contact the individual organizations for more information on public meetings and updates.

Mendocino County Local Agency Formation Commission (9/8/25): RRFC's annexation application was mentioned during review of the financials and the work plan update. Commissioner Mari Rodin encouraged LAFCo Executive Officer to attend the joint Board meeting between the two districts on 9/8/25 to answer questions about the LAFCo process.

Local Agency Formation Commission (10/6/25): cancelled

Inland Water & Power Commission (IWPC) (10/9/25): The Commission approved a 6 month contract with Larsen Wurzel & Associates to provide support in funding sources and an implementation for IWPC. RRFC Commissioner Reardan reported that RRFC approved the LAFCo application for RVCWD annexation. RVCWD Commissioner Schoneman reported that the Ukiah Valley Water Authority is actively working on additional and formal support to IWPC and its projects. FERC has not yet opened the public comment period on PG&E's submitted decommissioning plan. A meeting (subject to a Non-Disclosure Agreement) was held between ERPA representatives and PG&E to start negotiations for acquiring features of the current PVP. It is believed this process will be lengthy, perhaps several years, and incorporate complex issues such as permitting. After an agreement is made, FERC has to take the project out of commission and the PUC will have to approve the agreement; this is a long process. RRFC requested the Commission consider directing the public education ad hoc committee to develop a proposal for a public education webinar on IWPC projects, particularly the future of the Potter Valley Project and the USACE study regarding Lake Mendocino increased storage capacity. An update was provided on the USACE General Investigation of Coyote Valley Dam. The Federal government shut down has not impacted the work much yet but it could if the shutdown continues and could result in less activity on the project. Securing additional Federal appropriations is a priority, with current funds only lasting through the 2025 calendar year at most.

GSA TAC (10/15/25): The Committee received updates on development of the annual report, results of phase one of the well inventory, progress on the Interconnected Surface Water Study, and the 2027 Periodic Evaluation and possible Plan Amendment. Discussion around phase 2 of the well inventory study including available budget and scope, consideration of recommending a plan amendment to the GSA Board, and the Facilitation Support Services work. <https://ukiahca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2412/files/agenda/5587>

City of Ukiah (10/25/25): Council received a presentation from Hildebrand Consulting regarding the proposed financial plan and process for Ukiah Valley Water Authority rate adjustments. The UVWA member agencies are receiving presentations and the UVWA Executive Committee will be considering approval of rate structure in November. <https://ukiahca.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2130/media> (Item 4b in the recording.)

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

Date: October 21, 2025
To: Jeanne M. Zolezzi
From: Lilliana K. Selke
Subject: SB 707 – Amendments to the Brown Act Teleconference Requirements

SB 707 was signed into law on October 3, 2025, and consolidates and adds new requirements to the Brown Act’s remote participation requirements. The requirements of SB 707 go into effect on January 1, 2026.

Key Points:

➤ Traditional Brown Act Teleconference Procedures Remain Available

Existing law authorizes a legislative body of a local agency to use teleconferencing in accordance with certain requirements, including that all votes be taken by rollcall, the local agency post agendas at all teleconference locations, identify each teleconference location in the agenda, and make each teleconference location accessible to the public. Existing law also requires that, during the teleconference, at least a quorum of the members of the legislative body participate from locations within the boundaries of the local agency. This teleconference option remains available.

➤ Alternative Teleconferencing Rules Revised and Consolidated

More recent alternative rules have been revised and consolidated. The legislative body of a local agency may use teleconferencing in the following circumstances without complying with the traditional Brown Act teleconferencing procedures:

- During a proclaimed state of emergency or local emergency (Gov. Code § 54953.8.2).
- (i) At least a quorum of the members of the legislative body attend the meeting in person at a singular location open to the public within the boundaries of the local agency, (ii) the member(s) attending remotely provide a general description to the board at the start of the meeting of the need to participate remotely for just cause¹, (iii) participate through both audio and visual technology,

¹ Gov. Code § 54953.8.3(c) - For purposes of this section, “**just cause**” means any of the following:

- (1) Childcare or caregiving need of a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner that requires them to participate remotely.
- (2) A contagious illness that prevents a member from attending in person.
- (3) A need related to a physical or mental condition that is not subject to subdivision (c) of Section 54953.
- (4) Travel while on official business of the legislative body or another state or local agency.
- (5) An immunocompromised child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner of the member that requires the member to participate remotely.
- (6) A physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending in person.
- (7) Military service obligations that result in a member being unable to attend in person because they are serving under official written orders for active duty, drill, annual training, or any other duty required as a member of the California National Guard or a United States Military Reserve organization that requires the member to be at least 50 miles outside the boundaries of the local agency.

(iv) limit remote participation for “just cause” to a set number of days in accordance with the statute (Gov. Code § 54953.8.3).

To hold a teleconference meeting under the alternative teleconferencing rules, a legislative body shall comply with all the following:

- Provide (i) two-way audiovisual or (ii) two-way telephonic service and live webcasting of the meeting to allow the public to remotely observe and participate.
- Include remote access and participation instructions on the posted meeting agenda.
- Take no further action on agenda items during a disruption of the call-in option or internet-based service option until restored.
- Include in the meeting minutes the specific provision of law the member relied on to participate remotely, including the specific “just cause” subdivision as applicable.
- Before any action is taken, publicly disclose whether any other individuals eighteen or older are present in the room at the remote location with the member, and the general nature of the member’s relationship with that individual(s).
- Have and implement a procedure for receiving and swiftly resolving requests for reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities, consistent with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132) and give notice of the procedure for receiving and resolving requests for accommodation on the posted meeting agenda.

➤ New Categories of Bodies Covered By Alternative Teleconferencing Rules

Eligible subsidiary bodies² may now use alternative teleconferencing in accordance with specified provisions (Gov. Code § 54953.8.6). However, an elected official serving as a member of an eligible subsidiary body in their official capacity may only participate by teleconference if complying with the Brown Act’s traditional teleconference procedures.

In addition, eligible multijurisdictional bodies (such as Joint Powers Authorities) may now use alternative teleconferencing in accordance with specified provisions (Gov. Code § 54953.8.7). Specifically, the multijurisdictional body must:

- Adopt a resolution authorizing teleconferencing.
- Ensure at least a quorum of members participate from physical locations open to the public within the boundaries of the multijurisdictional body. A member who receives compensation for their service must participate from a physical location open to the public.
- Identify each member who plans to participate remotely in the agenda.
- Ensure the member participates through both audio and visual technology.
- Ensure no member participates in a meeting remotely unless the location from which the member participates is more than twenty miles each way from any physical location of the meeting.
- Limit remote participation to a set number of days in accordance with the statute.

➤ New Obligations for “Eligible Legislative Bodies”

SB 707 implements new obligations for “eligible legislative bodies” which includes the board of directors of a special district that has an internet website and meets *any* of the following conditions:

² “**Eligible subsidiary body**” means a commission, committee, board, or other body of a local agency, whether permanent or temporary, that serves exclusively in an advisory capacity and is not authorized to take final action on legislation, regulations, contracts, licenses, permits, or any other entitlements, grants, or allocations of funds (Gov. Code § 54953.8.6(b)(1)).

- The boundaries of the special district include the entirety of a county with a population of 600,000 or more, and the special district has over two hundred full-time equivalent employees.
- The special district has over 1,000 full-time equivalent employees.
- The special district has annual revenues, based on the most recent Financial Transaction Report data published by the California State Controller that exceed \$400,000,000, adjusted annually for inflation and the special district employs over two hundred full-time equivalent employees.

I do not believe any of the districts we represent fall under the “eligible legislative body” category and thus do not provide greater detail on this point.