

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

**STAFF REPORT**

**Agenda Item 8: Strategic and Annual Operations Planning  
Monday, March 2, 2026**

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**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.

**Discussion**

A draft 2026-2028 Strategic Plan was developed by the Consultant and Staff based on Board discussion at the planning meeting. Staff also drafted a separate annual operations plan for 2026 for Board review and feedback. It is proposed that the proposed annual operating plan is updated and adopted each year in or near January. The Board can provide feedback and direct Staff to return with an updated draft for approval consideration. The Board can also consider adopting either or both documents at this meeting.

**Recommendation:**

Strategic Plan:

- Provide feedback to Staff on the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan and direct to place on the April 5th agenda to consider adoption;
- or
- Move to adopt the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan as presented.

Operations Plan:

- Provide feedback to Staff on the 2026 Annual Operations Plan and direct to place on the April 5th agenda to consider adoption;
- or
- Move to adopt the 2026 Annual Operations Plan as presented.

**Attachments:**

- Proposed 2026-2028 Strategic Plan
- Proposed 2026 Annual Operations Plan

**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 - DRAFT**

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### **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.

<b>Trust:</b>	We are a consistent and reliable resource.
<b>Knowledge:</b>	We apply the insight and expertise required to steward water resources.
<b>Advocacy:</b>	We support and raise awareness of water resource issues.
<b>Inclusivity:</b>	We elevate equitable access to opportunities and resources.
<b>Transparency:</b>	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 - DRAFT**

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### **Priorities & Goals:**

#### **Priority 1: Long-Term Security**

**Ensure reliable, resilient, and available sources of water.**

Goal 1: Improve river and reservoir operations.

Goal 2: Support fair and reliable trans basin diversions.

Goal 3: Increased storage capacity.

Goal 4: Maintain health of District Water Rights

#### **Priority 2: Strategic Partnerships**

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

Goal 1: 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.

#### **Priority 3: Advocacy and Engagement**

**Be a voice for our region by influencing outreach, education, funding, regulation, & 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.

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## DRAFT 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"> <li>○ Continue regular meetings and information sharing with Sonoma Water.</li> <li>○ Monitor and contribute to TUCP filings and implementation.</li> <li>○ Participate in Russian River Reservoir Operations Workgroup meetings.</li> <li>○ Be a leader in Voluntary Water Sharing Program working group.</li> <li>○ Explore opportunities within channel maintenance obligations.</li> </ul>

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"> <li>○ Pursue State and Federal governmental policy and funding support.</li> <li>○ Meet with Eel River stakeholders to identify aligned values and goals.</li> <li>○ Actively promote and support transparent financial planning.</li> </ul>

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"> <li>○ Renew incentive based pricing development efforts.</li> <li>○ Remain proactive in IWPC USACE Lake Mendocino Study Ad Hoc.</li> <li>○ Pursue State and Federal governmental funding, legislative, and regulatory support.</li> </ul>

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"> <li>○ Continue cooperating with SWRCB on change petition filed in 2025.</li> <li>○ Support success of the LAFCo application for annexation of RVCWD.</li> <li>○ Cooperate with SWRCB to advance RR Telemetry Pilot.</li> <li>○ Explore and assess additional strategies and opportunities.</li> </ul>

## DRAFT 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"> <li>○ Engage Farm Bureau on opportunities for agricultural water use efficiencies, increased storage, and individual water right security.</li> <li>○ Explore collaborations for cost-effective, multi-benefit sustainability programs and actions to support.</li> </ul>

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"> <li>○ Attend trainings, meetings, and events to identify opportunities.</li> <li>○ Explore and assess additional strategies.</li> </ul>

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"> <li>○ IWPC and GSA approve and implement strategic plans and policies which guide expenditures of resources and board positions.</li> </ul>

### 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"> <li>○ Hold local, regional, and statewide advisory roles and positions.</li> <li>○ Improve dialogue and collaborations with Indigenous Tribes and communities.</li> <li>○ Establish relationships with key individuals and groups through dialogue, tours, information sharing, etc.</li> <li>○ Continue expanding website resources and issuing weekly newsletter.</li> </ul>

## **DRAFT 2026 Annual Operations Plan**

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### **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"><li>○ Identify key elements of a succession plan and begin outlining.</li></ul>

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"><li>○ Identify key elements of a succession plan and begin outreach.</li><li>○ Provide training and development opportunities in governance, engagement, and water related issues.</li></ul>

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"><li>○ Maintain effective and relevant policies, procedures, and governing documents.</li><li>○ Provide high value customer service.</li></ul>

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"><li>○ Conduct Board workshop to assess and prioritize internal and external water supply reliability projects.</li><li>○ Develop policy for budgeting, investing, and rate setting.</li><li>○ Identify projects to develop for grant funding opportunities.</li></ul>