

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

General Manager's Report for May 2026

Presented at Regular Meeting of Monday, June 1, 2026

Priority 1: Water Supply Security ~ Ensure reliable, resilient, and available sources of water.

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

1-Russian River and Lake Mendocino Operations: The State Water Board approved the Russian River Temporary Urgency Change Petition. On March 20, the SWRCB issued an order approving the TUCP. Sonoma Water's petition sought authorization to implement a hydrologic index based on Lake Mendocino storage values, rather than based on cumulative inflow into Lake Pillsbury. The petition requested the same temporary changes approved by the SWRCB in 2025. The request for an alternative hydrologic index based on Lake Mendocino storage levels originates during the drought of 2013-2015 and was used again during the drought of 2020-2022. The implementation of the alternate hydrologic index was one of several important interventions that prevented Lake Mendocino from going dry in 2021. This temporary change is to ensure that the water supply condition for the Russian River is determined by an index that is reflective of watershed conditions. The urgent need to implement the changes is due to the significant reduction of Eel River water imports through PG&E's Potter Valley Project as ordered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), effective May 15, 2026 – much sooner than in 2025. The influence of Eel River imports on downstream hydrologic conditions in the Russian River has been, and will continue to be greatly diminished, and thus use of the Eel River hydrologic index is not a reliable metric for Russian River water supply conditions. More information on the District's website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/current-russian-river-and-lake-mendocino-operations>

1-Eel River, Lake Pillsbury, & Potter Valley Project Operations: On May 14, 2026, FERC issued the order approving the 2026 temporary flow variance for the Potter Valley Project flows from the Eel to the Russian River. Starting May 15th, flows to the Russian River were reduced based on Lake Pillsbury storage forecasts and water temperature data. PG&E will utilize a flexible flow release approach to reservoir releases to provide adequate flows and cooler water temperatures in the Eel River. PG&E states that the variance is necessary due to the reduced water capacity in Lake Pillsbury as a result of its seismic-risk-related storage restriction, which has reduced the available water stores by approximately 18,200 acre-feet. PG&E has an objective of maintaining 25,000 acre-feet in Lake Pillsbury on October 1, 2026, which it calculates will allow it to meet its dam safety obligations and to preserve the cold water pool to ensure cooler water release temperatures. The initial flow release into the East Branch Russian River will remain at 25 cfs. PG&E will then adjust releases to the East Branch Russian River between 5 and 25 cfs based on Lake Pillsbury storage forecasts using available hydrologic forecasting tools and runoff forecasts, historical water temperature data and water temperature modeling, and other flexible water management criteria. Adjustments made to the East Branch Russian River releases will be made in consultation with the PG&E Drought Working Group. If Lake Pillsbury storage is below the 36,000 acre-feet after September 30, releases to the East Branch Russian River will be limited to 5 cfs. When Lake Pillsbury storage gets above 36,000 acre-feet after September 30, the variance will end and PG&E will release flows as required under its license. More information on the District website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/future-of-the-eel-river-to-russian-river-trans-basin-diversion-potter-valley-project>

1-PG&E Drought Working Group (DWG): With the approval of the 2026 flow variance, the DWG started meeting regularly to receive reports on storage conditions at Lake Pillsbury and other operations of PVP. When the report is provided, it will be posted on the District website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/current-pg-e-potter-valley-project-operations>

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1-Russian River Reservoir Operations Workgroup (Biological Opinion): Sonoma Water continues to provide weekly reports to the workgroup, only meeting when needed.

2-Future of the Trans Basin Diversion:

- (a) **FERC Notice of Scoping Document, Meetings, and Comments-** The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) published a Notice of Scoping Meeting and Request for Comments on the Proposed Surrender, Decommissioning, and Non-Project use of Project Lands (NERF) dated May 22, 2026. FERC will prepare a document discussing the environmental impacts of both the decommissioning and the building of the New Eel Russian Facility (NERF.) FERC will use this document in its decision-making process to identify potential adverse and beneficial impacts of the proposed project surrender and reasonable alternatives. The scoping process gathers input regarding the environmental impacts of the proposal. Specifically, FERC staff request comments on potential alternatives and impacts, as well as identification of any relevant information, studies, or analyses concerning effects on the quality of the human environment. Comments are due Friday, July 24, 2026. More information can be found on the District's website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/future-of-the-eel-river-to-russian-river-trans-basin-diversion-potter-valley-project>
- (b) **Potter Valley Project Acquisition Interests-** On April 21, 2026, US Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins announced on social media that she had heard from a potential buyer for the Potter Valley Project. The Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District in western Riverside County stated in an interview with the Eureka Times-Standard that it “wished to emphasize that the district had absolutely no concrete plans at this stage of the game, that it hadn’t yet looked at the opportunities or constraints of taking ownership of the project, or even if doing so was legally feasible at this point in the proceedings.” Since the announcement by Secretary Rollins, responses have been covered in the press. Articles are linked on the District's website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/future-of-the-eel-river-to-russian-river-trans-basin-diversion-potter-valley-project>
- (c) **Notice of Availability of the State Water Board Scoping Report for the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project Surrender and Decommissioning Project-** On May 12, 2026, the State Water Resources Control Board posted the Scoping Report for the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project Surrender and Decommissioning Project. The Scoping Report summarizes comments received during the State Water Board's Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project Surrender and Decommissioning Project public comment period, which closed on November 3, 2025. More information can be found on the District's website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/future-of-the-eel-river-to-russian-river-trans-basin-diversion-potter-valley-project>

3-US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Coyote Valley Dam General Investigation for Increased Storage Capacity at Lake Mendocino: The Inland Water & Power Commission Ad Hoc Committee reviewed draft content regarding options for progressing the study. The meeting was continued to develop a with recommendation to the Commission. More information can be found on the District's website: <https://rrfc.specialdistrict.org/lake-mendocino-s-coyote-valley-dam-general-investigation-study>

4-LAFCo Application for Annexation of Redwood Valley County Water District's service area: A meeting has been scheduled with the County in June regarding the tax sharing agreement process. An update will be provided after.

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4-State Water Resources Control Board Russian River Telemetry Study: The District GM accompanied State staff and consultants on several site visits and assisted with communications to volunteers. Equipment installations are now being scheduled and will continue throughout the year.

Priority 2: Strategic Partnerships ~ Collaborate with partners to achieve aligned goals for a mutual benefit. (1: Cultivate trusted relationships with community partners for regional water security. 2: Expanded relationships with non-traditional partners and stakeholders in pursuit of enhanced Environmental Stewardship. 3: Promote clarity on shared goals and initiatives with our strategic partners.)

1-Water Sharing Program: The working group received a presentation on the GS Flow Model by Sonoma Water staff. This group welcomes additional participants; contact DistrictManager@rrfc.net for more information.

1-County of Mendocino: At the May 19th Board of Supervisors meeting, item R4, the Board received an informational presentation regarding neglected and abandoned vineyards in Mendocino County. The Board authorized the Ag Department to take action on neglected and abandoned vineyards using relevant tools to accomplish the task and to work with the County CEO's office.

2-CA Land Stewardship Institute (CLSI): "Creating Long-Term Water Supply Resiliency for Ukiah Valley and Upper Russian River" – a project by a collaboration that includes CLSI, Larry Walker & Associates, the City of Ukiah, and the grantor, Bureau of Reclamation. The project was put on hold during a Federal Government shut down and a required project amendment. A stakeholder meeting was held on the project this week in which a review of the project was provided and the new tool was introduced.

3-Alexander Valley Special District Formation: During the May 6 Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Committee public hearing, the Commission reached a 2-4 vote regarding the structure of the proposed district. Specifically, the majority favored a registered-voter district model over the landowner-voted district proposed—a decision that ultimately led to the denial of the current application. "While this outcome is not what we worked toward, it is by no means the end of our efforts. We remain firm in our belief that a landowner-voted district is the most equitable and effective way to manage the unique needs of our water district." Next Steps: There is an opportunity to submit a motion for reconsideration. "We are reviewing the Commission's feedback and legal requirements to ensure our next filing strongly addresses their concerns while protecting the interests of our property owners."

Priority 3: Advocacy & Engagement ~ Be an influential voice for our region through outreach, education, funding, regulation, & legislation. (1: Improve public awareness and understanding of the importance of water issues. (2) Pursue State and Federal governmental policy and funding support.)

1-District Customer Meeting: A District-Customer meeting will be held in June to provide updates on water supply conditions, water reliability efforts, District water rates and policy development, and more.

2-Russian River Water Agency Legislative Group: Sonoma Water held a meeting to collaborate on lobbying efforts, providing updates and facilitating a discussion for coordination.

2-Mussel Prevention: Sonoma Water staff confirmed its mussel prevention project includes golden mussel prevention. (RRFC submitted a support letter last month.)

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Priority 4: Governance and Operational Excellence ~ 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, administration, and human resources to execute the strategic plan. 4: Sound and sustainable management of District finances.)

1: Executive Leadership: Attended or watched: (1) DWR's Proposition 4 Workshop on the Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Grant Program and the Watershed Resilience Grant Program. (2) Webinar - Closing Time: Leading Your District to a Clean Close by CSDA. (3) CA Water Data Consortium, Data and Grants, prop 4 webinar. (4) From Vision to Action: Special District Planning for Impact (CSDA) (5) From Climate Challenges to Watershed Solutions - Voices from the Field Spring 2026 Episode 1 (6) Northern California's role in adapting to a hotter, drier future. (7) Webinar: From Field to Policy: Scaling Sustainable Agriculture

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.

Local Agency Formation Commission (5/4/26): The Commission approved the FY 26-27 budget. The Commission adopted apportionments that remain unchanged for the fourth consecutive year at \$275,000.

City of Ukiah (5/6/26): Nothing water related to note.

Ukiah Valley Water Authority (5/7/26): Consultants Carollo provided an update on the application for planning/design phase of the SAFER grant process. Two meetings with the State have been held and City representatives found out the State had assigned an entirely new team to the project. All follow up information the State has requested is on track to be completed and the State is slated to approve application in September. There is some question about how the funding will be distributed, either in phases or all at once. A letter of support for the Redwood Valley Water District annexation into RRFC was unanimously approved. The Common Interest Agreement regarding Ukiah Valley Water Authority was approved. All member agencies have approved except Calpella, which is expected to consider approval at its next meeting. Staff reported on and invited discussion regarding the Water Authority replacing Redwood Valley Water District on the Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (IWPC.) Redwood Valley Water representatives shared concern that the District cannot continue the financial contributions required. Staff and legal counsel provided further information including the benefit of being represented in the ongoing development of future water supply. Unanimous approval was given to bring the topic forward to IWPC. Staff asked if the Water Authority would like to join the Ukiah Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (UVBGSA) and direction was given to staff to bring it back for a vote. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 4, 2026.

Ukiah Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Technical Advisory Committee (5/13/26): Updates were provided on the Upper Russian River Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) and Interconnected Surface Water Study (ISW) Project Funded by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Grant and the Department of Water Resources (DWR)'s Groundwater Sustainability Plan 2027 Periodic Evaluation. The Committee discussed the updates and amendments to governing documents and recommendations to the GSA Board. Staff provided an update on the State's recent Prop 4 workshop and an ad hoc committee was formed to explore GSA projects for Prop 4 funding requests. Laurel Marcus provided an update on the Bureau of Reclamation 2024 Grant. Staff reported on progress in administration issues.

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Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (5/14/26): RRFC Alternate Commissioner Koball provided a report on his recent meeting regarding a possible acquisition interest from a southern California water district. Chair Pauli added to Koball's report and noted that many of the IWPC member agencies have received public records requests regarding Potter Valley Project issues. The FY 26-27 IWPC expense budget was passed unanimously including agreement for monthly financial reports, enhanced consultant tracking, midyear budget review, and Executive Director recruitment (an Ad Hoc Committee was formed.) Redwood Valley Water District and Ukiah Valley Water Authority representatives reported on efforts for the Ukiah Valley Water Authority to replace Redwood Valley Water on the Commission. Eel River Project Authority Executive Director David Manning provided an update on the development of the New Eel River Facility (NERF.) Environmental studies for NERF have started and IWPC Legal Counsel provided information on the process. Regarding increasing Lake Mendocino storage, Chair Pauli noted the Ad Hoc Committee is now discussing alternatives to funding the project since the Federal Government has not committed hoped-for funds. A report to the Commission is expected in the next month or so. Regarding the water storage development item, Chair Pauli noted that the project lacks funding and no work has been done, though a summary of needed work and outreach to the public was shared.

Mendocino County Drought Working Group (at General Gov Standing Committee) (5/20/26): This was the inaugural meeting of the new scheduling of 2 meets per year of the DWG held during the GGS Committee. Jeanine Jones (Dept of Water Resources) and local County staff presented on statewide and regional water conditions. Chair Mulheren asked staff to explore some additional less formal outreach to the public as the formal setting of the GG Committee may be daunting for engagement. Staff will bring back alternatives.

Redwood Valley Water District (5/21/26): The Board discussed a concept of combining the Ukiah Valley Water Authority member agency Flood Control District contracts with general consensus of agreement. RRFC GM Salomone provided an update on the LAFCo application to annex Redwood Valley Water District into the RRFC Boundary. The Board discussed withdrawing from the Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission with the intent of the Ukiah Valley Water Authority taking its place on the Commission. The item was tabled to allow a letter to IWPC to be drafted for consideration. Director Derek Dahlen was appointed as the IWPC Alternate.

Attachments:

- Mendocino County Agricultural Department letter to Costco Customers regarding possible infestation of an invasive pest, the glassy-winged sharpshooter, on grapevines, blueberry shrubs, and fruit trees sold at the Ukiah Costco
- Letter of Support for the formation of the Alexander Valley Water District

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

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Angela Godwin
Agricultural Commissioner
Sealer of Weights and Measures

May 21, 2026

Dear Valued Costco Customer,

We are reaching out regarding a recent purchase you may have made of grapevine plants, blueberry shrubs, and/or fruit trees at Costco Wholesale in Ukiah. Out of an abundance of caution, we want to make you aware of an issue that has been identified with the above plants shipped from Burchell Nursery in Fresno County to Costco stores between April 24, 2026, and the present.

Some of these plants have been found to be infested with glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS), an invasive insect pest that poses a significant threat to vineyards and ornamental plants. This pest can spread Pierce's disease, which is devastating to grapevines, and can impact other plants as well.

What We Are Asking You to Do:

Please do not plant your recently purchased grapevine if you have not already done so. Contact the Mendocino County Agricultural Commissioner's Office as soon as possible so we can send an inspector to examine your plant. We may also place an insect monitoring trap at your property as a precautionary measure. We can be reached at (707) 234-6830, or by email at agcomm@mendocinocounty.gov

If your plant shows any signs of insect activity or distress, please keep it isolated and contained in its original pot or container until an inspector can visit.

We understand this is an inconvenience, and we appreciate your cooperation. Early detection is critical to protecting Mendocino County and California's agricultural resources.

More information about GWSS and Pierce's disease can be found online: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/pdcp/>

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Angela J. Godwin

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Mendocino County

Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District

PO Box 2104, Ukiah, CA 95482 707.462.5278 Website: RRFC.net DistrictManager@rrfc.net

May 1, 2026

Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission
11 Santa Rosa Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dear Commissioners,

The Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District (RRFC) supports the formation of the Alexander Valley Water District.

RRFC has coordinated with the Russian River Property Owners Association for years, specifically on drought response and planning issues. The formation of the Alexander Valley Water District would increase the positive impacts of this continuing work, as well as what lies ahead with the changing conditions in the Russian River watershed.

As it stands, there is a large gap of representation in key conversations and decision making. While Sonoma County Supervisors and Sonoma Water have represented the property owners to the best of their ability, the Alexander Valley Water District would provide a more direct representation in key areas such as the Potter Valley Project decommissioning, water rights issues, water supply challenges, and funding acquisition.

RRFC manages Mendocino County's benefit from Lake Mendocino for agriculture, industry, recreation, and drinking water. We have a keen interest in all Russian River watershed interests being suitably represented. The District has special interest in the Alexander Valley Water District being able to represent Sonoma County beneficiaries of stored water in Lake Mendocino.

Thank you for your focused attention on the approval of the Alexander Valley Water District formation.

Yours Sincerely,



Elizabeth Salomone
General Manager

President
Christopher Watt

Vice President
John Reardan

Treasurer
Tyler Rodrigue

Trustee
John Bailey

Trustee
Dave Koball