

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

**STAFF REPORT**

To: Board of Trustees  
From: E. Salomone, General Manager  
Meeting: Monday, October 3, 2022  
RE: Agenda Item 6: Water Supply Conditions Update & District Response

**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 environment.

**Inter-Basin Diversion of Water Through PG&E Owned “Potter Valley Project”**

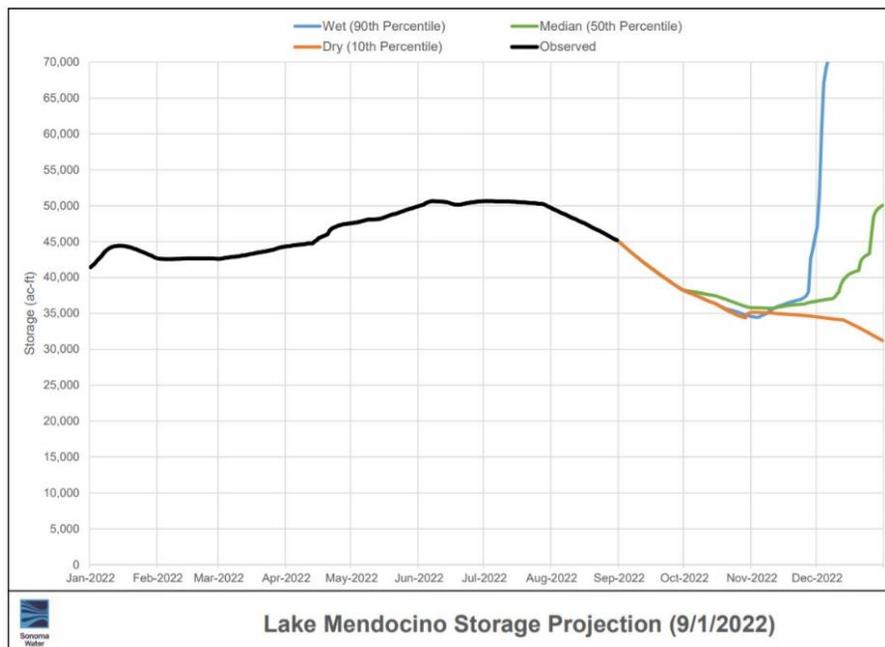
The PG&E Drought Working Group (DWG) continues to meet every two weeks during the variance period and PG&E has provided the DWG with Lake Pillsbury storage forecasts with various scenarios. To date, there has been a lack of consensus to increase the East Fork Russian River flows beyond the minimum 5 cubic feet per second (cfs) as allowed in the variance. The Variance remains in effect until Lake Pillsbury storage exceeds 36,000 acre feet (af) after October 1, 2022. Projections show that Lake Pillsbury will drop slightly below 36,000 af by October 1<sup>st</sup>, therefore the variance will remain in effect until precipitation/runoff brings storage up to 36,000 af.

**Lake Mendocino and the Mainstem Upper Russian River**

Lake Mendocino storage level on September 26, 2022 was 41,528 af, down from 44,504 af on September 5, 2022. Some rain in September and the decreased demand on water supply has allowed for a reduction in releases from Lake Mendocino.

**Reservoir Storage Projections**

LAKE MENDOCINO



From Sonoma Water’s website: <https://www.sonomawater.org/WaterSupplyProjections>

(Continued...)

**Curtailments in the Upper Russian River**

The State Water Board curtailments remain in effect for most water rights junior to January 1949 and regulators have been monitoring conditions to adjust to changing water supply conditions.

**The Upper Russian River Voluntary Water Sharing Agreement Program**

The Program continues to be due to the reduction in inter-basin diversions from the Eel River to the East Branch Russian River above Lake Mendocino. The Program is designed to be adaptive to changes in water supply however, it is unlikely that significant changes will occur before demand drastically drops off for 2022. The Steering Committee has considered calling an official end to the Program for 2022 but postponed that decision.

**District 2022 Water Supply**

As a participant in the Upper Russian River Voluntary Water Sharing Agreement Program, the District was issued a direct diversion water supply allocation for July and August 2022 that covered some customer water use with the remainder from stored water supplies in Lake Mendocino.

The District's January 1949 Appropriative Water Right License was not curtailed of direct diversion use in 2022, though there is insufficient direct diversion to meet the full customer demand and stored water from Lake Mendocino is also being used. Customers have been asked to recognize the requests from Governor Newsom and the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors to reduce overall water use by at least 20% in recognition of a third consecutive year of drought conditions and reduced water supply.

**District Response:**

The District Board passed Declaration #21-03, Stage IV - Water Crisis, on May 17, 2021 and is holding a Public Hearing at the October 3, 2022 Board Meeting to consider approving Declaration #22-01 Stage III: Water Warning.