

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

General Manager's Report for November 2023

Presented at Regular Meeting of Monday, December 11, 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)

1-River & Reservoir Ops: October 2023 Temporary Urgency Change Petition: On October 13, 2023 Sonoma County Water Agency filed temporary urgency change petitions (TUCPs) with the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights. The petitions were submitted for Temporary Urgency Change to modify the minimum instream flow requirements for the Russian River as established by Decision 1610 for Permits 12947A, 12949, 12950 and 16596 in response to changed watershed conditions in the Russian River due to recent changes in the operation of the Potter Valley Project. The **attached** letter of support was submitted by the District. More information: <https://www.sonomawater.org/tucp>

1-Future Reservoir Ops: RRFC and Sonoma Water staff met to review 2023 water year and discuss the 2024 Technical Memo development (under the MOU) with monthly meetings to start in January.

2-Trans Basin Diversion Future: PG&E posted the Initial Draft Surrender Application and Decommissioning Plan for public review. The Board will consider approval of a comment letter in Item 6.

2-Russian River Water Forum: PG&E's Draft Surrender Application and Conceptual Decommissioning Plan was on the agenda for the Thursday, December 7 Water Forum Planning Group meeting. More information on Forum: <https://russianriverwaterforum.org/>

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): Vice President White and GM met with the GSA's Rate & Fee Study consultants to discuss options and provide feedback in their proposal development.

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.)

2-Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA): An ACWA Board orientation was held for incoming Board Members. GM Salomone's term is Jan 1, 2024 to Dec 31, 2026. The statewide ACWA Board met.

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-Water Right License Change Petition: GM and Legal Counsel met with State Water Resources Control Board to discuss potential petition.

1-Water Right License: Data and water use worksheets are being returned by to with a December 31, 2023 deadline to meet new State Water Resources Control Board annual reporting deadlines.

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1-Redwood Valley surplus supplies: Paperwork has been issued for 180 af of contracted water to be transferred and made available to Redwood Valley. An additional 523 af has been offered and can be made available, for a total of 703 af on top of what is uncontracted.

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 was on leave for 2+ weeks in November/early December. GM attended the following webinars/trainings: *Grant Writing, *SWRCB annual reporting updates, *UC Cooperative Extension certification class to become a Qualified Individual for SB88 compliance, *the 3.5 hour long DWR 2023 Fall Groundwater Sustainability Agency Forum - Well Management Approaches: from Enhancing Local Understanding to Leveraging Local Coordination, a recording of which will be available on YouTube at a future date, *virtually attended the half day PPIC 2023 Annual Water Conference-Stewarding CA's Wet Years, *Natural Resource Agency's Secretary Speaker Series - Native Voices on Traditional Ecological Knowledge and how it Informs Advocacy. *CA Water Commission meeting Agenda Item 12, presentation on Drought Strategies: Presentation on Draft White Paper. *Engineering with Nature webinar, *CA Water Data Consortium's State Agency Panel Discussion: Open Data for Water Resilience in CA that looked at how modernizing water data infrastructure is driving positive outcomes for water stewardship in CA.

3-Systems: Meters continue to malfunction and fail, causing major hurdles in the water use reporting work. GM, Legal Counsel, and Engineer are updating the District's SB88 Alternative Compliance Plan. GM became certified as a "Qualified Individual" under the law to oversee installation and calibration of meters in the field.

4-Finances: The 2022-2023 Financial Audit is being drafted.

Community Meetings

Upper Russian River Water Agency (URRWA) (11/1/23): Calpella is conducting a rate study. New VFD pumps have been installed in the Redwood Valley pumping station and just need to be wired in. Redwood Valley's second attempt at drilling a well resulted in only 80 gpm. They are trying to figure out what to do with the remaining grant money that will be helpful to RV. Millview's Well 6 is offline for maintenance. Millview is draining and sand blasting two tanks, and they are also replacing water meters for radio read. Existing ones have been failing. Groundwater Sustainability Agency information was given. Some concern expressed over the proposed amount of the expected budget in the out years. URRWA/City of Ukiah Ad Hoc Report on consolidation efforts: added wording to the agreement to satisfy State concerns. A redline agreement is being drafted for approval. Final outcome is the formation of a JPA of all the members. Millview November meeting is being moved from the 21st to the 14th due to the proximity of Thanksgiving.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) (11/6/23): The Commission received an informational presentation on behalf of the Ukiah Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency regarding a rate and fee study being conducted to pay for activities of the Ukiah Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency.

Willow Water District (11/13/23): GM working with attorney on water rights reporting. Looking to increase connection fees based on inflation (CPI) not subject to the Proposition 218 process. Spanish Canyon tank site dispute seems to have resolved itself. Some maintenance projects in other districts. IWPC asking Districts to figure out future water needs. Water district contracts: Millview tank being recoated. RV exploratory borehole yield was 80 gpm and not worth building a well. Hopland Caltrans project for ADA sidewalks and want Hopland PUD to relocate the water service meters. Ukiah Valley water retailers consolidation: Attorneys talked through State Water Resources Control Board concerns on the draft agreement. State wants to see all districts

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consolidated and annexed into single entity with no option to withdraw from JPA. Upon signing agreement Willow staff become city employees and all district service contracts flow to the city. Bella Vista subdivision fee deferment - no action and no news from developer. Discussion about point in time to initiate connection fee increase. Groundwater Sustainability Agency issued an additional invoice to cover rate and fee study; \$30k from each member would be \$7,500 to Willow pro-rated based on service connection count. Unbudgeted cost for Willow. Audit report: overall clean with no major discrepancies. Motion passed to approve audit.

Hopland Public Utility District (11/9/23): No one from the District attended.

Millview Water District Special (11/14/23): Tank sandblasting and painting along with telemetry install proceeding apace. Redwood Valley well drilling abandoned due to low yield. \$130K down. 1.5 million remaining. Next step will be to hire high tech water finders and try another spot. Cal Trans has a project to rebuild 101 at Hopland in an 18-36 month long operation. It expects Hopland PUD to pay for all the relocations of water and sewer infrastructure. Well 6 was checked with a camera, and it was clear that all the perforations are plugged up. Plan is to do an acid descale treatment followed by brushing. Motor rebuild is going well for \$3,900. Refurbishing the well is about \$52,000. Consolidation efforts: working group met 3 weeks ago and assigned one of the attorneys to prepare a redline draft of the agreement to address the State's concerns before the money will be provided. The primary concern is that the members can't leave the group after infrastructure starts going in the ground. GSA invoice: On hold for a month. They want the Fee Study Consultants to address the URRWA meeting to give a better understanding of the financial picture.

City of Ukiah (11/15/23): Nothing water related.

Calpella Water District (11/15/23): No one from District attended.

Redwood Valley Water District (11/16/23): Trustee report to be provided at meeting.

Inland Water & Power Commission (11/17/23): Redwood Valley contributed \$25,000 of the requested \$50,000 to IWPC. There was no closed session, however, Legal Counsel Scott Shapiro gave a briefing on the proposal submitted to PG&E which is available on the IWPC website. Proponents and supporters include two basin solution partners and more. PG&E issued initial draft surrender application and conceptual decommissioning plan. PG&E does not "accept" the proposal but references it as an option. PG&E requesting public comments by Dec 22, the first of 3 opportunities to provide comment on decommissioning plan (May 2024 and again probably in 2025.) Eel-Russian Project Authority (JPA): Preview of document to be considered for adoption at Nov 30 IWPC meeting. Will also include voting for representation. Scheduling of first meeting once all directors selected. Staffing TBD. Potter Valley Tribe request: Advice from legal to setup meeting with Tribe to learn about their interest and concerns. RRWF Steering Committee met recently and discussed lack of funding and potentially winding down the forum.

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