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THE UKIAH VALLEY WATER DISTRICTS

The Grand Jury received citizen complaints about the operations of various water agencies in the Ukiah Valley, alleging mismanagement of water resources, non-compliance with state law and lack of coherent planning for distribution of the water resource. On the basis of those complaints, and in view of the growing demand for this crucial resource, the Grand Jury undertook a thorough investigation of the water districts in the Ukiah Valley.

The water resources in Ukiah Valley are all allotted to their maximum limits. Most of the water that enters Lake Mendocino and the upper Russian River (61%) goes to Sonoma County; some of which Sonoma County sells to Marin County. Sonoma draws water from Lake Mendocino when the lake is below its average level, but not from Lake Sonoma.

The public water systems located in the Ukiah Valley of Mendocino County, as well as those located just to the north and south of the valley, are dependent, either directly or indirectly, on the Russian River as a source of water supply. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has declared the Russian River to be fully appropriated each year during the months of June through October, the months of greatest agricultural activity in this basically agricultural region.

Method of Investigation

The Grand Jury interviewed Board members, managers and employees of five water districts in the Ukiah Valley as well as members of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (BOS), officials of the SWRCB and the Mendocino County Water Agency (MCWA), to determine the status of the Districts' operations and the relationships among the Districts, and to seek better management of this scarce resource. The Grand Jury also interviewed representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers, board members of the Russian River Flood Control District (RRFCD), Officials of the City of Ukiah, and the chairperson of the Inland Water and Power District, and reviewed documents from the State Department of Health Services.

Background Information

The Russian River, fed by its East and West Forks, meanders in a southerly direction through the Ukiah Valley, Sanel Valley, Alexander Valley, Healdsburg Valley and through the gorge of the Coast Mountain Range to the Pacific Ocean at Jenner, a distance of about 110 miles. The watershed encompasses an area of approximately 1,485 square miles. The hydrology of the River is typical of most northern California coastal streams, with high flows in the winter and low flows in the summer with substantial annual variations. Runoff from rainfall supplies most of the water for the River's flow as there is little snow in the watershed. The River provides essentially the entire water supply for approximately 500,000 people in Mendocino, Sonoma and Marin Counties.

The East and West Forks of the River converge approximately two miles north of the City of Ukiah. The East Fork is fed in large part by a diversion of water from the South Fork of the Eel River through a Pacific Gas and Electric Company tunnel at the north end of Potter Valley. That water finds its way to Lake Mendocino where it is stored behind Coyote Dam, constructed in 1956 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a flood control project.

History

In 1949, the California State Legislature passed the "Water Code Appendix No. 54830" et seq. which authorized establishment of the Mendocino County Flood Control District and Water Conservation District. That code authorizes formation of improvement districts within Mendocino County. Pursuant to Sec. 54-35 of that Act, the BOS authorized an election to create the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District (RRFCD) and, in January 1956, the voters within the boundaries of the District, with the exception of Redwood Valley, elected to create the District which has the power to levy property taxes and fees, incur bonded indebtedness and develop contracts with outside parties. At the same time, the voters approved the sale of \$650,000 in bonds to finance the District's share of the cost of Coyote Dam construction. Also participating in that project, constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was the Sonoma County Water Agency, which,

because it supplied the lion's share of funding for the dam, has exclusive rights to control releases from Lake Mendocino and is allocated most of the water stored there.

In 1975, the SWRCB granted RRFCD a water right of 8,000 Acre Feet per Year (AF/Y), the water to be beneficially used for municipal, domestic, industrial, recreational and irrigation purposes within the RRFCD throughout the calendar year. In order to convert its permit to a full license (the last step in conversion to a full right), the RRFCD must submit information to the SWRCB by 2005, demonstrating full beneficial use of its allocated water. At that time, the SWRCB will issue a license to the RRFCD for the actual amount being used, up to 8,000 AF. Conversion will allow the RRFCD, through County of Origin provisions in the Water Code, to pursue additional water rights from permits that have failed to demonstrate full beneficial use. Whether such rights are currently available is in question.

In order to meet conversion requirements, RRFCD must have an accurate accounting of water use within its area. Currently, that accounting consists of an estimate of water pumped by post-1949 users plus the excess over the right for the District's 8,100 AF/Y drawn by pre-1949 users and/or water pumped by pre-1949 users, which may be within the 8,100 AF/Y allotment but is unavailable from pre-1949 sources (i.e. when there is inadequate natural flow in the River to meet pre-1949 uses). To that end, the RRFCD has adopted Ordinance No. 00-1, requiring all users to formalize by contract their relationship with RRFCD and to install meters to monitor water usage. (The deadline for submitting applications for water was September 30, 2001; the RRFCD received requests for nearly 17,000 AF/Y of water, far in excess of its 8,000 AF/Y annual allocation.) Ordinance 00-1 also mandates a conservation program, to come into effect during periods of water shortage. The program prohibits wasteful use of water and establishes a five-stage water allocation schedule ranging from normal to emergency use. This schedule meets minimum requirements established by the SWRCB as a condition for new water rights.

In 1959, the SWRCB issued permits for 37,544 (AF/Y) to the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) and for 8,000 AF/Y to RRFCD (Permit 129447B). The Board established rights to 20,000 AF/Y for Pre-1949 users in Sonoma County and 8,100 AF/Y for pre-1949 users in Mendocino County.

Pre-1949 rights include both riparian and pre-1949 appropriative rights to divert natural flow of the Russian River or one of its tributaries for beneficial use. Water available for those uses is limited to sources of supply in existence prior to 1949, including natural inflow to Lake Mendocino from the west fork of the Russian River, supplemented by the PG&E diversion of water flow into the west fork of the Russian River, and natural flow in the tributaries below Coyote Dam. The east fork of the Russian River is also fed by the Eel River through a PG&E owned tunnel, which empties into the East Fork of the Russian River into Potter Valley. Users in this category (prior to 1949) include the City of Ukiah, Masonite Corporation and a large number of agricultural users. The Water Code requires those riparian users to register their use with the SWRCB, but failure to do so carries no penalty and few riparian users in the Ukiah valley have registered. The RRFCD has estimated total riparian use to be as much as 10,000 AF per year.

The SWRCB estimates the annual appropriative use prior to 1949, i.e., the total amount of water available through natural flows to those users, to have been approximately 8,100 AF/Y. The RRFCD considers Pre-1949 use exceeding 8,100 AF/Y to be Project Water, i.e., water stored in Lake Mendocino.

Post-1949 "appropriative rights" are granted by the SWRCB to divert natural flow of the Russian River or one of its tributaries following the 1949 authorization for construction of Coyote Dam. Use of those rights is to a large degree for use in agricultural frost protection or off-stream storage of winter/spring diversion from the river. RRFCD has estimated total year-round rights for this category to be approximately 4,000 AF/Y.

The post 1949 rights thus amount to approximately 20,100 AF/Y, but, as some users elect not to register their use, that total probably underestimates the total usage in the watershed area.

The Russian River Flood Control District

The Russian River Flood Control District (RRFCD) is comprised of seven (7) distinct water districts, five (5) of which are within its boundaries. These are:

CALPELLA COUNTY WATER DISTRICT (CCWD)
CITY OF UKIAH UTILITY DISTRICT (CUUD)
HOPLAND PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT (HPUD)
MILLVIEW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT (MCWD)
WILLOW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT (WCWD)

The RRFCD includes several private water companies and numerous agricultural users. All these users are dependent on various water rights relating to natural water flow and Coyote Dam Water Project water. All these districts and private water companies have the mission of distributing sufficient water to households, industry and agriculture within their boundaries.

The Redwood Valley County Water District (RVCWD) is within the place of use and is dependent on Russian River water, but chose not to be a part of the RRFCD. RVCWD is authorized to draw only water from the RRFCD allotment of 8,000 AF/Y when any of that 8,000 AF/Y is considered surplus, i.e., not used by persons or entities that are a part of the RRFCD and have a legal right to use part of it's 8,000 AF/Y annual entitlement.

Under normal conditions, all water utilities in the Ukiah Valley, except for CUUD, depend on RRFCD water rights during the summer months to legally pump or divert water from the Russian River. During dry years, when natural flows in the Russian River are limited, they revert to project water to cover shortfalls. Under those conditions, even CUUD would have to depend on Project water. As RRFCD has had no formal agreement with any of the users in the District, except for the RVCWD (authorized to purchase surplus water), there is no complete accounting for all use of its allocated water; the quantity reported as used may be questionable.

The SWRCB requires an annual report from the RRFCD indicating who used how much of its permitted water. For those reports, the RRFCD estimates the quantity of water going to agricultural users by looking at the power consumption of their pumps. For public water systems, it relies on

reports from the systems derived from production meter readings taken throughout the year.

Table IV-1
RRFCD Annual Water Use
 1995 - 1999 (Acre Feet)

Year	Pre-1949	Post-1949	Project Water	Total
1995	7,920	4,836	4,816	14,636
1996	8,896	5,372	5,813	16,418
1997	9,167	4,747	6,045	16,176
1998	9,434	6,284	6,626	17,759
1999	10,514	7,121	8,049	20,236

Note: Project Water includes surplus water sold to Redwood Valley Water District.
 In 1999, the amount of surplus water sold to Redwood Valley was reported at 2,122 A.F.

Table IV-1 (from State Water Resources, Division of Water Rights), summarizes the estimated annual water use by all Ukiah Valley users for the period 1995-1999 as reported to the SWRCB (data for 2000 were not available at the time of this report). It shows that RRFCD Project water use in 1999 was 8,049 AF/Y, exceeding its legal water right. The total estimated water use in the Ukiah Valley including pre-1949 and post-1949 water and Project water was over 20,200 AF.

Table IV-2
Total Annual Utility Water Use
RRFCD District Permit for Years 1999 and 2010

Water System	Annual Water Use (AF/Y)				
	1999 Reported Use			2010 Projected Use	
	Total	% Project Water	Project Water	Total	Project Water
Hopland	238	100	238	337	336
Willow	1,191	58	691	1,299	753
Millview	1,537	58	891	1,869	1,084
Rogina	630	100	630	746	746
Calpella	93	100	93	139	139
Ukiah	4,226	0	0	5,028	0
Redwood Valley	2,548 (534)	82	2,090	4,474 (874)	3,673 (721)
Total	10,463 (8,449)		4,633	13,892 (10,292)	6,731 (3,779)

Numbers in parenthesis are values that exclude Redwood Valley (RVCWD) agricultural demand

Table IV-2 (from RRFCD) shows the amount of the annual Project water use for the years 1999-2010 for the seven public water systems considered in this report. The projected 2010 use is based on the assumption that the percent of total annual Project water use in 1999 would be the same in 2010. It also assumes that all groundwater use is river underflow and thus included under the RRFCD permit. [The SWRCB defines all subterranean water within the geologic bed of the Russian River as underflow and, in past decisions, has considered all wells within the confines of the Ukiah Valley as surface water under their jurisdiction.] Inasmuch as water for CUUD, RVCWD and HPUD is all considered Project water, none of the systems have an independent permit for water. One hundred percent of RVCWD use for May through October is Project water and a portion of UCWD water usage should certainly count against RRFCD water allocation but, as that is beyond the scope of this report, the Table counts none of UCWD water use against the RRFCD permit in the Table.

The data show that projected total demand from the seven utilities will increase from 10,463 AF/Y in 1999 to 13,892 AF/Y by 2010.

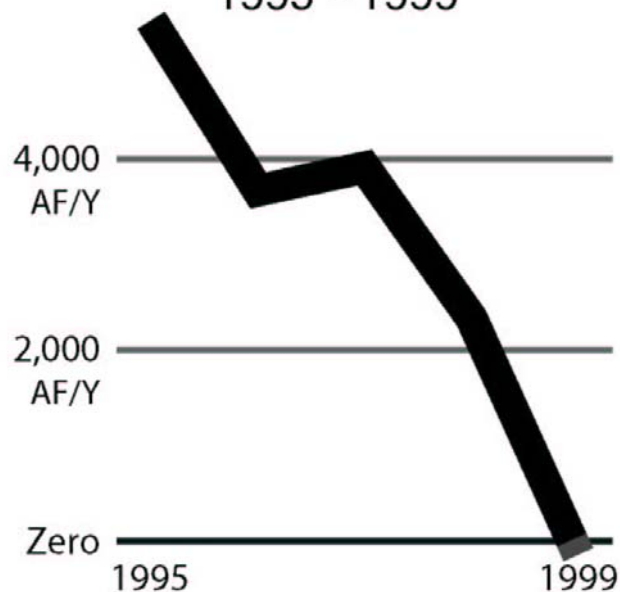
Table IV-3
Water Utility Maximum Month Water Use
1995 – 2000

Water System	Average Day Production In Maximum Month; gpcd (Six Year Average)	Ratio to Ukiah Average Day In Maximum Month
Ukiah	878	1.00
RVCWD	913	1.04
CCWD	948	1.08
Rogina	1,203	1.37
HPUD	1,436	1.64
MCWD	1,664	1.90
WCWD	1,894	2.16

Table IV-3 (ibid) summarizes the average water use per day per connection during the maximum flow months for 1995-2000, based on data from Ukiah Valley utilities. CUUD has the lowest usage; RVCWD and CCWD show moderate usage; the highest figures are in WCWD, MCWD and HPUD. But CCWD, CUUD, HPUD and MCWD consider some of their wells as drawing from percolated groundwater rather than underflow and have not included that usage to the RRFCD for inclusion in its annual report.

Table IV-5 RRFCD Water Availability

1995 - 1999



(Beyond Allocation)

The Grand Jury looked at records submitted to the Department of Health Services (DHS) for 1999. The figures include all groundwater sources, compared to the figures reported to the RRFCD of sources considered underflow, with a difference of almost 1,500 AF/Y. As the SWRCB considers all groundwater to be underflow, total Russian River water use in the Ukiah Valley is more than 21,700 AF/Y, significantly exceeding the estimated appropriate annual water rights for the area.

Valley-Wide Task Force

The County of Mendocino and the City of Ukiah established the Ukiah Valley-Wide Task force in April 1990 to study possible consolidation of interest and services, present and future for water, sewer, emergency services and development standards. The Task Force developed the following conclusions:

1. Fragmentation of authority of water services within the Ukiah Valley has diluted the financial resources available to those responsible for providing those services and for further development of water supply. That fragmentation precludes a pooling of the financial resources that would produce better and more effective services.
2. RRFCD should be reconstituted with a newly-elected seven-member board by zones. The Board should represent residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational and environmental users in the District. The RRFCD should be the lead agency responsible for the protection, development, treatment and sale of water to distribution districts and agricultural users.
3. Because of legal implications of existing water rights, existing small districts should remain in place. However, when it becomes legally and economically feasible, small districts should be consolidated into a larger entity for delivery of water. Immediate plans should be made to consolidate the treatment of water under one agency and small districts should look to effect cost savings through the use of Joint Powers Agreements with other water agencies.

The Task Force recommended that immediate steps be taken by the various legislative bodies to begin implementation of its conclusions.

Grand Jury Findings

1. RRFCD has 8,000 AF/Y of water under its direct control and reports monthly to SWRCB on water usage within the District, but cannot provide precise information. There are no meters or user contracts to provide that information. The Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District (MCRRFC) is required by the State Water Resources Control Board to report the amount of water used under their permit. To that end, MCRRFC is establishing a customer base and all individuals and entities using their water must install meters by 7/01/03. This will allow MCRRFC to accurately account for their water as required by the State.
2. None of the Ukiah Valley-Wide Task Force recommendations have been implemented.
3. Division of Water Rights (DWR) inspection of more than 70 permits and licenses within the Russian River watershed determined that several diversions from the River or its tributaries are not in compliance with the terms and conditions of their permits and licenses. Inspectors found excess amounts of seasonal water use, new uses, new or additional points of diversion and expanded places of use. Many of those permittees and licensees claimed their excess diversions were covered by a RRFCD permit.
4. In many instances, diversion figures reported by RRFCD are greater than the diversion amounts calculated by SWRCB for specific projects. RRFCD is serving property outside the place of use authorized by its permit.
5. RRFCD data includes water diverted from domestic use to agricultural, a use not currently authorized by its permit.
6. SWRCB is currently requesting identification of the specific points of diversion at which RRFCD is delivering water under its permit.
7. SWRCB has been issuing contracts for parties recognized as using water under RRFCD permit after September 30, 2001.

Recommendations

- A. The appropriate agencies implement the recommendations of the Valley-Wide Task force.
- B. RRFCD develop and implement a water conservation plan to address any anticipated or unpredicted water shortages as well as for implementation during periods of normal water supply. RRFCD oversee water users within the District to ensure that they are complying with conservation mandates. They have recourse to sanctions such as establishment of different water rates for users who conserve water and those who don't.
- C. RRFCD develop contracts with county water districts for water use within the RRFCD boundaries.
- D. RRFCD establish a moratorium on any new agricultural hook-ups for use of project water.
- E. RRFCD establish fees for water distributed to individual water districts within one year.
- F. RRFCD require installation of water meters by **all** public and private water users at user cost, with the proviso that users without meters receive no water. RRFCD monitor the meters and stop all illegal withdrawals.
- G. RRFCD petition SWRCB to change the character and place of use under its permit and file a new application to cover direct diversion of water for agricultural use.

Calpella County Water District (CCWD)

Findings

1. CCWD has no water right permits. CCWD's single well is insufficient to meet its demands, and it is out of compliance with State requirements.
2. With a current storage volume of 250,000 gallons, CCWD is deficient in the amount of water storage necessary to meet California Water Works Standards.

Recommendations

- A. CCWD install meters, to be monitored by RRFCD, to allow for monthly reports on water usage to the RRFCD and the SWRCB.
- B. CCWD develop and implement a water conservation plan.
- C. CCWD apply for permits to draw water from other districts and develop a contract with RRFCD for water use.
- D. CCWD obtain permits from SWRCB to build water tanks to meet SWRCB and California Water Works Standards.

City of Ukiah Utilities District (CUUD)

Findings

1. CUUD has 4,139 domestic and 2,518 commercial hookups at this time.
2. Depending on hydrologic conditions, only project water is available during the dry season. At those times, CUUD pumps RRFCD water.
3. In the past five years, CUUD usage has significantly exceeded its Pre-1949 water rights during the dry season.
4. Based on water use in the year 2000, CUUD storage is inadequate, amounting to less than 50% of SWRCB requirements.
5. CUUD is exploring the possibility of using treated wastewater for the Municipal Golf Course, City Parks and the Cemetery District.

Recommendations

- A. CUUD develop contracts with RRFCD for water use.
- B. CUUD install meters, to be monitored by RRFCD.
- C. CUUD continue efforts to use treated wastewater for the Municipal Golf Course, City Parks and the Cemetery District.
- D. CUUD obtain permits from SWRCB to build water storage tanks as per SWRCB and California Water Works Standards.
- E. CUUD obtain permits to divert water from other districts within RRFCD.
- F. CUUD investigate use of existing additional storage available behind Coyote Valley Dam during late winter and early spring, water to come through RRFCD.

HOPLAND PUBLIC UTILITIES DISTRICT (HPUD)

Findings

1. HPUD has adequate storage and distribution capacity to meet existing and projected demands to the year 2010.
2. HPUD is the only water district in the Ukiah Valley that has recycled sewer water for agricultural use.
3. HPUD has no water filtration system and only disinfects water.

Recommendations

- A. HPUD install meters to be monitored by RRFCD.
- B. HPUD develop contracts with RRFCD for water use.
- C. HPUD develop and implement a water conservation plan.
- D. HPUD install a water filtration system
- E. HPUD treat sewage water before distributing it.

MILLVIEW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT (MCWD)

Findings

1. MCWD lacks sufficient storage space to meet California Water Works standards.
2. MCWD has the second highest historical per connection use in the Ukiah Valley because of supplying water to other districts and agricultural use.
3. The SWRCB ordered MCWD to undertake an engineering analysis of the system, including source capacity, transmission mains, storage capacity, emergency interconnection with Ukiah and the need for standby power. The order called for recommendations and a schedule for implementing them; it also requires Department authorization, through an amended domestic water supply permit, prior to adding any new service connections or sources of treatment.
4. MCWD established a water conservation program in mid-2001. MCWD submitted an engineering analysis of the water system to the SWRCB in 2002; all connections to the water system have Departmental approval as MCWD's domestic water supply permit has been amended.
5. MCWD storage tanks do not provide enough water to meet demand and water availability does not meet SWRCB standards.
6. There is no backup power for the pumps, the filtration system or the wells with a potential public health risk. A June 2001 compliance order requires that there be no more connections and water use must decline for existing connections.
7. RRFCD sends water to MCWD in spite of the lack of any contractual agreement.
8. MCWD sells water to unauthorized users such as CCWD.
9. MCWD could be subject to a \$500 a day fine from SWRCB due to its non-compliance with SWRCB requirements.

Recommendations

- A. MCWD install water meters to be monitored by RRFCD.
- B. MCWD develop and implement a water conservation plan to meet SWRCB standards.
- C. MCWD develop contracts with RRFCD for water use.
- D. MCWD obtain permits to provide agricultural water or cease supplying water for agricultural use.
- E. MCWD evaluate the number of hook-ups and the volume of water used by each.
- F. MCWD comply with SWRCB demands to stop pumping underflow water to recharge wells.
- G. MCWD obtain permits to divert water to other districts.
- H. MCWD obtain permits from SWRCB to build storage tanks up to State standards.
- I. MCWD obtain SWRCB authorization through an amended domestic water supply permit before adding new service connections and sources of treatment.
- J. MCWD develop back-up power for the pumps and filtration system.
- K. MCWD require yearly evaluations for management staff.

REDWOOD VALLEY COUNTY WATER DISTRICT (RVCWD)

Findings

1. Water usage in Redwood Valley has increased from 1,812 AF/Y to approximately 2,510 AF/Y from 1994 to 2000; the increase is mostly attributable to increased demand from vineyards and wineries. Domestic use, subject to a court-imposed moratorium, has not significantly increased.
2. RVCWD relies on surplus water from RRFCD to meet dry season demands. Approximately 2,120 AF/Y in 1999 surplus water from RRFCD is no longer available.
3. RVCWD is diverting water in violation of SWRCB Permit 17593, which prohibits water diversion from Lake Mendocino.
4. RVCWD is out of compliance with terms of its permit requiring the District to ensure reasonable beneficial use of water stored in local landowners' reservoirs, to submit a certified engineer's map showing the location of all reservoirs receiving project water and to keep records of the amount of water stored in privately-owned reservoirs.
5. RVCWD lacks an adequate and reliable source of water during the dry months, June through October, and relies on surplus water from RRFCD, which is currently exceeding its water rights limit; as a result, the available water for Redwood Valley can be expected to decline or be non-existent.
6. According to SWRCB, the RVCWD is limited to 3,500 acres of irrigated land in any one year, not to include new annexations to RVCWD boundaries since issuance of SWRCB Permit 17593.
7. Between 1994 and 2000, water use in RVCWD increased by more than 50%, largely as a result of increased irrigation use. That increase is the result of RVCWD providing water to out-of-boundary areas.
8. RVCWD has no legal right to water between May and October.

9. RVCWD has ignored consultants' recommendations to ensure proper flow and pressure for agricultural users and require 24-hour holding ponds as called for by their permit.
10. RVCWD has sidestepped contract law by using non-licensed contractors and putting them on the District payroll.
11. In 1999, RVCWD was cited by the State Department of Health for using a non-permitted chemical for vegetation removal. When ordered to get rid of the treated water, the water was dispersed into the domestic water lines.
12. An examination of the financial records at the Redwood Valley Water District headquarters showed that payments for services and materials were made prior to authorization by the RVCWD Board. Payments were made for services not yet rendered.

Recommendations

- A. RVCWD establish a moratorium on new agricultural hook-ups until the issue of water above 8,000 AF/Y allocated to RRFCD is resolved.
- B. RVCWD install meters, to be monitored by RRFCD, as a basis for monthly reports on water usage.
- C. RVCWD develop contracts with RRFCD for water use within the boundaries of the RRFCD and resolve outstanding charges.
- D. RVCWD require agricultural users to have 24-hour holding ponds in accordance with SWRCB permit 17593. The permit should include fines or cutoff of service for those without ponds.
- E. RVCWD use a public bidding process for all contracted work and accept bids only from licensed contractors.
- F. RVCWD Board of Directors approve all budget decisions prior to acceptance of contract for services and supplies.

G. RVCWD obtain appropriate permits for diversion of water to other districts and for service outside of currently designated place of use.

H. RVCWD Board evaluate management staff performance at least every six months and take corrective action for any mismanagement.

I. RVCWD refrain from adding toxic chemicals to domestic water without appropriate permits and without informing customers.

J. Look for additional water sources and storage capacity.

WILLOW COUNTY WATER DISTRICT (WCWD)

Findings

1. WCWD has an estimated maximum capacity of 3,225 AF/Y, an amount more than adequate to meet projected demands to the year 2010.
2. SWRCB has determined that WCWD's Burke Hill and Norgard Well Fields draw 3.500 gallons per minute during the summer months when there is no natural flow in the Russian River. SWRCB considers that water to be chargeable to RRFCD's allocated 8,000 AF/Y.
3. WCWD does not filter its water. It does add disinfectants.
4. WCWD, with storage capacity of .843 million gallons, is out of compliance with State regulations requiring 1.83 million gallons of storage capacity.
5. SWRCB called on WCWD to correct all issue of non-compliance by July 1, 2002. WCWD has not done that, but the District is meeting with CUUD and MCWD to develop solutions to the issues identified by SWRCB.

Recommendations

- A. WCWD install water meters, to be monitored by RRFCD, as a basis for monthly reports on water usage to RRFCD and SWRCB.

General Findings

1. Water districts have no water conservation plans to identify over-use and providing penalties for over-use.
2. Water districts are required to install meters for measuring water use by each water consumer.
3. In violation of the Brown Act, water district board members have communicated within their district and between districts by telephone, e-mail and private meetings to discuss public matters.
4. The water resources in the Ukiah Valley (i.e., 8,100 AF/Y of pre-1949 water) are being used in part, by agricultural consumers without cost and without measurement and controls.

General Recommendations

(All recommendations are of equal importance)

1. Newly restructured Mendocino County Water Agency be appointed lead agency by BOS for all County Water Districts, watershed studies, negotiations with California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Fisheries and other water agencies.
2. Consolidate Ukiah Valley Water Districts.
3. Mendocino County Water Agency assume responsibility for the Inland Water and Power Commission mandates concerning the Eel River diversion into Potter Valley.
4. Develop and implement a water conservation plan to address any anticipated water shortage.

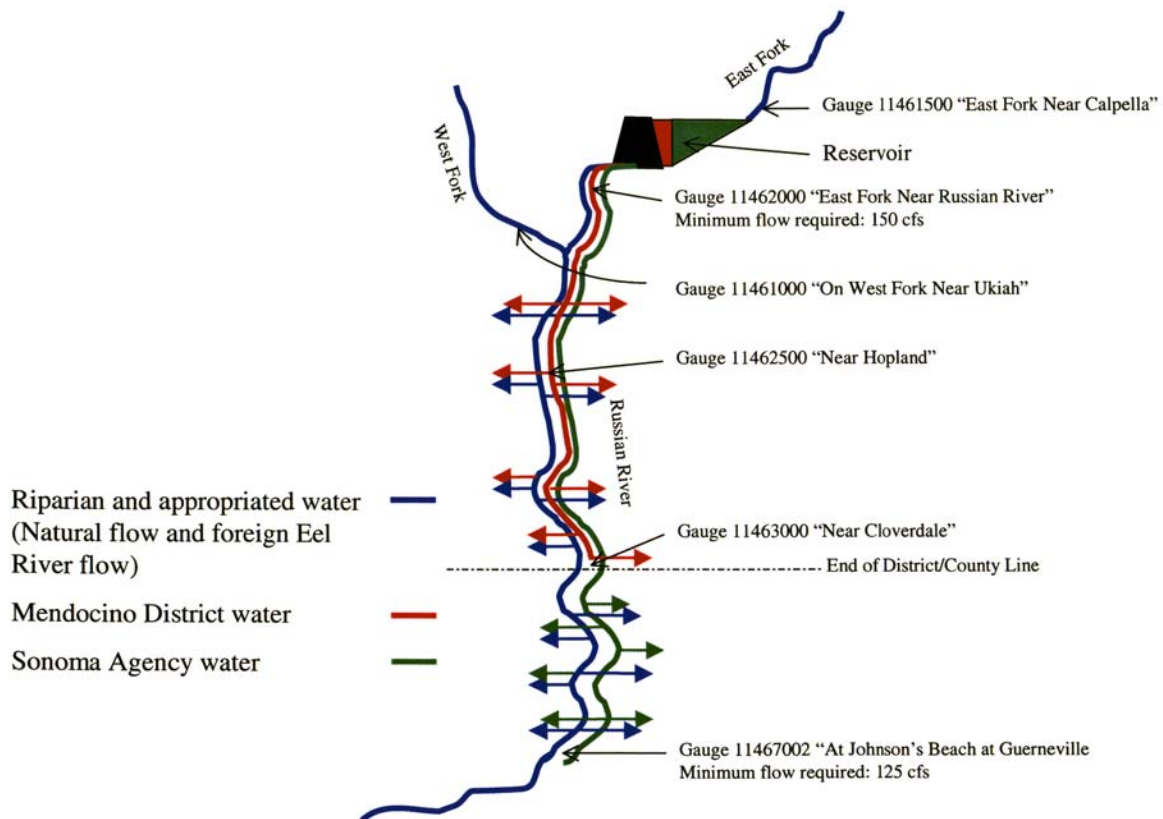
5. Install meters for all water consumers to insure accurate monthly reports to Russian River Flood Control District and the State Water Resources Control Board.
6. Water District board members attend Brown Act orientation program or seminar.
7. Establish a 5-year moratorium on any new agricultural hook-ups.
8. All environmental considerations must be addressed to preserve the quality of life in Mendocino County now and in the future.

Comments

The Ukiah Valley population is likely to continue to grow and the need for water for domestic, business and agricultural use will increase proportionately. Any increase in availability of water by storage behind the Coyote Valley Dam or other means is problematic and speculative. Raising the dam, even if possible could not be accomplished in less than ten years.

There is an immediate need for a water conservation plan for the Ukiah Valley, which would limit water use by water consumers by providing penalties for over-use. Fines and shut-offs would be necessary. The Mendocino County Water Agency would be responsible for water-use policies and regulation enforcement. A comprehensive program with a futuristic approach to our water usage is needed.

Russian River Conceptual Flow Schematic



Technical Terms Appendix

One Acre Foot (AF) is a measure of water volume and is defined as one acre of area covered one foot deep by water, thus 43,560 cubic feet.

One Acre Foot (AF) is 325.850 gallons of water.

One Million Gallons is 3.07 AF (3,0689)

One cubic foot per second of flow (CFS) is 646,315 gallons. That amounts to nearly 2 AF (1.98) per 24-hour day. At a rate of one gallon per second, it would take about 3 3/4 days to run out an acre foot (3.7714 days).

Distribution List

Response Required:

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Russian River Flood Control District

Calpella County Water District

City of Ukiah Utilities District

Hopland Public Utilities District

Millview County Water District

Redwood Valley County Water District

Willow County Water District

Response Requested:

California State Water Resource Control Board

Report release date: June 4, 2003