



5 Priority Water Projects for Mendocino County

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
Public Health, Safety and Resources Committee
September 21, 2022



What Can Mendocino County Do To Help?

- Political Advocacy for local, state and national assistance
- Creation of the Mendocino County Water Resource Team
- Public stakeholder meetings, technical support, grant writing and support, grant administration
- In most cases, Mendocino County will support and not necessarily lead if other agencies are involved.

District 1: Consolidation of the Upper Russian River Water Agency (URRWA)



- This is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) working for the consolidation of Ukiah Valley's water. The board includes a single member from Willow County Water, Calpella County Water, Redwood Valley County Water, Millview County Water, and most recently the Ukiah Valley Sanitation District.
- The planned objectives is to connect water service from Ukiah to Redwood Valley to ensure that there is a safe, clean, reliable, and water system supplying potable water to residents in the service area that managed as a unit.
- Consolidation of small water systems for more reliability and efficiency is a stated goal of State Water Resource Agencies. Funding is available.

District 2: Winter ground water recharge in flood plain areas



- The concept is to divert Russian River water during high flow periods onto the flood plain adjacent to the river where no damage is likely to happen to permanent structures, allowing water to infiltrate into the water table over a wide area.
- There are multiple places where this can be done in the Ukiah Valley, but the city owned property of River Side Park might be a good location to try a pilot project since it is close proximity to the Russian River and multiple high-volume wells in Aquifer 1.
- Interest from both City of Ukiah and Ukiah Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency



District 3: Delineating and Mapping the Ground Water Basins of Little Lake, Round and Long Valleys:

- Creating a better understanding of the water dynamics of storage and extraction in these important groundwater basins will inform the sustainable water yield beneath the communities of Willits, Laytonville, and Covelo.
- As water use has increased in the past decade for various purposes, drying of domestic wells is a huge concern of many residents.
- Developing a conceptual model of the basin's hydrology and delineating probable boundaries and yields of the 3 aquifers would be the goal of this study.
- Potential water management can also be studied to avoid drying of shallow wells in dry years



District 4: Increasing Surface Water Storage for the City of Ft. Bragg:

- Ft. Bragg depends on surface diversions from the Noyo River which is an adequate supply in normal years. In dry years, the flow may be greatly reduced, and having a backup surface water supply is essential.
- Presently, the system can store up to 45-acre feet, which is marginal in dry years. There is a desire to create up to 200-acre feet of storage over time to ensure that there is an adequate water supply when drought years occur.
- In addition to supplying Ft. Bragg, this water system provides potable water that is trucked to communities from Ft. Bragg to Albion when drought conditions cause dry wells in the coastal area, especially around the town of Mendocino.



District 5: Modernization of Mendocino City Wastewater Treatment Plant:

- Designed over 50 years ago, this facility is aging and needs rebuilding and upgrading to provide tertiary treated water that can be used for landscaping.
- Presently, there is only a 3-day emergency storage facility for untreated wastewater which is inadequate should a breakdown incapacitate the facility.
- Additionally, the town of Mendocino is very water insecure. Modern tertiary water treatment can be used for landscape irrigation and possibly groundwater replenishment during summer months when over 25% of the wells supplying town water go dry.



Next Steps

- Assure that this is the priority project for each district (today)
- Gain approval by BOS on October 4th to support these projects
- Work with CEO Office to assemble Water Resource team for technical support, grant support and contract support