



WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS UPDATE

February 1, 2021

By Elizabeth Salomone, Russian River Flood Control District

LAKE MENDOCINO:

SEVERELY LOW STORAGE LEVELS

We are experiencing below average rainfall and the third driest water year on record. Without significant rainfall, water right curtailments will likely be issued by the State Water Resources Control Board, impacting every water supplier in the region. Water Districts, Cities, and water companies are making preparations and conducting public outreach. A decision on emergency regulations is expected in March or April.



IN-FLOWS FROM EAST FORK RUSSIAN RIVER



Diversions from the Eel River through the Potter Valley Project are expected to reduce as Lake Pillsbury storage levels decrease. This will result in lower flows in the East Fork Russian River and into Lake Mendocino. Current flows are already exceptionally low for this time of year.

RELEASES

Outflows from Lake Mendocino through Coyote Dam join with the West Fork Russian River and provide water for diverters and fisheries along the main stem.

A Temporary Urgency Change Petition has been filed to help maintain more water in storage for future use. Longer term solutions are being pursued by Water leaders in the watershed.

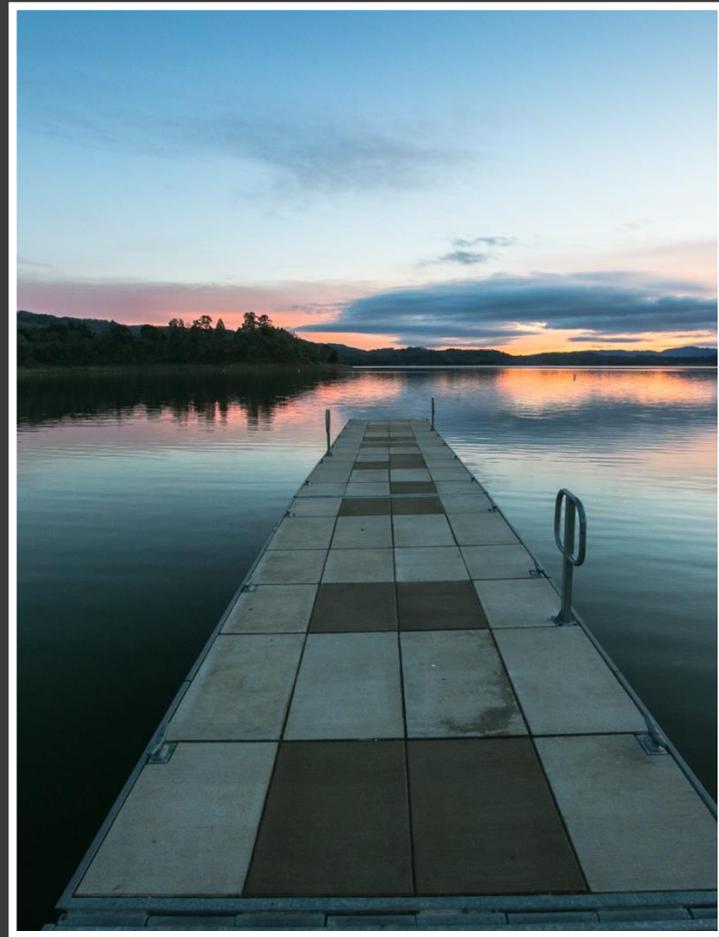




Due to Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO), an additional 11,000 acre feet was stored in Lake Mendocino in 2020. A major deviation has been filed to continue increased storage until the Water Control Manual update can be completed.



2021



2019

Water Resiliency Task Force

Co-hosted by RRFC, City of Ukiah, and the Mendocino County Farm Bureau, the Task Force is focused on the Mendocino County portion of the Russian River watershed. The Task Force continues to work with the State Water Resources Control Board on how data is collected and used in the need for, and design of, water rights curtailments in 2021. Public outreach and wider cooperation with regional entities are additional areas of focus for the Task Force.



2021

In addition to the many individual water rights that will be subject to emergency regulations, the water rights of major municipal water suppliers are at risk of cutbacks or complete curtailment.

Most of these municipal suppliers have a water supply contract with RRFC that will see them through with increased customer conservation.

Unfortunately, Redwood Valley Water District's absence of a secure water supply and the physical limitations of its Lake Mendocino intake will severely restrict water delivery to Redwood Valley customers.



2019

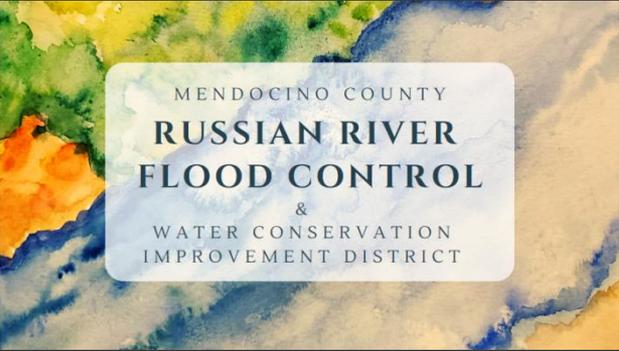


LARGER THREATS ON THE HORIZON

We are facing immediate *and* long term water crises in the Russian River Watershed.

In addition to the challenges of the current drought, the uncertainty of the Potter Valley Project's future has Water Leaders on high alert.

Ask yourself what you are willing to do in securing a sustainable water supply, not just for 2021, but for decades into the future.



MENDOCINO COUNTY
**RUSSIAN RIVER
FLOOD CONTROL**
&
WATER CONSERVATION
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MORE INFORMATION

For more Drought and Water Conservation Resources visit:

<https://mcrcd.org/resources/drought-water-conservation-resources>

<https://mcrcd.org/resources/flow-enhancement>

<http://www.savingwaterpartnership.org/>

For Potter Valley Project description and updates visit

<https://mendoiwpc.com/our-shared-water/>

<http://pottervalleyproject.org/>

<https://www.twobasinsolution.org/>



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