

Meeting Summary

Russian River Water Forum

Working Group: Water Rights & Water Management

Meeting #3

Zoom

September 18, 2023, 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Summary

The Russian River Water Forum held the third meeting of the Water Rights & Water Management Working Group via Zoom. The meeting was facilitated by Kearns & West. Presentation slides and a recording of the meeting are available on the project [website](#).

The meeting objectives were as follows:

- Review outline of work product
- Discuss water rights “buckets” to be used in the work product
- Discuss next steps

The meeting agenda and a list of attendees are in Appendices A and B. The meeting had a total of 33 attendees.

The next section provides a summary of the takeaways and action items from the meeting.

Takeaways

- David Taber presented the draft Work Product outline; Working Group participants provided input:
 - Include a table or chart showing Eel-River annual diversion volumes in recent years, and total water demands on the Russian River over time.
 - Include data on salmonid populations in the Eel River over time
 - There is a need for discussion of the role of imported Eel River water in sustaining Russian River fisheries and in meeting required environmental flow requirements.
 - Question: Is there information on the obligations of water rights holders that should be included?
 - Include information on the upper Russian River water sharing partnership in recent years; it is a rare example of senior water rights holders sharing with junior rights holders.
 - The Conclusion slide needs a clearer statement about the effects of the 2021 curtailment on Tribal users. It was clarified that, in 2021, all water rights, including pre-1914 and riparian claims, were curtailed on the upper Russian River. The only exception was if the water was needed for human health and safety.

- David Taber presented the proposed water rights “buckets” slide; Working Group participants provided input:
 - Note that Coyote Valley Rancheria and Redwood Valley Rancheria are served by Redwood Valley County Water District. These Tribes can only access water from Lake Mendocino if surplus is available through Russian River Flood Control.
 - Include information on “required environmental flows.” It was clarified that required environmental flows are not water rights *per se*, and should be considered a regulatory overlay on the system that affects the availability of water for diversion.
 - It was noted that the Russian River Biological Opinions are up for reconsideration, depending on what happens with the PVP diversion.
 - It was noted that there is substantial uncertainty around some water demand issues, especially the nature/degree of interconnections between the Russian River and local aquifers from which agricultural and municipal water users extract water.

Action Items

- **Redgie Collins, CalTrout**, to share information on modeled flows at Cape Horn Dam site.
- **K&W** to schedule a follow-up meeting with the Work Group co-chairs this week re: next steps for the Work Product.
- **Glen Spain, PCFFA**, to share information on environmental flow requirements
- **K&W** to follow up with John Nagle regarding the development of infographics for the work product.

Appendix A: Meeting Agenda

Time	Topic
12:00 p.m.	Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review
12:10 p.m.	Review and Discuss Work Product Outline
12:40 p.m.	Discuss Proposed Water Rights “Buckets” for Work Product
12:55 p.m.	Review Next Steps and Upcoming Meetings
1:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Appendix B: List of Attendees

Working Group Members		
Full Name	Organization	Attendance
Adam Gaska	Redwood Valley County Water District	Present
Adriane Garayalde	Agriculture Landowner, Russian River Confluence	Present
Alicia Hamann	Friends of the Eel River	Absent
Angle Lynn Slater	Lake Pillsbury Alliance	Absent
Brandon Axell	Mendocino County Farm Bureau	Absent
Brenda L. Tomaras	Lytton Rancheria	Absent
Chris Shutes	California Sportfishing Protection Alliance	Absent
Cliff Paulin	pvid iwpc	Absent
Curtis Berkey	Berkey Williams Law	Absent
Dakota Perez	Pinoleville Pomo Nation	Present
David Taber	Palomino Lakes Mutual Water Company	Present
Don Seymour	Sonoma Water	Present
Eddie Crandell	Lake County Board of Supervisors	Present
Elizabeth Salomone	Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District	Present
Erica Costa	Berkey Williams Law	Absent
Frank Lynch	Lake Pillsbury Alliance	Present
Glenn McGourty	Mendocino County Board of Supervisors	Absent
Jaime Neary	Russian Riverkeeper	Present
Janet Pauli	Potter Valley Irrigation District, Inland Water and Power Commission	Present
Jeanne Zolezzi	Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District	Absent
John Nagle	Sonoma Resource Conservation District	Present
Kristin Peer	BKS Law Firm	Present
Laurel Marcus	California Land Stewardship Institute	Present
Letty Belin	California Trout	Present
Luis Santana	Robinson Rancheria	Present
Mary Grace Pawson	City of Rohnert Park, TAC Member	Absent
Matt Clifford	Trout Unlimited	Present
Mike Harty	Kearns & West	Present
Mike Thompson	Sonoma Water	Present

Nikcole Whipple	Save California Salmon, Edtrust Justice Fellow, Round Valley Indian Tribes	Present
Pam Bacigalupi	Agriculture Landowner	Absent
Pam Jeane	Sonoma Water	Present
Patrick Sullivan	Lake County	Absent
Peter Chevalier	Agriculture Landowner	Absent
Phil Williams	City of Ukiah	Absent
Redgie Collins	CalTrout	Present
Robert Pennington	County of Sonoma	Present
Ryan Bezerra	Sonoma Water	Absent
Sam Boland-Brien	State Water Resources Control Board	Present
Scott Shapiro	Downey Brand	Present
Sean White	City of Ukiah	Absent
Stephen Zollman	City of Sebastopol	Present
Ted Hernandez	Wiyot Tribe	Absent
Terri McCartney	Pinoleville Pomo Nation, MLSTEP	Present
Terry Crowley	City of Healdsburg	Present
Todd Schram	Sonoma Water	Present
Tyler Nelson	Agriculture Landowner	Absent
Tyrone Mitchell	Yokayo Tribe of Indians	Absent
Vivian Helliwell	Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations	Present

Other Attendees		
Full Name	Organization	Attendance
Glen Spain	PCFFA	Present
Justin Frederickson	California Farm Bureau	Present
Peter Kiel	Law Office of Peter Kiel	Present
Rue Furch	Sierra Club	Present