

West Water Company

Public Meeting #2

September 9, 2026
5:45 p.m.



CALIFORNIA WATER BOARDS

SAFER PROGRAM

Attendee Expectations



Please hold off on questions or comments until the end of each presentation section.



You may fill out a comment card during the presentation or raise your hand after.



Everyone will have a chance to speak during the public comment period. Please remain respectful and civil during discussion.

Meeting Purpose

To explain why the State Water Board is pursuing the mandatory consolidation process for West Water Company

To provide an update since the 1st Public Meeting that occurred 10/15/2020

To review the required findings to issue the mandatory consolidation order

Agenda

- West Water Company Background
- Mandatory Consolidation Process Overview
- West Water Company Update
- Next Steps
- Public Comments/Questions





Water Board's Mission Statement

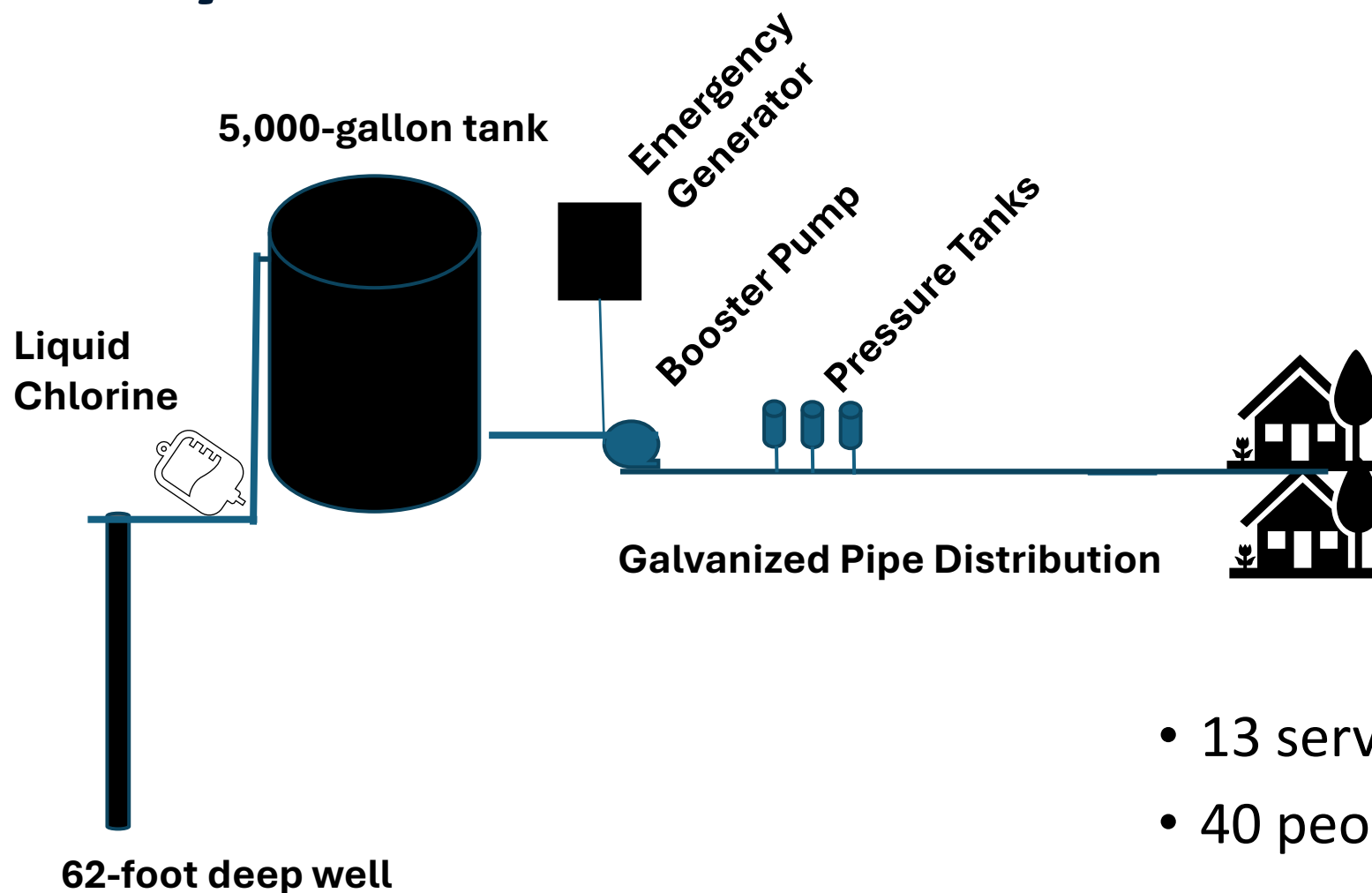
Preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.

West Water Company Background

Maritza Flores Marquez, PE
Water Resource Control Engineer
Division of Drinking Water, SAFER

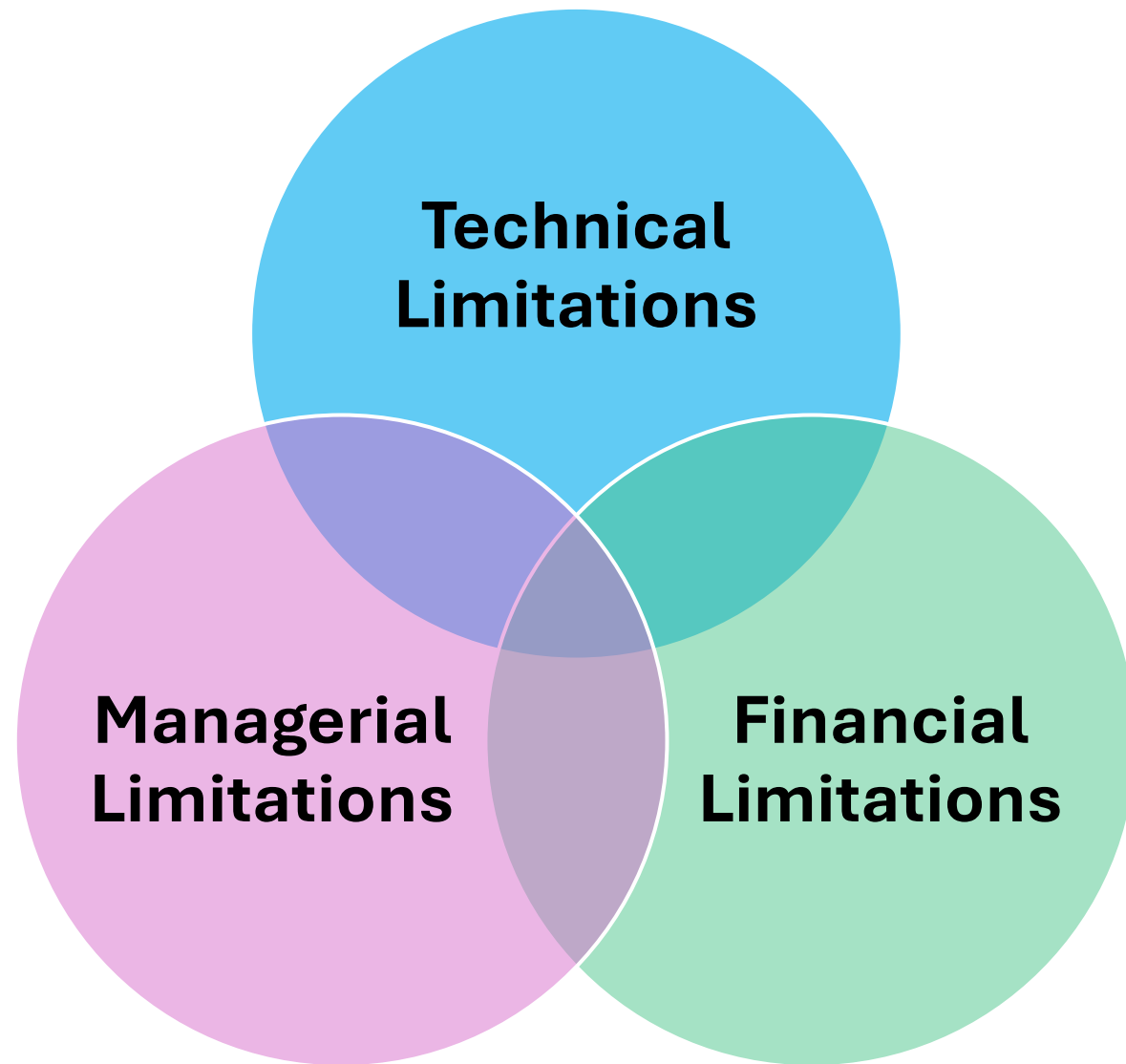


Water System Basics



- 13 service connections
- 40 people served water

Concerns



Technical Limitations

Water Quality

- Historically, the well produced water with coliform bacteria leading to installation of chlorination disinfection in 1999
- Bacterial contamination found in February 2019
- Bacterial contamination seems to occur when the river is high in winter since the well is only 62 ft deep, when the river is high, river water has the potential to enter the well more easily.
- 1995-2019: Violations have included positive coliform tests along with the presence of manganese, nitrate, aluminum, lead, copper, atrazine, and arsenic



Technical Limitations

Insufficient Storage Capacity

- Lack of adequate storage – Additional storage is needed to provide water to customers when the system is out of service for short periods of time
- No fire storage or fire hydrants in distribution system
- Water system storage is a combined domestic and fire protection system with deficient storage capacity



Technical Limitations

Inadequate Distribution System

- Inadequate piping to deliver minimum fire flows
- Undersized to deliver peak period demands
- Pipes are going on 65+ years, leaks and corrosion likely have reduced the flow of water



Technical Limitations

Additional Water System Deficiencies

- Inadequate water rights
- Physical condition of well
 - Well casing is in poor condition
 - Well annular seal does not meet minimum depth requirement under California Standards



Managerial Limitations

- Lack of Managerial Capacity
 - Water system experienced ongoing operational and maintenance challenges under original ownership
 - In November 2019, Sonoma County began covering the cost of Russian River Utility's services without owning the water system or receiving customer revenue



Financial Limitations

- Capacity constraints inhibit:
 - Affording necessary improvements
 - Applying for and qualifying for private financing
 - Applying for and qualifying for State Water Board funding



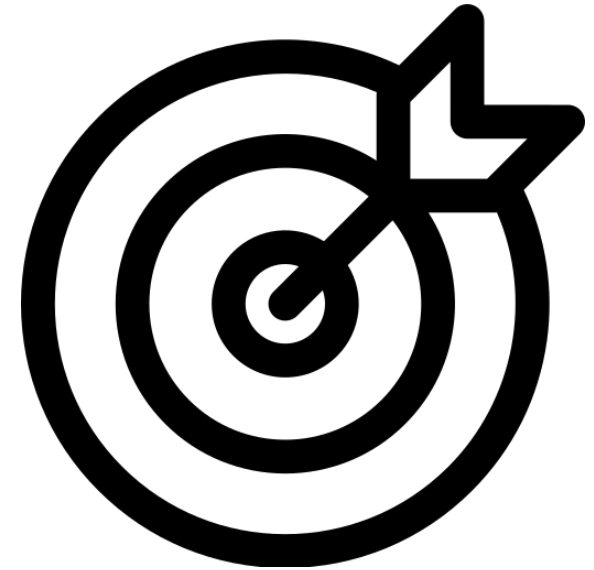
Mandatory Consolidation Process Overview

Maritza Flores Marquez, PE
Water Resource Control Engineer
Division of Drinking Water, SAFER



Goals for Mandatory Managerial Consolidation of West Water Co with Sonoma County

- The State has the authority to order consolidation between two systems.
- Goals:
 - Safe and reliable drinking water
 - Complete necessary improvements
 - Maintain community engagement
 - Oversee implementation of long-term consolidation solution



Definitions

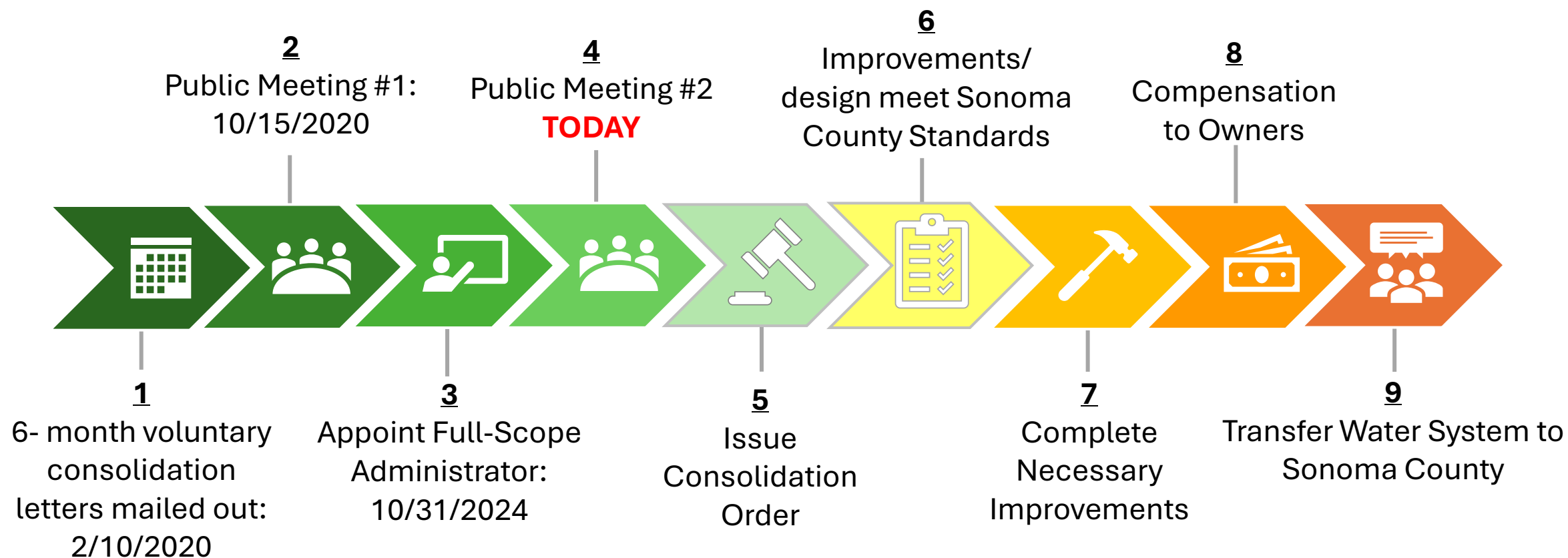
- **Consolidation:** The joining of two or more water systems. Typically, a smaller system is absorbed into a larger water system. Applicable when:
 - The subsumed system is a disadvantaged community ✓
 - “Documented” water quality or quantity issue(s) ✓
 - There is an adequate and sustainable water system nearby ✓
- **Managerial Consolidation:** Combining management of multiple water systems under one organization to improve coordination and efficiency. There is **NO** physical connection (ex. Pipeline).

Why is the State Board Pursuing Mandatory Consolidation?

- Water system failed to make required improvements to ensure the delivery of safe water to customers
- State Board does not believe the water system can operate reliably without one or more failures in the future
- Sonoma County identified as best partner:
 - System will be absorbed and operated by Sonoma County



Consolidation Process



Through active & continuous coordination with Sonoma County

West Water Company Update

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Division of Drinking Water, SAFER

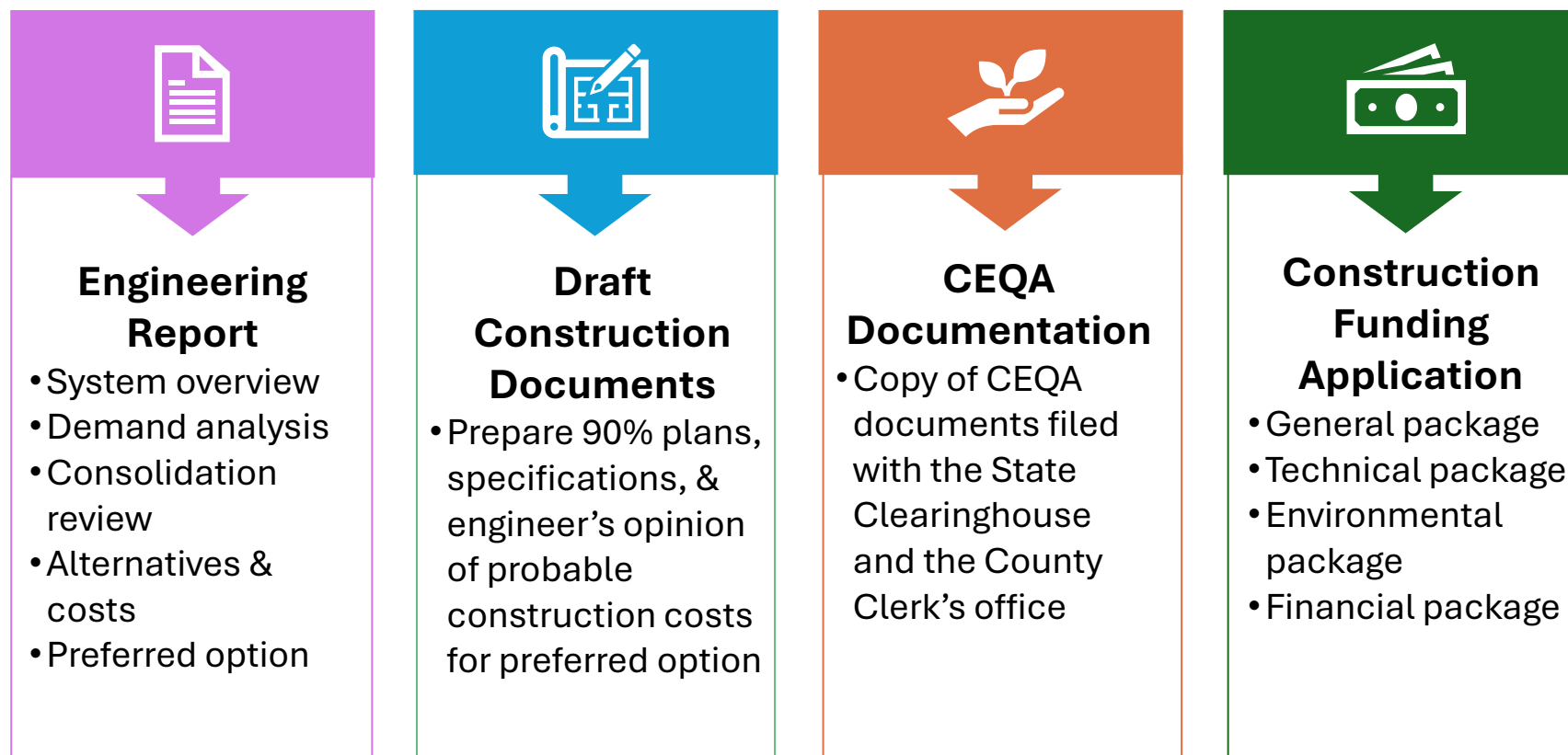


Administrator Appointment – Sonoma County

- Appointed administrator on 10/31/2024
- Has full control of the system, including administrative, operations, and maintenance services with support through Russian River Utility
- Facilitates water system consolidation
- Role is separate and distinct from ownership, long term control, or consolidation of the water system
- Short-term effort



Technical Assistance



Supports long-term solution of 2 water supply wells, new storage, and new distribution system.

Next Steps

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Water Resource Control Engineer
Division of Drinking Water, SAFER



Next Steps

- State Board intends to exercise its authority to order consolidation of the water systems
- Consolidation Order will be issued by the State Board
- The systems will have the opportunity to petition the Order
 - A petition must be received by the State Board within 30 days of date of issuance of the Consolidation Order



Statutory Findings

1. The potentially subsumed water system has consistently failed to provide an adequate supply of safe drinking water.

- **Water Quality Violations:** Multiple Total Coliform Rule Maximum Contaminant Level violations (1996, 2000, and an acute violation in 2010), indicating repeated bacterial contamination concerns.
- **Monitoring Violations:** Repeated failures to conduct required monitoring for regulated contaminants, including lead and copper, arsenic, nitrite, atrazine, aluminum, manganese, and total coliform.
- **Infrastructure and Operational Deficiencies:** A 2019 Waterworks Standard violation related to source capacity, indicating the system lacked adequate and reliable water supply infrastructure to meet regulatory standards.



Statutory Findings

2. Reasonable efforts to negotiate consolidation or extension of service were made.

- The Division of Drinking Water participated in multiple meetings with West Water Company & Sonoma County regarding the consolidation of the water systems.
- Consolidation between Sonoma County & West Water Company was not achieved during the 6- month negotiation period that ended 6-months after the 1st Public Meeting.



3. Consolidation of the receiving water system and subsumed water system or extension of service is appropriate and technically and economically feasible.

- The State Water Board initiated the consolidation process; the State Water Board provided funding to appoint Sonoma County as the full scope Administrator to facilitate implementation and support infrastructure improvements before managerial consolidation.
- The engineering report dated May 2026, concluded that consolidation is the most feasible solution, both technically and financially, and it provides West Water Company with a reliable water system & long-term management.



Statutory Findings

4. There is no pending local agency formation commission process that is likely to resolve the problem in a reasonable amount of time.

- Sonoma County LAFCo was contacted Spring 2026. There is no current LAFCo known process that is likely to resolve the problem in a reasonable amount of time.



5. Concerns regarding water rights and water contracts of the subsumed and receiving water systems have been adequately addressed.

- West Water Company's supply is groundwater, with two new wells planned. The West Water Company will not be physically interconnected with Sonoma County.
- The local groundwater basin is unadjudicated; therefore, there are no currently known issues regarding water rights and water contracts of the two water systems.



Statutory Findings

6. Consolidation or extension of service is an effective and cost-effective means to provide an adequate supply of safe drinking water.

- The State Water Board initiated the consolidation process; the State Water Board provided funding to appoint Sonoma County as the full scope Administrator to facilitate implementation and support infrastructure improvements before managerial consolidation.
- The engineering report dated May 2026, concluded that consolidation is the most feasible solution, both technically and financially, and it provides West Water Company with a reliable water system & long-term management.



7. The capacity of the proposed interconnection needed to accomplish the consolidation is limited to serving the current customers of the subsumed water system.

- Selected alternative is limited to serving the current customers of West Water Company and surrounding domestic well owners that are interested in connecting to the water system.



Public Comments/ Questions

Maritza Flores Marquez, PE
Water Resource Control Engineer
Division of Drinking Water, SAFER



Public Comment

- Speak your comment:
 - Please raise your hand.
- Written comments can be submitted today, or addressed by mail or email
 - Maritza Flores Marquez, State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Drinking Water, 1001 I St 17th floor, Sacramento, CA 95814
 - Email: DDW-NorCalEngagement@waterboards.ca.gov
 - Phone number: (916) 445-5615

Thank you!

Contact Us!

DDW-NorCalEngagement@waterboards.ca.gov



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