

Regional Water Quality Control Board
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report
Thursday, January 28, 2016
Regional Water Board Office
Santa Rosa, California

- ITEM: 5
- SUBJECT: Update on Water Rights and Fisheries Management Actions in the Russian River Watershed (*Bryan McFadin, Daniel Worth, SWRCB Division of Water Rights, and Corinne Gray, California Department of Fish and Wildlife*)
- BOARD ACTION: This is an informational item. No action will be taken by the Regional Water Board.
- BACKGROUND: In June 2015, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) adopted the Russian River Tributary Emergency Regulations to help protect federal- and state-listed anadromous fish in four priority Russian River tributary watersheds - Dutch Bill Creek, Green Valley Creek, portions of Mark West Creek, and Mill Creek. The emergency regulations required landowners in designated areas adjacent to critical stream reaches to implement enhanced water conservation practices. The emergency regulations also authorized an information order that required landowners in the four watersheds submit information describing their water use and sources. More information about the Russian River Tributary Emergency Regulations can be found at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/water_action_russianriver.shtml
- In January 2014, Governor Brown signed the California Water Action Plan (Plan). The Plan promulgated many actions related to water supply, water quality, flood protection, and the environment, including efforts to enhance flows. The Plan directs the SWRCB and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to "implement a suite of individual and coordinated administrative efforts to enhance flows statewide in at least five stream systems that support critical habitat for anadromous fish." Three of the five stream systems (Mark West Creek, South Fork Eel River, and Shasta River) are in the North Coast Region. More information on the CWAP can be found at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/instream_flows/cwap_enhancing/#heading
- To address the urgency created by the recent drought, CDFW and the National Marine Fisheries Service have developed the Voluntary Drought Initiative to reduce the effects of the drought on priority salmon and steelhead populations in California. The Initiative seeks

to develop temporary, voluntary water conservation and in-stream flow agreements with water users in high priority salmon and steelhead rivers and streams, including the Russian River and its tributaries.

DISCUSSION: Staff from the SWRCB's Division of Water Rights and the CDFW will present the results of last summer's efforts to implement the Russian River Tributary Emergency Regulations, voluntary flow augmentation projects, and ongoing efforts to implement elements of the California Water Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: No action will be taken by the Regional Water Board.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: None