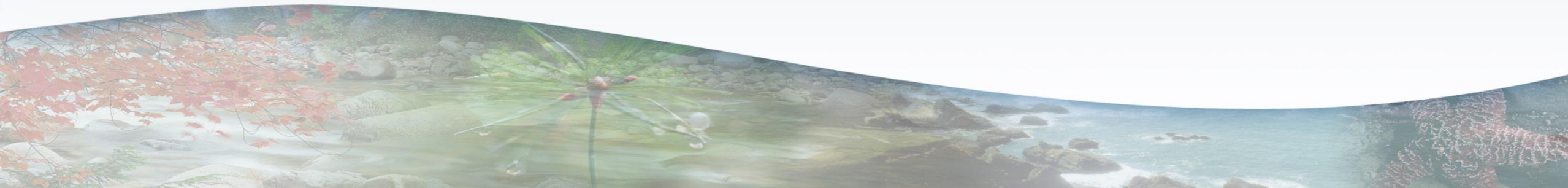


Item No. 9

**Public Hearing for**

Renewal of Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements,  
General Water Quality Certification, and Monitoring and  
Reporting Program for the Mendocino County  
Resource Conservation District's  
**Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program**

Gil Falcone and Jonathan Warmerdam  
February 21, 2019







# I. Mendocino County and Permit Coordination

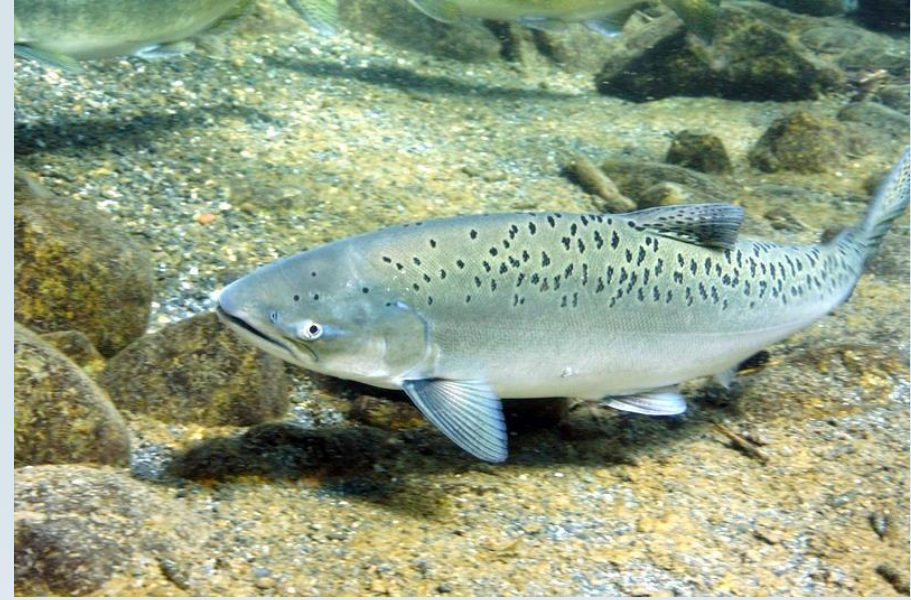




# Mendocino - A County of Resources









# Mendocino's **Impaired** Watersheds

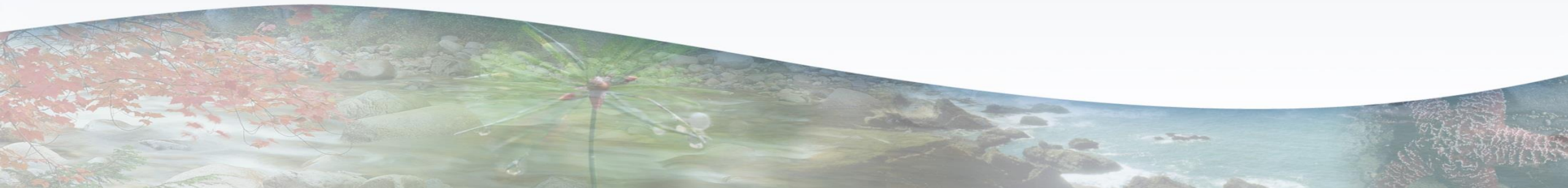


- Upper Russian River
- North Fork Gualala River
- Garcia River
- Navarro River
- Albion River
- Big River
- Noyo River
- Ten Mile River
- Upper Eel River
- Middle Fork Eel River
- North Fork Eel River
- South Fork Eel River
- Mattole River (south basin)
- Pudding Creek
- Usal Creek



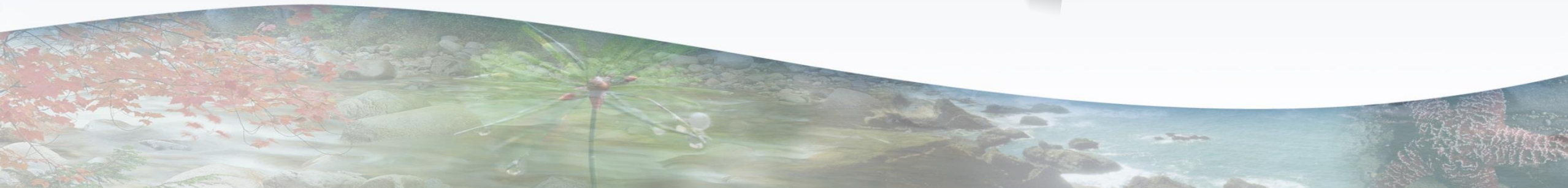
# Priority Recovery Actions

1. Reduce erosion and sedimentation
2. Improve riparian zone
3. Enhance instream complexity
4. Reintroduce large woody material
5. Secure instream flows



# Challenges to Recovery Actions

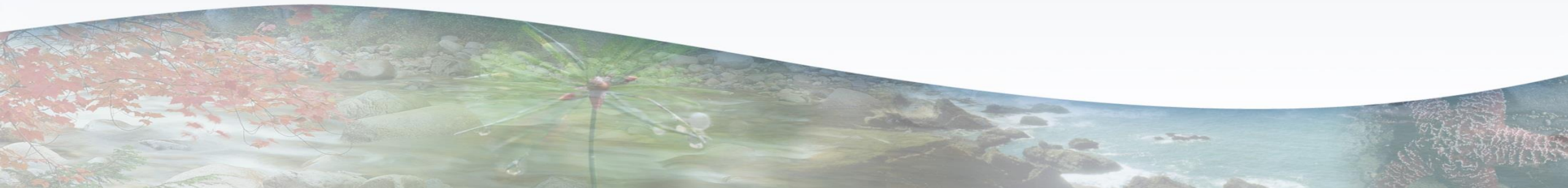
- Complex permitting
- Expensive
- Lots of paperwork
- Guidance lacking
- Conflicting requirements





# What is coordinated permitting?

- **Permit coordination programs** seek to improve permitting efficiencies, while providing technical guidance and financial assistance to landowners seeking to restore natural resources on their lands

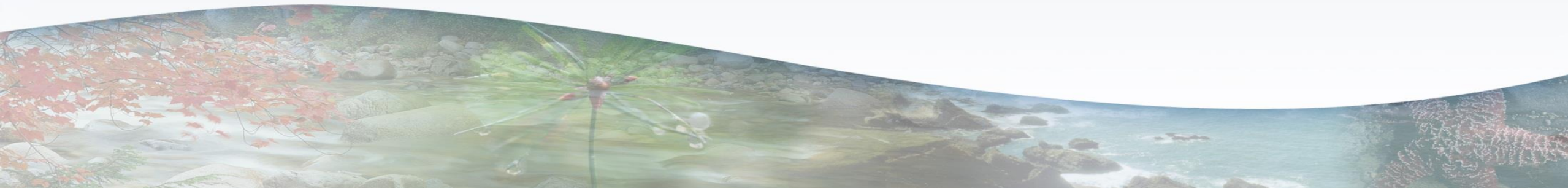


# Permit Coordination in California

## Program Location:

## Approval Date:

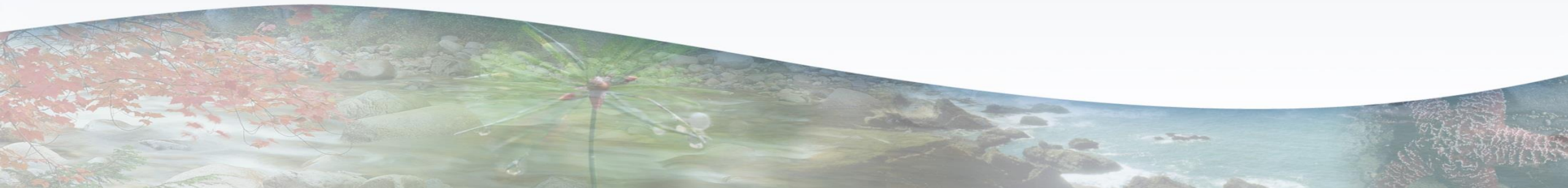
- |                                      |      |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Elkhorn Slough                    | 1997 |
| 2. Salinas River                     | 2002 |
| 3. Morro Bay                         | 2003 |
| 4. <a href="#">Navarro Watershed</a> | 2003 |
| 5. Marin Coastal Watersheds          | 2004 |
| 6. Calleguas Creek                   | 2006 |
| 7. Yolo County                       | 2007 |
| 8. Lake County                       | 2008 |
| 9. Upper Pajaro River                | 2009 |
| 10. San Luis Obispo County           | 2010 |
| 11. Santa Cruz County                | 2011 |
| 12. <a href="#">Mendocino County</a> | 2013 |





# What other benefits does coordinated permitting promote?

- ✓ Education and outreach
- ✓ Government efficiency
- ✓ TMDL goals
- ✓ *Legal* projects
- ✓ Watershed stewardship principles



## II. Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program





# Vision Statement

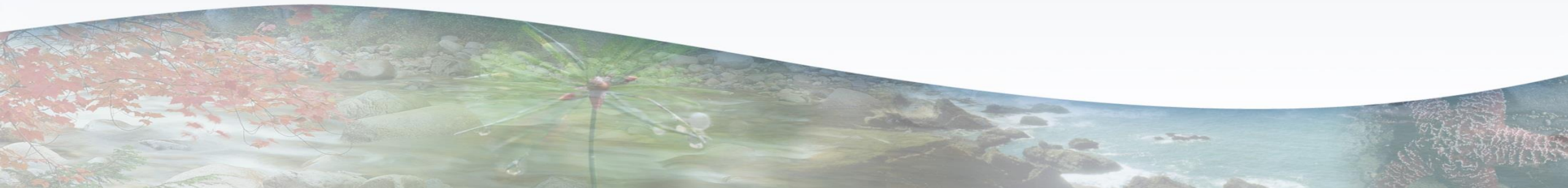
*Healthy watersheds. Effective regulation.  
Strong partnerships.*





# Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program

1. Developed by Mendocino RCD and NRCS-Ukiah
2. Builds upon the Navarro Permit Coordination Program
3. Programmatic CEQA certified in June 2012 (Mitigated Negative Declaration / Initial Study)
4. Board adopted Order R1-2013-0059 and MRP



# Watersheds Covered by the Program



- Upper Russian River
- North Fork Gualala River
- Garcia River
- Navarro River
- Albion River
- Big River
- Noyo River
- Ten Mile River
- Upper Eel River
- Middle Fork Eel River
- North Fork Eel River
- South Fork Eel River
- Mattole River (south basin)
- Pudding Creek
- Usal Creek
- Other Coastal Tributaries

# Mendocino PCP Project Goals

- ✓ Control erosion and sediment
- ✓ Improve instream habitat
- ✓ Remove migration barriers
- ✓ Stabilize eroding streambanks
- ✓ Restore riparian shade
- ✓ Promote native riparian vegetation
- ✓ Control invasive species





# Conservation and Restoration Practices

Utilizes NRCS *Technical Guides* as foundation  
(10 practices):

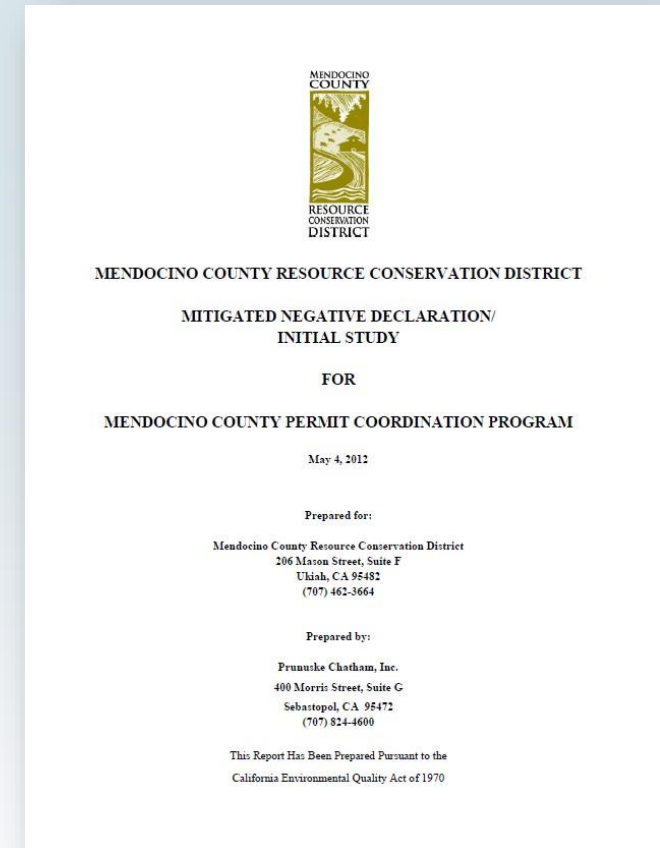
- Road and stream crossing improvements to reduce sediment delivery and allow fish passage
- Stream restoration / enhancements; native vegetation planting / invasive control, channel and bank stabilization, aquatic habitat enhancements



# Environmental Protection

Incorporates environmental protection and mitigation measures from CEQA analysis:

1. General conditions for all projects
2. Additional conditions for specific project types
3. Measures to avoid direct impacts to salmonids/habitat



# Program Mechanics – *How it works*

1. Build capacity for project development
2. RCD establishes “*Cooperator Agreements*”
3. RCD submits Annual Workplan to agencies
4. Agency reviews / project inspections
5. RWB notification of coverage/certification
6. Project implementation
7. Project monitoring
8. Post-construction reporting





# Program Accomplishments

## Across 24 properties

### Projects include:

- 30 miles of roads improved
- 15 miles of roads decommissioned
- 97 culverts upgraded
- 1,750 feet of stream banks restored
- 6 fish passage barriers removed
- 7 miles of habitat opened up
- 11 large wood habitat structures installed
- 500 linear feet of invasive species (*Arundo donax*) treated



*Healthy Watersheds*

# III. Regional Water Board Proposed Order





# *Proposed* Order No. R1-2019-0004

Conditional waiver of waste discharge requirements and general water quality certification (CWA §401)

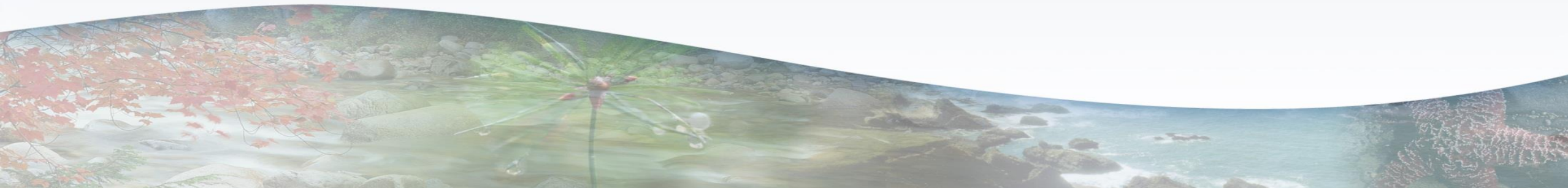
- Project eligibility criteria
- Implementation standards and conditions
- Annual Workplan and Project Status Report
- Certification fee
- Permit may be renewed in 5 years

*Effective Regulation*



# *Proposed* Order No. R1-2019-0004

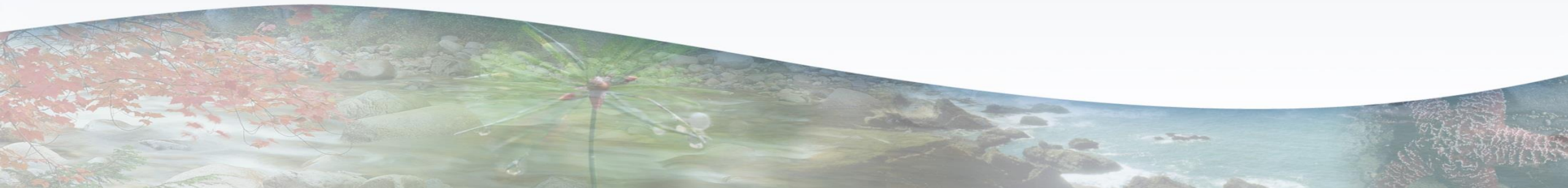
- Monitoring and Reporting Program
  - Implementation monitoring
  - Effectiveness monitoring
  - Photo-point monitoring
  - Project response monitoring
- Annual Project Status Report





# *Proposed* Order No. R1-2019-0004

- 45-day public notice: Nov 24, 2018 - Jan 8, 2019
  - *No public comments were received*
- Order changes from R1-2013-0059:
  - *Updated 401 water quality certification standard condition language*
  - *Included 5-year accomplishments*



# IV. Mendocino County Resource Conservation District

Patty Madigan and Joe Scriven



*Strong Partnerships*



# Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program

## RCD Perspective: 2013-2018

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

February 21, 2019

Patty Madigan – Conservation Program Manager  
Joe Scriven – Fisheries Biologist / Project Manager



# Relationships & Teamwork

## SWRCB Mission Statement:

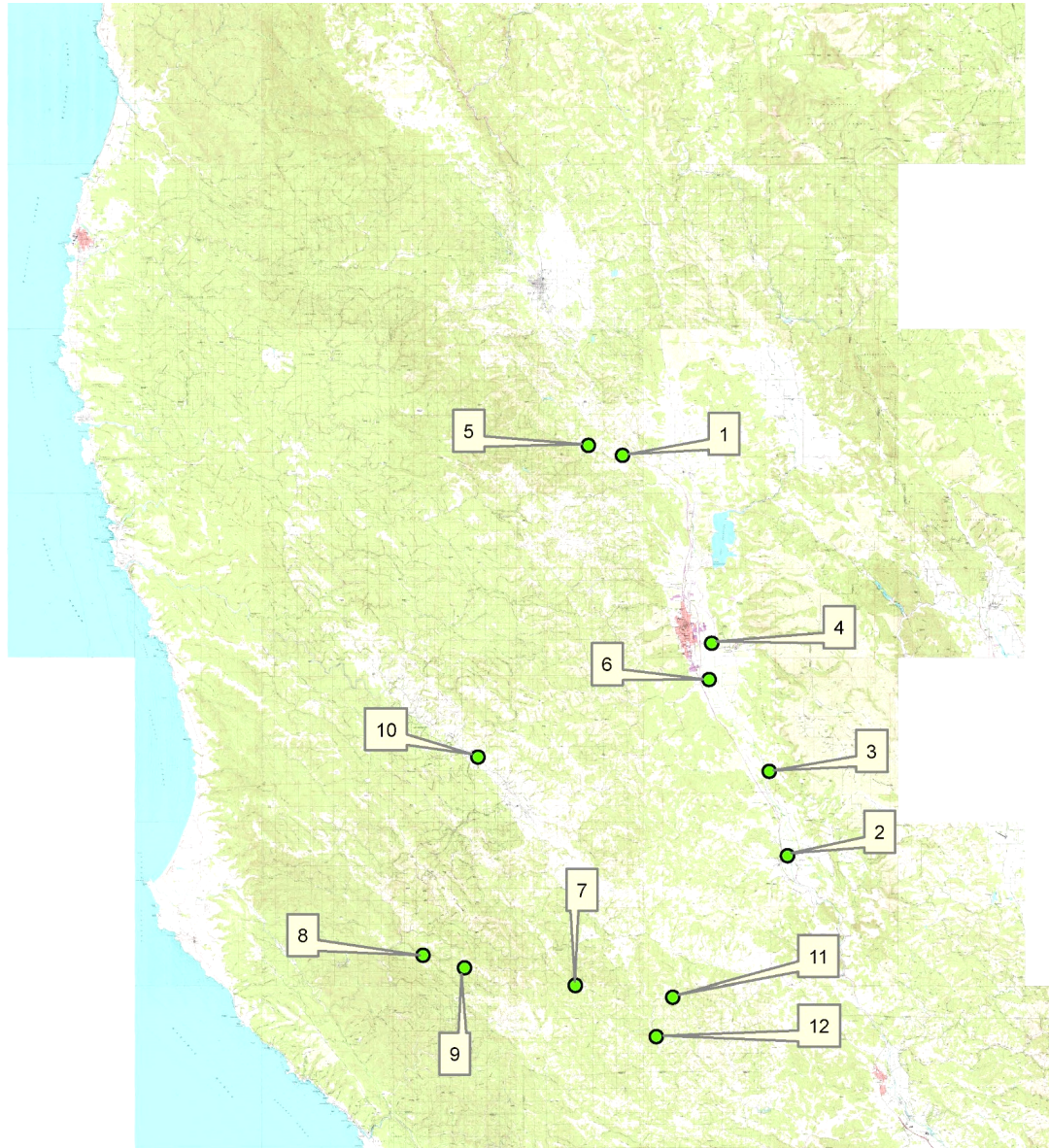
To preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.

## MCRCDD Mission Statement:

The Mendocino County Resource Conservation District is a non-regulatory, local agency supporting voluntary stewardship of natural resources on wild and working landscapes.



# Project Map 2013-2018



## Russian River Watershed

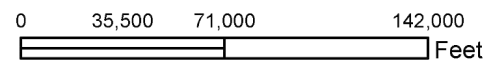
- 1: Forsythe Creek Sediment Reduction
- 2: Upper Russian River Arundo Eradication - Beckstoffer
- 3: Upper Russian River Arundo Eradication - Largo and King
- 4: Mill Creek - Talmage Fish Passage Improvement and Riparian Restoration
- 5: SWRCB Redwood Fire Recovery Project
- 6: Upper Russian River Arundo Eradication - Koball

## Garcia River Watershed

- 7: Garcia River TMDL Implementation Phase 2 - Wheeler
- 8: Garcia River TMDL Implementation Phase 2 - Alden
- 9: Mendocino Coast TMDL Implementation

## Navarro River Watershed

- 10: Denmark Creek Fish Barrier Removal and Riparian Restoration
- 11: Navarro Headwaters TMDL Implementation - Lawson
- 12: Upper Rancheria Creek Large Wood Project - Bickell



January 2019

# How we got here:

- Navarro Watershed Coordinated Permitting in 2003.
- Included RWB 401, ACOE 404, and CDFW 1600
- Program Expanded County-wide in 2012
- Added RWB 401/WDR in 2013
- ACOE 404 and CDFW 1600 are not covered

# Where are we going next?

- Eel River and Coastal Watersheds
- Storm-proofing roads to address sediment TMDLs
- Post-fire Recovery: MCPCP has already been important in this process





Roads are significant sediment sources to impaired waters.

Episodic failures are still relatively common.

Chronic erosion and sediment delivery are widespread problems.

Roads are corridors for vehicles & wildlife as well as water & sediment.

The higher the percentage of road systems hydrologically connected to the stream network, the greater potential for affecting receiving waters.





Before



After

Rolling Dip

## Garcia River TMDL Implementation: Phase 2 Project

Treatment of chronic erosion sources via outsloping and rolling dips.





## Garcia River TMDL Implementation: Phase 2 Project

Prevention of episodic erosion by designing crossings to the 100-year storm interval, and road decommissioning.





Before

After

## Denmark Creek

# Fish Passage and Riparian Restoration





## Denmark Creek

# Fish Passage and Riparian Restoration



# Upper Russian River



*Arundo donax*

Eradication & Riparian Restoration





Brush mattress installed in 2016



Brush mattress in 2018

## Upper Russian River

*Arundo donax* Eradication & Riparian Restoration



# MCPCP “Take Home” Messages

- The 401 and CEQA get RCD’s projects on the ground faster.
- Addressing CEQA for each project would otherwise be too cumbersome & very costly.
- Coordinated Permitting saves money and time.
- Increasingly, grant initiatives require applicants to have CEQA completed to secure funding.

# Limiting Factors

- Limited staffing/funding for project development
- Few dedicated funds for capacity building
- Incentives for landowners to participate
- Increased costs and delays from other permitting agencies

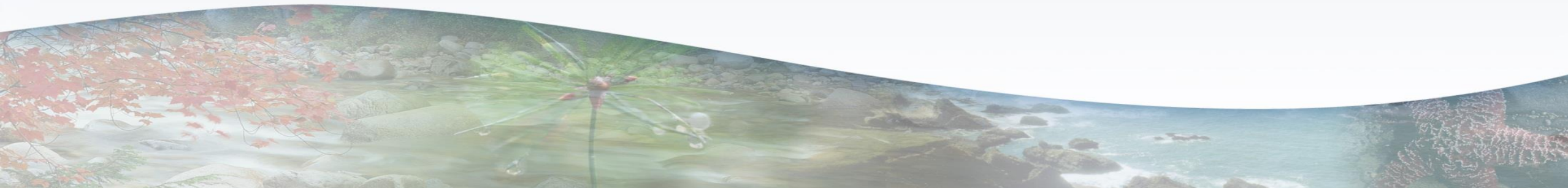


# Acknowledgements:

- NCRWQCB: original funding to secure the CEQA Mitigated Declaration (2012), adoption of the 401/WDR (2013, 2019)
- National Marine Fisheries Service for the Biological Opinion for the CEQA MND
- Natural Resources Conservation Service for the Biological Assessment
- Prunuske Chatham, Inc. for support with the Initial Study and hand-holding to the finish line
- Landowners and project partners who “followed the rules” and restoration professionals for all their high-quality work...

# V. Conclusions

1. Mendocino watersheds are important and impaired
2. The status of salmonids requires continued action
3. The Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program is implementing important conservation and restoration projects
4. This strong partnership and effective regulation is leading to healthier watersheds



# Recommendation

Adopt proposed Order No. R1-2019-0004,  
Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements,  
General Water Quality Certification, and  
Monitoring and Reporting Program for the  
Mendocino County Resource Conservation  
District's **Mendocino County Permit  
Coordination Program**





# Thank You



Gil Falcone  
Sr. E.S. Restoration Specialist

Jonathan Warmerdam  
Environmental Program Manager

