

CITY OF SANTA ROSA

P.O. Box 1678
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

SEP 24 1996

DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders' Consensus on Reuse

SCOR Proposal for constructing a fiscally and environmentally sound
Subregional project

SCOR supports a project based on the following objectives:

001

- 1) maximize reuse of a valuable resource while providing cost recovery
- 2) reduce cost and increase flexibility in project design and operation
- 3) provide short and long term reliability to the cities, farmers, and regulators
- 4) encourage collaboration between the cities, farmers, and investors, and work only with willing landowners
- 5) respect for the integrity of drinking water supplies, recreational resources, wildlife habitat, and other environmental assets around the county

Storage

002

Storage is comprised of small to medium sized reservoirs located on-farm, with cost savings through participation by water users and site owners. Should a large storage site become available and financially viable in the future, it might be pursued, but a system of dispersed sites could assure adequate storage. The ultimate goal is 5.5 billion gallons of storage capacity.

Irrigation

003

Continued use of the existing 5,000 acres (subject to the "Buffers" option below), with addition of 8,000 acres or irrigated pasture, vineyard, orchard, and truck and specialty crops would assure full water use.

Discharge

004

Maintain the current discharge limits for the first 5 years of the project. After the first 5 years, expanded irrigation and buffer options could remove the necessity of discharging above 1% of river flow.

Phasing the project

Much of the project cost may be reduced by phasing the construction, with increased irrigation acreage and/or storage brought in as needed.] The system does not need to bond, at great expense, for the entire cost from the beginning; thus interest payments are reduced. A huge "front-loaded" cost would become an expensive burden to ratepayers if city growth didn't meet projections, and development fees didn't pay for their expected share of the debt. A phased project could be temporarily frozen, until capacity need increased.

Phasing also allows for the gradual development of trust between farmers and the city as partners in the system, as well as for refinement of crop production, storage development and irrigation patterns. Therefore, a phased project is cheaper, more adaptable, and more marketable.]

Buffers

Building a system to reuse all of the water in all possible weather situations is both expensive and wasteful. Buffer areas may be used to store and dispose of excess water when weather and river flow leave too much water in regular storage. Buffer options include extra irrigation on city-owned land, or special contracts on land planted in Christmas trees or wood lots. Current city-owned land can be shifted from regular irrigation to use only during extraordinary weather years. Emergency fee incentive water conservation programs might be considered.]

Private sector participation

In a fundamental change in project character, this proposal moves away from the massive one-time public works project to a partnership approach with the farming community and with entrepreneurs who might assist in assembling storage sites and water users. Their profit might be realized through cost reductions from city estimates.]