

State Water Resources Control Board
Order 05/02/2012

Provision 12 - Coordinated Efforts with
Agricultural Russian River Water Users



March 29, 2013

Prepared by

**Sonoma County Water Agency
404 Aviation Blvd
Santa Rosa, CA 95403**

1 Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Sonoma County Water Agency (Water Agency) to fulfill the requirements of Provision 12 of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) Order dated May 2, 2012 (Order).

Provision 12 of the Order directs the Water Agency to take the following actions:

SCWA shall continue to work with agricultural Russian River water users to pursue opportunities that will result in improved management of the Russian River by better anticipating periods of high water demand. SCEA shall provide a written update to the Deputy Director regarding the progress of these efforts by March 31, 2013.

2 Improved Frost and Heat Event Forecast Project

SCWA continues to work with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Sonoma County WineGrape Commission to improve the spatial and temporal resolution of forecast models for frost and heat events in the Alexander Valley. To date, this demonstration project has resulted in improved forecasting of these events. Improved forecast tools can provide agricultural water managers better information regarding the location and duration of frost events with a goal of more efficient and coordinated water use. Future work includes: (1) continued improvements to the forecast tool, (2) installation of equipment that measures the height of inversion layers so that vineyard managers can better determine whether fans (lower inversion layers) can be used rather than water (higher inversion layers); and (3) working with the WineGrape Commission and other stakeholders to "roll out" the modeling tool should it be determined that it is reliable for operations.

3 Frost Event Coordination with Mendocino County Grape Growers

SCWA continues to work with Mendocino County grape growers, the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District and the Mendocino WineGrape and Wine Commission on coordinating releases from Coyote Valley Dam in response to forecasted frost events. Coordination efforts include: (1) Mendocino County grape growers providing SCWA operations staff with estimated pumping rates that will likely be applied during an eminent frost event; and (2) developing strategies for refilling off stream ponds following frost events. This ongoing coordination has improved SCWA's ability to manage Russian River flows in response to frost events.

4 Independent Science Review Panel (ISRP)

In 2012 SCWA, California Land Stewardship Institute, Russian River Water Conservation Council, and the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District funded the Russian River Independent Science Review Panel (ISRP). The purpose of the ISRP is to develop a comprehensive conceptual model of hydrologic and ecologic processes for the upper Russian River (above the confluence with Dry Creek), the Mark West watershed and Green Valley watershed. In addition, the ISRP is tasked with evaluating and prioritizing

data gaps to inform stakeholders where their resources for monitoring and data collection should be prioritized. Panel members were chosen from a pool of applicants by a selection panel comprising a broad range of constituencies in accordance with National Academies conflict of interest protocols. The panel is comprised of nine scientists representing a variety of disciplines from the physical and biological sciences. More information regarding the ISRP can be found at www.russianriverISRP.org.