

# West County Water Quality and Recycled Water Supply Feasibility Study with Stakeholder Committee

## Phase 1: Project Initiation

- Russian River County Sanitation District received an order from North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to conduct a feasibility study with stakeholder outreach
- Sonoma Water issued Request for Qualifications and engaged consultants

## Phase 2: Stakeholder and Technical Committee outreach

- The facilitator conducted facilitated interviews with stakeholders
- Sonoma Water formed a Stakeholder Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

## Phase 3: Study/Service Area

- Stakeholder Committee and TAC will provide feedback on study/service area
- Sonoma Water with technical consultant West Yost Associates will refine and finalize study/service area

## Phase 4: Project Regionalization Alternatives

- Stakeholder Committee and TAC will provide feedback on project regionalization alternatives
- Sonoma Water with technical consultant West Yost Associates will refine and finalize regionalization alternatives

## Phase 5: Finalize Feasibility Study and Develop Project Advancement Report

- Stakeholder Committee and TAC provide feedback on draft feasibility study, implementation options and possible financial solutions
- Sonoma Water with technical consultant West Yost Associates will finalize the feasibility study and submit it to Regional Board
- Sonoma Water develops a roadmap to advance feasible projects that obtained support from existing wastewater treatment systems

2023



2024



2024



2025



2025



2026

Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

Summer 2024

Fall 2024-Spring 2025

Summer 2025

Fall 2025-Winter 2026



# Objectives and Key Milestones

Sonoma Water is conducting a high-level feasibility study focused on potential regional projects that could improve water quality, water supply reliability, pathogen levels, and climate change resiliency in the lower Russian River watershed. The study will also consider “regionalization” of west Sonoma County wastewater systems and possible resulting cost savings for ratepayers. Regionalization could include things like connections between small wastewater or consolidation of multiple small systems to create a larger customer base. This could lead to greater efficiency and more standardized wastewater treatment throughout the project area.

Through a Stakeholder Committee, Sonoma Water will identify community concerns associated with waste management and treatment in western Sonoma County. Through a Technical Advisory Committee of representatives from the County of Sonoma, community service districts and sanitation districts, Sonoma Water will identify engineering, operational and financial challenges and opportunities. Feedback from both committees and the broader community will help ensure that this study reflects other consolidation efforts and will help chart a path forward.

## Phase 1: Project Initiation Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

As a result of sewer spills that occurred during 2019 storms, in 2023 the Russian River County Sanitation District received an order from and was fined by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. More than 85 percent of the fine (nearly \$890,000) is directed toward this study, which was defined in the Regional Board’s order. In 2023, Sonoma Water issued a request for qualifications to solicit professional services to perform the study and stakeholder engagement.

## Phase 2: Stakeholder and Technical Committee outreach Summer 2024

Sonoma Water engaged West Yost Associates to perform the technical work and the Center for Continuing Education at Sacramento State University to assess stakeholders and to facilitate the Stakeholder Committee. Both the Stakeholder Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) were created to provide feedback on key components of the study.

## Phase 3: Study/Service Area Fall 2024 - Spring 2025

A key milestone is defining the geographic boundaries of the study/service area, including specific service districts. West Yost will develop recommended study/service area options and solicit feedback from the TAC and from the stakeholder committee in a meeting that is open to the public.

## Phase 4: Project Regionalization Alternatives Summer 2025

A second milestone is developing consolidation alternatives, ranging from small to large. West Yost will develop regionalization options and solicit feedback from the TAC and from the stakeholder committee in a meeting open to the public.

## Phase 5: Final Feasibility Study and Project Advancement Report Fall 2025 - Winter 2026

The final milestones are to complete the study (including a financial analysis of potential costs and savings to ratepayers) and to develop a Project Advancement Report. West Yost will prepare a draft study for feedback from the TAC and stakeholder committee. The stakeholder committee meeting will be open to the public. The sanitation district will submit the study and a project advancement report to the regional board to serve as guiding documents for future actions, including seeking funding for possible planning, permitting, engineering and implementation.