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## State Water Resources Control Board

### **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ON PROPOSED RUSSIAN RIVER EMERGENCY REGULATION AND RECENTLY ISSUED NOTICES OF WATER UNAVAILABILITY FOR THE UPPER RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED**

In response to emergency drought conditions persisting throughout the Russian River watershed and insufficient water supply to meet the needs of all water rights holders, on May 25, 2021, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) issued notices of water unavailability to water rights holders in the Russian River watershed upstream of the Dry Creek confluence. Additionally, the State Water Board is considering adoption of an emergency regulation for the Russian River. The proposed emergency regulation would allow for curtailments of water diversions when natural flows decrease such that water is not available: (1) to meet carryover storage targets in Lake Mendocino; (2) minimum flows for state and federally listed fish in the Russian River; and (3) minimum human health and safety needs.

State Water Board staff will hold a public workshop to provide information and answer questions related to the Notices of Water Unavailability and the proposed emergency regulation. Details of the public workshop are as follows:

**Thursday, June 10, 2021  
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

Zoom Link:

<https://waterboards.zoom.us/j/96366907908?pwd=UIU1RW1wbG5vVGFEVGVZHWGZkVjFGUT09>

Meeting ID: 963 6690 7908

Passcode: 179300

#### **Background**

On April 21, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a drought emergency proclamation in Mendocino and Sonoma counties due to drought conditions in the Russian River watershed. The April 2021 Proclamation directs the State Water Board to consider adoption of an emergency regulation to ensure adequate minimum water supplies and to curtail water diversions when water is not available.

Under California's priority based water rights system, if there is insufficient water to support all water rights, junior water right holders are ordered to limit or stop their water diversions first, based on their water right priority, to satisfy the rights of those more senior to them. On May 25, 2021, the State Water Board sent Notices of Water Unavailability to all post-1914 water right holders in the Russian River Watershed upstream of the confluence of Dry Creek and the Russian River, referred to as the Upper Russian River. The State Water Board also sent letters to all pre-1914

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E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

appropriative right holders and riparian right holders upstream of the Dry Creek confluence to warn them of dry conditions, encourage conservation of water, and inform them that the State Water Board is developing emergency regulations that may affect their water rights.

The proposed emergency regulation is scheduled to be considered by the State Water Board at its June 15 meeting. If approved by the State Water Board, the emergency regulations will be provided to the Office of Administrative Law for a public comment period, review, and approval. If approved, the emergency regulations would become effective in early July. The emergency regulation will remain in effect for up to one year, unless extended by the State Water Board due to ongoing drought conditions.

### **Additional Information**

Please visit the State Water Board's [Drought webpage](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought) (www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought) for additional information on drought related activities. This website will be updated with draft materials available for public comment and additional drought-related information as available. You can also visit the or State Water Board's [North Coast Regional Drought Information webpage](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/north_coast/) (www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/north\_coast/) for more information.


### **How to Receive Updates**

If you would like to receive email updates about the Russian River drought effort, please [sign up](#) for the State Water Board's "Russian River Drought" email subscription list under Water Rights at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/)

### **Questions**

Please email questions regarding this notice and related efforts to: [RussianRiverDrought@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:RussianRiverDrought@waterboards.ca.gov).

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June 7, 2021  
Date

  
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Jeanine Townsend  
Clerk to the Board