



Annual Report

FY 2020/2021



ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

The Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership (Partnership) represents 13 water utilities in Sonoma and Marin counties that have joined together to provide regional solutions for water use efficiency.

The utilities include the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Petaluma, Sonoma, Cotati, Healdsburg, and Cloverdale; North Marin and Valley of the Moon Water Districts; Town of Windsor, Marin Water and California American Water - Larkfield and Sonoma Water (Partners). Each of the Partners have water conservation programs that can assist customers in reducing their water use.

The Partnership was formed to identify and recommend implementation of water use efficiency projects, and maximize the cost-effectiveness of water-use efficiency programs in our region.

The Partners are committed to remaining members in good standing of the California Water Efficiency Partnership.

OUR SERVICE AREA

More than 600,000 residents in Sonoma and Marin counties rely on the water delivered from the Russian River by Sonoma Water to nine of the cities and districts in the Partnership. The water provided by Sonoma Water is supplemented by local supplies including recycled water, groundwater from underground aquifers and surface water reservoirs.

Recreation, agriculture and wildlife, including threatened and endangered steelhead, coho and Chinook salmon, also rely on these same natural resources in order to thrive.

Realizing the importance of protecting and preserving water resources for future generations, the members of the Partnership have taken a proactive role in helping fund, maintain and implement an array of water supply, water-use efficiency and fishery recovery programs.



DROUGHT IS HERE

The year 2021 was the second dry year in a row for our region, clearly establishing drought as the next of a seemingly endless series of challenges – from wildfires, to flooding on the Russian River, navigating through a pandemic, and now record low reservoir levels and water supply concerns due to drought. In spite of these successive challenges, our communities continually demonstrate their strength to recover, rebuild, and to improve on our readiness and resilience to the challenges we will face going forward. There is more work to do, however, and water supply is of course among the top priorities for resiliency efforts to ensure we can continually meet our communities' needs for safe and reliable water every day. This includes water for people, but just as importantly, water for the environment that supports us and all the other species within it. To that end, our Partners are working tirelessly to make the most out of what we have – to make water conservation a California way of life to ensure our communities continue to thrive as we adapt to a changing climate.

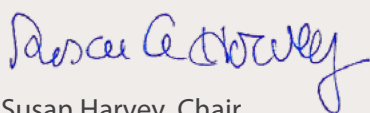
Due to a lack of winter rainfall, in early 2021 the Partnership undertook a winter outreach campaign to bring awareness of low water supply levels and to ask customers to Save Water With Us by taking voluntary actions to conserve and to eliminate all wasteful practices. By early summer, and due to worsening drought, the outreach message was refocused to emphasize the Drought is Here - Save Water with the expectation of mandatory conservation requirements being implemented by the Partnership's members through summer into fall. To support community water saving efforts, drought kits were distributed at three coordinated "Drought Drop By" events held in Sonoma, Marin, and Mendocino counties, outfitting customers with over 10,000 kits including a bucket for saving water, low-flow showerhead, faucet aerator, 5-minute shower timers and more.

The Partnership took the momentum generated from the Drought Drop By and rolled it into a regional summertime Saving Water Challenge, relying on encouragement from trusted community messengers to share water saving tips and practices with others. As a result, our Partnership responded at the local customer level by further embracing water use efficiency actions that contributed to a 23 percent reduction in water diversions from the Russian River, well above the 20% reduction mandate required by the State Water Board Order as compared to 2020. Although a great short-term achievement, the Partnership, through its many water use efficiency programs, educational seminars and outreach campaigns, is working every day of the year to remind our communities about the importance of conserving our water resources and curbing water-wasting behaviors.

As a consequence of this good work, the Partnership was once again recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its efforts in water use efficiency, receiving a 2021 WaterSense "Sustained Excellence Award" for its Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program – an irrigation-professional certification and training program. This is the fifth EPA WaterSense "Sustained Excellence Award" for QWEL.

We offer our thanks and recognition of everyone working collectively to help extend our water supplies during this exceptional drought. While the rains needed to replenish our watershed are uncertain, we know we can rely on our partners and community members to meet any challenges we face.

Sincerely,



Susan Harvey, Chair
Water Advisory Committee



Lynda Hopkins, Chair
Sonoma Water Board of Directors

PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS BY

OUTDOOR WATER USE PROGRAMS

945

IRRIGATION SYSTEMS
RETROFITTED WITH SMART
CONTROLLERS

150,755

SQUARE FEET OF LAWN
REMOVED VIA CASH FOR
GRASS / MULCH MADNESS

154

REBATES GIVEN FOR LAWN
REMOVAL VIA CASH FOR
GRASS / MULCH MADNESS

139

LANDSCAPE PLANS
REVIEWED

1

RAINWATER HARVESTING
WORKSHOPS

17

LOW WATER USE GARDEN
DESIGN CLASSES

1,498

WATER WASTE
ENFORCEMENTS

2

SHEET MULCHING
WORKSHOPS

2

DRIP IRRIGATION
CLASSES

37

LANDSCAPE UPGRADE
REBATES

158

POOL COVER REBATES

18

LAUNDRY TO LANDSCAPE
GRAYWATER SYSTEMS
INSTALLED

31,963

GALLONS OF RAINWATER
HARVESTING CAPACITY
ADDED

ECO FRIENDLY GARDEN TOUR ONLINE

4,987

UNIQUE PAGE
VIEWS

14

GARDENS



60

QWEL PROS CERTIFIED



FEATURED AT

28

NURSERIES



105

CONSULTATIONS

THE NUMBERS

RESIDENTIAL WATER USE PROGRAMS

39

HOT WATER RECIRCULATION
SYSTEM REBATES

461

WATER SMART
HOME EVALUATIONS

1,795

WATER SMART HOME SELF
EVALUATION KITS

278

HIGH-EFFICIENCY
CLOTHES WASHER REBATES

316

HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILETS
RETROFITTED

964

SMART HOME WATER
MONITORING SYSTEMS

COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

31

INDOOR SURVEYS
COMPLETED

3

HIGH- EFFICIENCY URINALS
RETROFITTED

2

HIGH- EFFICIENCY TOILETS
RETROFITTED

K-12 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

4,645

STUDENTS RECEIVED DIRECT
VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION

3rd Grade - Water/Energy Nexus,
Storm Drain Pollution:

1,131 students

4th Grade - Be Part of the
Climate Change Solution:

755 students

5th Grade – Water Transmission
System, Water Quality, Salmon:

2,759 students

20,298

PIECES OF CURRICULUM
MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED
TO STUDENTS IN **1,131**
CLASSES

7,631

STUDENTS ATTENDED
VIRTUAL ASSEMBLIES
WITH ZUNZUN

12

STUDENTS PARTICIPATED
IN THE WATER AWARENESS
VIDEO CONTEST



PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

PARTNERSHIP FOCUSES ON DROUGHT RESPONSE

Winter/Spring Outreach Campaigns

With the lack of rain in the fall of 2020, the Partnership launched a series of winter outreach campaigns beginning in December of 2020 with the message “Less rain means less water” encouraging residents to reduce water use and to turn off outdoor irrigation.

In March of 2021, the tagline “It’s A Dry Year, Save Water With Us” was rolled out featuring tips to save water. Social media, print and digital ads, and radio ads were developed in English and Spanish.

Summer/Fall Outreach Campaigns

In May of 2021, the campaign transitioned to “Drought Is Here, Save Water” and continued with additional bi-lingual social media, print, and digital ads as well as radio ads. This campaign was refreshed in October with new graphics and imagery to maintain interest.

Drought Drop By Events

The Partnership held a series of give-away events to raise awareness about the drought and to distribute water saving devices to communities in Sonoma, Marin, and Mendocino counties. More than 10,000 kits were distributed at the events in June, August, and October 2021.

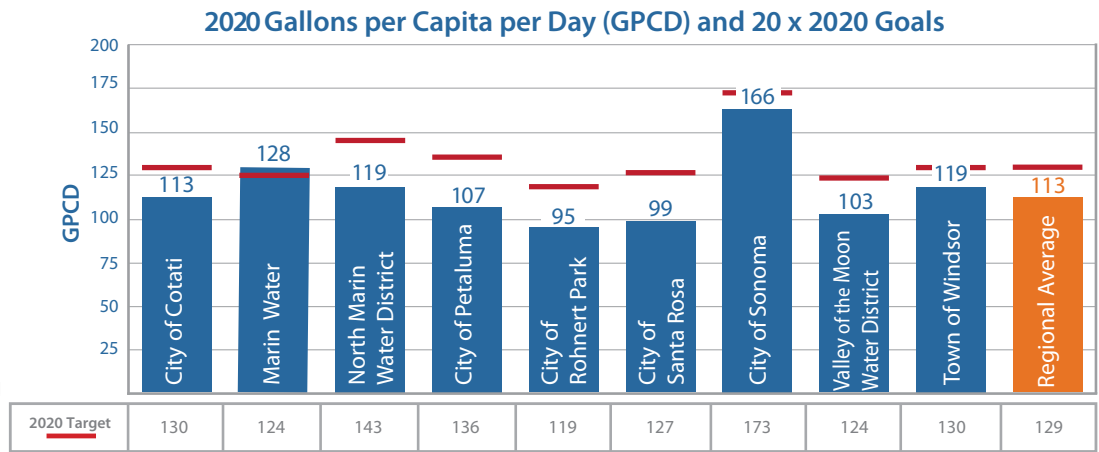
Saving Water Challenge

In July, the Partnership kicked off the Saving Water Challenge which included a drawing for water efficient prizes. Participants pledged to follow 31 water saving practices to enter. Prizes included a high-efficiency clothes washer, toilet, smart-irrigation controller, home water monitoring system, a rainwater harvesting system and a gift certificate to a car wash that recycles its wash water on site.



20 X 2020 GOALS

In 2009, SBx7-7 established a statewide goal, known as 20 x 2020, to reduce per capita water use 20% by the year 2020. The legislated option to form a Regional Alliance for attainment of the reduction goal was undertaken by the founding Partners in 2010.



The chart to the above right displays 2020 per capita water use of the founding Partners' service areas, as well as the regional average for these Partners participating in the Regional Alliance. The 2020 goals are indicated by the red lines.

While the chart shows that Regional Alliance has met the 2020 target, we recognize that water-use efficiency must continue. Many factors can affect water-use patterns as has been seen in recent years. It is important to continue the work on water-use efficiency to maintain the savings already achieved and make sure the region captures all the benefits of future water savings.

RECOGNITION FOR CONTINUED EXCELLENCE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership with a **2021 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award** as a professional certifying organization, for continuing to make their Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) trainings and certification accessible to a wide audience.

The Partnership is proud to receive its Fifth Sustained Excellence Award.



PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

(In thousands of dollars)

| | FY 20-21 | Minimum |
|-----------------------------------|----------|---------|
| City of Cotati | \$49 | \$18 |
| Marin Water | \$1331 | \$512 |
| North Marin Water District | \$328 | \$168 |
| City of Petaluma | \$513 | \$172 |
| City of Rohnert Park | \$115 | \$94 |
| City of Santa Rosa | \$913 | \$374 |
| City of Sonoma | \$117 | \$40 |
| Valley of the Moon Water District | \$49 | \$53 |
| Town of Windsor | \$183 | \$69 |
| Sonoma Water | \$2365 | NA |
| Regional Total | \$6006 | \$1500 |

Minimums are established for founding members in the MOU Regarding Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership.

WATER EDUCATION PROGRAM ADAPTS

The Water Education Program adapted all of its existing programs to accommodate virtual learning in our local schools. This led to the creation of 15 synchronous and asynchronous lessons to educate students about natural resource conservation. In response to the drought, existing programs were modified to include drought messaging, and new lessons were developed so all students grade 3 to 12 have access to drought education.

NEW PARTNERSHIP WEBSITE

The Partnership launched a newly redesigned website in July 2021 after more than a year of planning and development. The new design replaces one that dates back to 2008 and includes new features including a low water use plant database, weather-based irrigation scheduler, event calendar, online rebate submittal, and more. Take a look at savingwaterpartnership.org



savingwaterpartnership.org



City of Santa Rosa
707-543-3985
srcity.org/water



Town of Windsor
707-838-1004
townofwindsor.com



City of Rohnert Park
707-588-3300
rpcity.org



**NORTH MARIN
WATER DISTRICT**

North Marin Water District
415-761-8933
nmwd.com



**MARIN
WATER**

Marin Water
415-945-1520
marinwater.org



Valley of the Moon
Water District
707-996-1037
vomwd.com



City of Petaluma
707-778-4507
cityofpetaluma.org/water-conservation



City of Sonoma
707-933-2237
sonomacity.org



City of Cotati
707-665-3631
cotaticity.org



**CALIFORNIA
AMERICAN WATER**

California American Water
Larkfield
707-542-8329
calamwater.com



City of Healdsburg
707-431-3122
smartlivinghealdsburg.org



**CITY OF
CLOVERDALE**

City of Cloverdale
707-894-2521
cloverdale.net



**Sonoma
Water**

Sonoma Water
707-547-1933
sonomawater.org