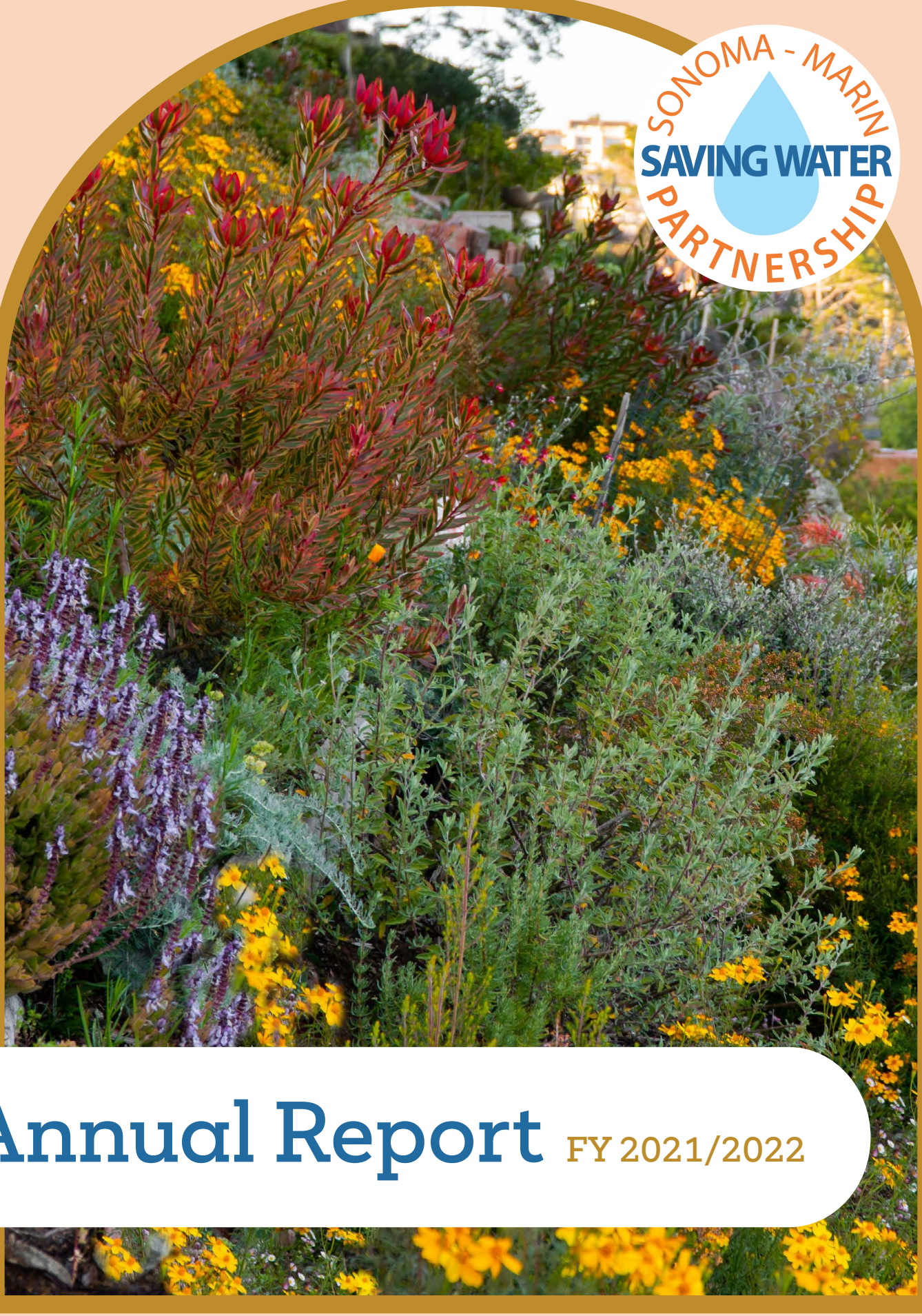


SONOMA - MARIN SAVING WATER PARTNERSHIP

Annual Report FY 2021/2022

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

The Sonoma-Marin 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 STILL HERE

The 2022 water year started with much needed record rainfall in October 2021, but it was not enough to break the grip of the drought. With below average rainfall through the rest of the rainy season, the drought continued into its third year, necessitating an ongoing message to the community to save water.

Building on the success of the 2021 "Drought is Here" outreach campaign, the Partnership reminded residents and businesses that the "Drought is Still Here" through the winter, spring, and summer months. Focused on easy to implement water saving strategies and the elimination of wasteful practices, the Partnership's campaign had a continual presence on local news media websites and print publications, on broadcast radio, and on online streaming media sites.

For a personal touch, the Partnership met with residents at more than two dozen "Saving Water Summer Pop-Up" events at home improvement stores, local farmers markets, summer concerts, and other community events from July through September. Pop-up visitors were able to speak one-on-one with Partnership members staff to learn about ways to save water and pickup free water conservation tools, including low flow showerheads and buckets for catch and reuse of warm-up and rinse water.

Our community continues to respond favorably to the Partnership's call to conserve water. Water diversions from the Russian River were reduced by over 30 percent as compared to 2020, exceeding the 20 percent reduction required by a State Water Board Order for the period July through October 2022. It's clear our community understands the value of water and recognizes the shared responsibility for reducing water use during times of drought. It's also clear that by working together our water supplies are more resilient in the face of climate change impacts.

As a testament to the good work being done, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the Partnership the 2022 WaterSense Promotional Partner of the Year Award for its efforts in promoting water use efficiency through the 2021 Drought Drop By events, and was additionally awarded one of twelve 2022 WaterSense Sustained Excellence Awards for its Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program – an irrigation-professional certification and training program. This is the sixth EPA WaterSense Sustained Excellence Award for QWEL.

With predictions that our future will be drier than our past, the response and collective actions of our community during this ongoing drought are reassuring as we continue to take steps to make water conservation a California way of life.

Sincerely,

Michael Healy, Chair
Water Advisory Committee

James Gore, Chair
Sonoma Water Board of Directors

PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS

OUTDOOR WATER USE PROGRAMS

322
IRRIGATION SYSTEMS RETROFITTED WITH SMART CONTROLLERS

921,843
SQUARE FEET OF LAWN REMOVED VIA CASH FOR GRASS / MULCH MADNESS

929
REBATES GIVEN FOR LAWN REMOVAL VIA CASH FOR GRASS / MULCH MADNESS

150
LANDSCAPE PLANS REVIEWED

3
RAINWATER HARVESTING WORKSHOPS

16
LOW WATER USE GARDEN DESIGN CLASSES

6,950
WATER WASTE ENFORCEMENTS

3
SHEET MULCHING WORKSHOPS

3
DRIP IRRIGATION CLASSES

74
IRRIGATION SYSTEM EFFICIENCY UPGRADE REBATES

355
POOL COVER REBATES

ECO-FRIENDLY GARDEN TOUR ONLINE

5,203 UNIQUE PAGE VIEWS

11 GARDENS

62,881
GALLONS OF RAINWATER HARVESTING CAPACITY ADDED

6
LAUNDRY TO LANDSCAPE WORKSHOPS

QWEL
QUALIFIED WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPER

47
QWEL PROS CERTIFIED

SONOMA - MARIN SAVING WATER PARTNERSHIP
water smart plant

FEATURED AT
33
NURSERIES

SENSE Garden
SONOMA COUNTY

302
CONSULTATIONS

BY THE NUMBERS

RESIDENTIAL INDOOR WATER USE PROGRAMS

195
HOT WATER RECIRCULATION SYSTEM REBATES

1,362
WATER SMART HOME EVALUATIONS

650
WATER SMART HOME SELF EVALUATION KITS

376
HIGH-EFFICIENCY CLOTHES WASHER REBATES

45
LAUNDRY TO LANDSCAPE GRAYWATER SYSTEMS

683
RESIDENTIAL TOILET REPLACEMENTS

COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

48
INDOOR SURVEYS COMPLETED

0
COMMERCIAL HIGH EFFICIENCY URINALS RETROFITTED

179
COMMERCIAL HIGH EFFICIENCY TOILETS RETROFITTED

K-12 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

3,466
STUDENTS RECEIVED DIRECT INSTRUCTION

3rd Grade - Water/Energy Nexus, Storm Drain Pollution:
1,482 students

5th Grade – Water Transmission System, Water Quality, Salmon:
1,984 students

29,908
STUDENTS IN **1,164** CLASSES RECIEVED SCHOOL SUPPLIES FROM THE PROGRAM

9,181
STUDENTS ATTENDED VIRTUAL ASSEMBLIES WITH ZUNZUN

36
STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE WATER AWARENESS VIDEO CONTEST

30
VIDEOS WERE ENTERED IN THE WATER AWARENESS VIDEO CONTEST

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Year-Round Outreach in Response to Drought

In response to the drought, the Partnership has increased outreach from a summer only campaign to a year-round effort to keep the community engaged and informed about our water supply. The Parnership continued messaging through fall and winter reminding residents to turn off their irrigation systems and to conserve water indoors.

In May of 2022, the outreach campaing moved to an updated message that the "Drought is STILL Here, Save Water." The Partnership continued with bilingual social media, print and digital ads with seasonally approriate tips and recomendations to save water and improve water use efficiency.

Saving Water Summer Pop-Up Events

The Partnership hosted a series of Saving Water Summer Pop Up events from July through September to meet with the communty at home improvement stores, farmers markets, nurseries, summer concerts, and other community events to pass out water saving tools and advice.

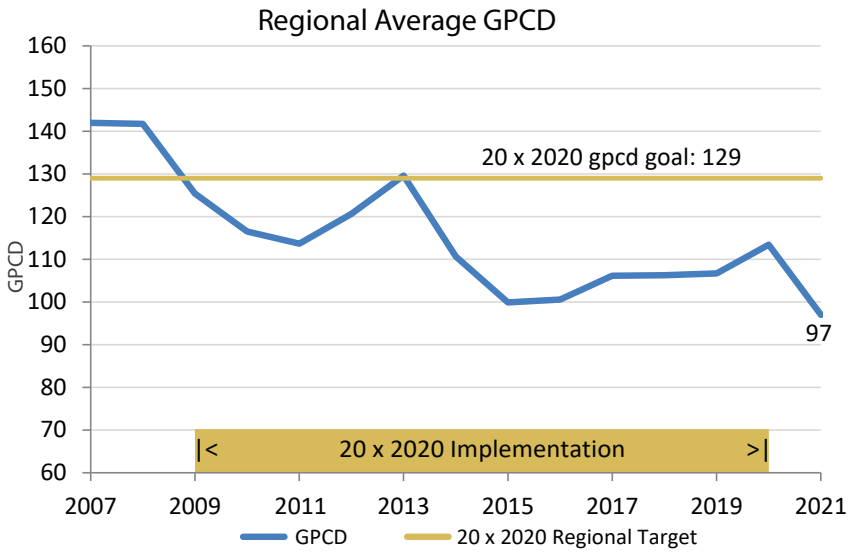
More than two dozens pop-ups allowed the Partnership to engage with over 2,300 residents.

WATER USE EFFICIENCY 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 Partnership exceeded the goal with a regional average of 113 gallons per capita (gpcd) in 2020.

In 2021, the Partnership's regional average decreased to 97 gpcd, partly due to the ongoing drought.

Over the last two years the State has undertaken work to develop a new water conservation framework, called Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life. This new framework was set in motion in 2018 by the passage of SB 606 and AB 1668 and includes updated Urban Water Use Objectives for retail water agencies to achieve.



Although these new objectives are not yet fully adopted, the laws are clear in setting new standards for water agencies that go beyond the targets in 2020. As such, we must continue our efforts to become more efficient to ensure that future goals are attainable.

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES
(In thousands of dollars)

	FY 21-22	Minimum
California American Water	$39	$21
City of Cloverdale	$519	$39
City of Cotati	$26	$18
City of Healdsburg	$844	$35
Marin Water	$3,008	$512
North Marin Water District	$450	$168
City of Petaluma	$915	$172
City of Rohnert Park	$78	$94
City of Santa Rosa	$1,100	$374
City of Sonoma	$110	$40
Valley of the Moon Water District	$95	$53
Town of Windsor	$240	$69
Sonoma Water	$3,005	NA
Regional Total	$10,440	$1,595

Minimums are established for Partners in the MOU.

DROUGHT OUTREACH AND QWEL RECOGNIZED WITH EPA AWARDS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership's 2021 outreach activities with its ***2022 Partner of the Year Award***. In response to the drought, the Partnership's "Drought Drop-By" events educated residents on the water shortage, encouraged residents to conserve water and provided them with the tools to do so, distributing more than 10,000 drought kits with water-saving devices, including WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucet aerators.

The EPA also award the Partnership's Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper program (QWEL) with its its sixth consecutive Sustained Excellence Award. QWEL is a WaterSense labeled professional landscape certification program that emphasizes a wholistic approach to landscaping and landscape irrigation practices.

EPA WaterSense 2022 PARTNER OF THE YEAR

EPA WaterSense 2022 SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE

SONOMA - MARIN SAVING WATER PARTNERSHIP

savingwaterpartnership.org

We've been EPA WaterSense PARTNER for 11 years!

Town of Windsor
707-838-1004
townofwindsor.com

City of Sonoma
707-933-2237
sonomacity.org

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

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

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

City of Cotati
707-665-3631
ci.cotati.ca.us

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

City of Healdsburg
707-431-3122
smartlivinghealdsburg.org

City of Cloverdale
707-894-2521
cloverdale.net

Sonoma Water
707-547-1933
sonomawater.org