

Public Comment TUC
Sonoma Co. Water Agency
Deadline: 4/24/09 by 5:00 p.m.

From: "Jim Skiba, CMP" <jim@worldincentivenexus.com>
To: randy.poole@scwa.ca.gov; commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov;
jim@worldincentivenexus.com
Date: Thu, Apr 23, 2009 1:26 PM
Subject: Comments for May 6th Workshop on Order 2009-0027-DWR

April 23, 2009

Jeannie Townsend

Clerk to the Board

State Water Resources Control Board

1001 I Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

Randy Poole

General Manager/ Chief Engineer

Sonoma County Water Agency

PO Box 11628

Santa Rosa, CA 95406

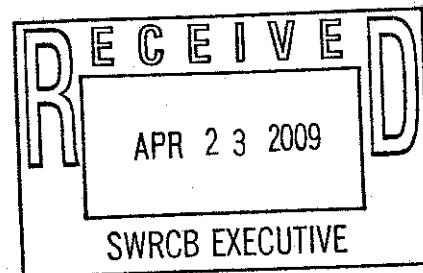
RE: Comments for May 6th Workshop on Order WR 2009-0027-DWR

Dear Chairman Hoppin and Members of the Board,

I am writing to express my concern regarding impacts related to Order 2009-0027- DWR and modifications in permit terms that would reduce those impacts. The reduction in flows will cause severe impacts to water quality, recreation, community water systems, over-summering juvenile salmon and Steelhead as well as the lower River economy that depends on a healthy Russian River.

Please take special note of these areas in bold:

I have moved here from San Francisco 3 years ago after coming here since



1985 as a professional meeting planner with over 40 groups (5,600 people) to the Russian River Area to experience the environment. This has had a significant impact on the growth of sustainable ecology in the region since I have developed best practices on handling groups when they enjoy the environment.

I have also been working for the past 2 years as a marketing consultant for the Russian River Region - specifically with EcoRing, The Russian River Chamber of Commerce and the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods.

My experience with Eco Tourism and Eco Adventure programs comes from working as a consultant in Latin America for the past ten years - specifically in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, and Peru. I have assisted those countries to have a sustainable growth for the residents and the tourists. We work in the jungles and archeological sites to preserve and set policies for protection.

I have been establishing marketing around the globe to start to recognize and re-brand the Russian River region as a special destination for outdoor adventures. However, if the environment is not protected - then there will be no value for future tourism programs.

Talking to local business owners - I know that their businesses have suffered from fewer visitors because people were staying away due to the low flows. The lower river economy depends on summer visitors to make it through each year and this flow reduction will harm local businesses.

In order to reduce the impacts from reduced flows under Order 2009-0027-DWR we urge you on May 6 to take action to protect water quality and beneficial uses in the Russian River.

Specifically we urge you to:

- Increase frequency of chemical water quality monitoring to every two weeks with results posted promptly on a public website to proactively prevent water quality problems such as algae blooms from increased nutrient concentrations

- Include new provisions in the order to require flow changes in response to violations in water quality standards or as needed to protect juvenile ESA listed fish over the summer, the water agency released water to protect grapes from frost on April 14 to 16th so we expect increases to protect

water quality as well

- Installation of additional gauges as needed to ensure instantaneous flow compliance levels are maintained, in 2004 and 2007 compliance levels were violated under previous orders

- A minimum of 25% mandatory conservation for SCWA customers and all users downstream of Dry Creek to help maintain flows and conserve water in case of multi-year drought.

- Mandatory conservation by all permitted water diversions upstream of Dry Creek including agricultural and rural residential diversions and streamside wells pumping underflow

- Additional prohibitions in the Order on diversions that are not permitted in critically dry conditions or if needed a separate order restraining those diversions without permit to protect water storage in Lake Mendocino and maintain higher flows

- Keep order prohibition on commercial turf irrigation in SCWA service area and expand to include all commercial turf using water from the Russian River

I believe that modifying the order to include these provisions will improve protection of water quality, juvenile endangered fish and likely result in somewhat higher flows due to reduced diversions. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Jim Skiba, CMP

Director

World Incentive Nexus

jim@worldincentivenexus.com

www.worldincentivenexus.com <<http://www.worldincentivenexus.com/>>

(707) 869-8012

2007-2008 Global Development Committee Member

Meeting Professionals International

www.mpiweb.org <<http://www.mpiweb.org/>>

2004-2005 President Northern California

Meeting Professionals International

www.mpincc.org

CC: michele_luna@comcast.net; innkeepers@ferngrove.com