

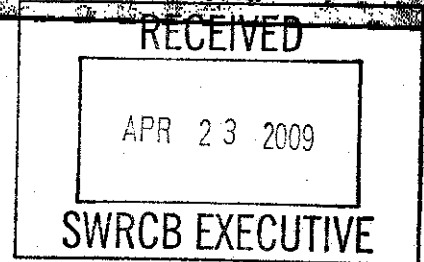
AFRICAN TREASURES

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

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4-23-09

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.

My partner and I own a business on the lower Russian River in Guerneville. We rely on the summer tourist trade to support our business and our family. We have been in this wonderful community for almost 20 years now. It is unfair, I believe, to shift all the burden of multi year drought issues on the lower Russian River community. Everyone should share this pain. Everyone should be required to conserve water and not waste our precious water rights. What about the 1st water rights properties? Why should vineyards and lawns be given more preference to water usage over endangered fish species and humans swimming in unsafe water?

I have seen how the past low water years of 2004 and 2007 caused the river to become filled with algae and warmer than a bathtub. I know that our business suffered from less 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.

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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 unpermitted diversions 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

We 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,



Karen A. Cox

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reduction in flows happen as proposed, I will be in grave danger of losing my employment, since business at our store will be very negatively affected by this proposal.

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