

Trout Unlimited Public Workshop  
March 17, 2005  
hard cc: Board, Debbie Irvin

electronic cc:  
Exec, OCC, EM  
VAW, SRH, LLE, RAS, JT

March 4, 2005

Ronald & Diane Rucker  
2500 Tindall Ranch Rd.  
Ukiah, Ca. 95482

State Water Resource Control Board  
Division of Water Rights  
1001 I Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Re: Workshop to Consider a Petition submitted by Trout Unlimited and the Peregrine Chapter of the National Audubon Society-scheduled for **March 17, 2005.**

Dear Sirs:

We have engaged in farming vineyard in the Ukiah and Redwood Valleys in Mendocino County since 1976. We have been involved in the on-going process of obtaining water right license for both these locations since March of 1989.

The Redwood Valley ranch had an existing irrigation pond when we purchased the property in 1976. The Ukiah ranch had only a drainage ditch entering our vineyard from the county road, which had water only in times of rain. We constructed a small irrigation pond for the vineyard. The newly constructed pond changed the landscape!

We think it **VERY IMPORTANT** that people realize and understand the real benefits of the many small ponds throughout our state which work to conserve water for everyone's benefit. Since we built the pond at the Ukiah home ranch we have been able to witness first hand the tremendous increase in varied wildlife that now frequent this area.

This small pond provides a home and habitat for all forms of wildlife. The pond has mosquito fish, blue gill, bass, toads, water snakes, turtles, and bullfrogs. Seasonally we see wild turkeys, doves, quail, blue herons, egret, mallards, buffle-heads, coots, cormarands, geese, king fisher, ring-necked duck, sparrows, killdeers, ravens, crows and red tail hawks. The pond and surrounding habitat serve deer, coyote, raccoon, skunk, fox, opossum, muskrat, and jack rabbits.

Last, but not least, on several occasions we have had the CDF helicopter use our pond water to fill their buckets for firefighting in the nearby mountain area. Thus, we have witnessed how this one pond has provided habitat and haven to a wide variety of fish, fowl, and wildlife in an area that didn't exist prior. This pond, and many more like it, throughout the state, are enormously beneficial to the wildlife, the farmer, and the general public.

We hope that all interested parties will take the time to visit some of these ponds to see for themselves that ponds must, and do serve both man and wildlife.

Regards,

*Ronald Rucker*  
*Diane Rucker*  
Ronald & Diane Rucker