



# COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 11/28/2023

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**To:** Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Sonoma County Water Agency  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Kevin Booker, 707 521-1865  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisorial District(s):** All

**Title:**

FY 23/24 Joint Funding Agreement with U.S. Geological Survey

**Recommended Action:**

Approve and authorize the Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute a Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey for FY 23/24 to maintain stream gages in the Russian River, Sonoma Creek, and the Petaluma River watersheds, in the amount of \$663,240.

**Executive Summary:**

This agenda item is to request approval for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 funding, and for continued funding for the collection and monitoring of flow data used by the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and other local public and private entities/individuals for stream gages in the Russian River, Sonoma Creek, and the Petaluma River watersheds.

Water levels (flow and stage) are measured by multiple stream gages in Sonoma County. The data from these gages are transmitted to USGS computers within one hour of measurement. The data is quality assured and made available online by USGS to Sonoma Water and other local public and private entities/individuals. Sonoma Water uses the data collected for planning and forecasting for water supply, environmental, and flood management purposes. Other users of the data include emergency responders, water managers, environmental and transportation agencies, universities, utilities, recreational enthusiasts, and consulting firms.

**Discussion:**

The USGS Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program supports the collection and/or delivery of both streamflow and water-level information for more than 8,500 sites (continuous or partial record) and water-level information alone for more than 1,700 additional sites throughout the United States. Of the gages USGS manages for Sonoma Water; sixteen are along the Russian River; three in the Dry Creek watershed; three in the Sonoma Creek Watershed; and fourteen in the Santa Rosa Creek Watershed. Sonoma Water uses the data generated from the stream gages to assist with planning purposes. The data is served online in near real time, to meet many diverse needs. Water levels are measured by more than 10,000 gages; the data is typically transmitted to USGS computers within one hour of measurement. The data is quality assured and made available online to local public and private entities/individuals. Data users include emergency responders, water managers, environmental and transportation agencies, universities, utilities, recreational enthusiasts, and consulting firms.

Data collected from the stream gages funded by Sonoma Water are used for:

1. Planning, forecasting, and warning about floods and droughts;
2. Hydrologic and hydraulic modeling;
3. Monitoring environmental conditions to protect aquatic habitats;
4. Forecast Informed Reservation Operations (FIRO);
5. Assessing water quality and regulating pollutant discharges;
6. Determining if streams are safe for recreational activities; and
7. Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information System (AQPI) radars and National Water Model Water Quality Analysis

Data from these sites, along with Sonoma Water maintained sites act as an early warning monitoring system. In addition, the data is also increasingly critical to the California Nevada River Forecast Center's (CNRFC) river forecasts and to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through AQPI. Sonoma Water needs to maintain the flow in the Russian River in accordance with the requirements of its Water Rights Permits, as such, have worked with USGS, Since 1994, for management of stream gages. Additionally, Sonoma Water contracts with USGS to perform the flow monitoring and measurement of waters in the Russian River, Dry Creek, Santa Rosa Creek, and Sonoma Creek watersheds because of their expertise in this area.

**County of Sonoma Strategic Plan**

N/A

**Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment**

This item directly supports Sonoma Water's Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following goal, strategy and action item.

**Goal:** 3 Environmental Stewardship - Protect and sustain our watersheds to maintain water resources, ecosystems, and communities.

**Strategy:** 2.1 Conduct planning that integrates and balances operational, maintenance, and infrastructure priorities.

**Action Item:** 4.1.4 Improve coordination with water contractors, regulatory agencies, and government partners.

Through cooperation with USGS, the operations and maintenance of these stream gages will help provide information used to provide a reliable water supply and flood protection for future services and for a thriving community.

**Racial Equity:**

**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

11/08/2022 Approve and authorize the Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute a Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey for FY 22/23 to maintain stream gages in the Russian River, Sonoma Creek, and the Petaluma River watersheds, in the amount of \$649,060.

**Agenda Date:** 11/28/2023

11/16/2021: Approve and authorize the Sonoma County Water Agency’s General Manager to execute a Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey for FY 21/22 to maintain stream gages in the Russian River, Sonoma Creek, and the Petaluma River watersheds, in the amount of \$669,420.

11/17/2020: Approve and authorize the Sonoma County Water Agency’s General Manager to execute a Joint Funding Agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey for FY 20/21 to maintain stream gauges in the Russian River, Sonoma Creek, and the Petaluma River watersheds, in the amount of \$568,460; Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Sonoma County Water Agency General Manager to execute future Joint Funding Agreement and/or amendments with the Department of the Interior Geological Survey (USGS) for collecting and monitoring flow data for the gauging stations to maintain stream gauges in the Russian River, Sonoma Creek, and the Petaluma River watersheds pursuant to the standard Agreement with the Department of the Interior, in an amount not to exceed \$600,000.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY23-24 Adopted</b>	<b>FY24-25 Projected</b>	<b>FY25-26 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$663,240		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$663,240		
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$663,240		
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	\$663,240		

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Budgeted amount of \$663,240 is available from FY 2023/2024 appropriations for the Flood Control Zone 1A Fund (\$147,160), Flood Control Zone 3A Fund (\$59,060), Flood Control Zone 5A Fund (\$5,600), Warm Spring Dam Fund (\$71,350), and the Russian River Projects Fund (\$380,070). No additional appropriation is required.

**Staffing Impacts:**

<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

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**Agenda Date:** 11/28/2023

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**Attachments:**

Agreement

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

None