



**Sonoma  
Water**

August 17, 2022

The Honorable Shelly Averill  
Presiding Superior Court Judge,  
Superior Court of Sonoma County  
Hall of Justice  
600 Administration Drive  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**RE: Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) Response to Sonoma County Civil  
Grand Jury 2021-2022 Final Report**

Dear Honorable Judge Averill,

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) respectfully submits the attached Response to Grand Jury Report Forms regarding recommendations and findings in the 2021-2022 Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury Final Report. We appreciate the diligent work of the Grand Jury to understand and advise on issues critical to our local communities.

If you should need further clarification or have additional questions, please contact me at (707) 547-1911.

Sincerely,

Grant Davis  
General Manager

c: Neal Baker, Foreperson Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury

Sonoma Water Board of Directors / Board of Supervisors  
James Gore, Chair  
Susan Gorin  
David Rabbitt  
Chris Coursey  
Lynda Hopkins

Sheryl Bratton, Sonoma County Administrator  
Deva Marie Proto, Sonoma County Clerk

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## Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: What Happens When the Grand Jury Makes Recommendations?  
Report Date: June 14, 2022  
Response by: Grant Davis Title: General Manager  
Agency/Department Name: Sonoma Water

### FINDINGS: F3, F5


I (we) agree with the findings numbered: \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: **F3, F5. See attached.**

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons.)

### RECOMMENDATIONS: R1, R2

- Recommendations numbered: **R1 has been implemented. See attached.**  
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered: **R2 has been partially implemented, and will be further implemented in the future. See attached.**  
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered: \_\_\_\_\_ require(s) further analysis.  
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. ***This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.***)
- Recommendations numbered: \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 8-17-22 Signed: 

Number of pages attached: 3

(See attached Civil Grand Jury Response Requirements)

## Sonoma Water Response

### *What Happens When the Grand Jury Makes Recommendations?*

#### Required Response to Findings

*F3. The Recommendation that the City of Sonoma, the Valley of the Moon Water District and Sonoma Developmental Center implement plans to share existing water resources to reduce risks in emergencies was not implemented.*

Sonoma Water disagrees partially with this finding. This finding is specific to City of Sonoma, Valley of the Moon Water District and Sonoma Development Center (SDC). Sonoma Water does not have any jurisdiction or control over these entities. That said, Sonoma Water strongly supports regional water supply resource planning and has been spearheading such efforts for many years. As referenced in the Grand Jury's report, Sonoma Water along with its consultant, Jacobs, has been leading the development of a Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study. Sonoma Water is coordinating with its water contractors (including Valley of the Moon Water District and the City of Sonoma) to conduct the study. The study has resulted in the development of a decision support framework model that considers regional and local water supply sources and infrastructure of both Sonoma Water and its retail customers. This tool enables the simulation of emergency water supply shortages to assess impacts to service in addition to evaluating potential mitigation projects to reduce the risk and/or duration of such shortages. The study has completed an assessment of drought resiliency and has identified a suite of both near term and longer term potential opportunities to coordinate water supply operations and share water resources with and among the water contractors as a response to water shortage due to drought. A technical memo was prepared that describes the analysis and its recommendations. The study is currently evaluating the resiliency of Sonoma Water's water supply and transmission facilities to seismic events. The study is being informed by Sonoma Water's recently updated Natural Hazard Reliability Assessment prepared by Infra Terra on behalf of Sonoma Water.

Through the Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study and Sonoma Water's existing water supply agreements with the City of Sonoma, Valley of the Moon Water District, and the State of California for SDC, Sonoma Water will continue to work with these entities on coordinated and resilient regional water resources planning.

*F5. The future sources of water for the Sonoma Developmental Center property are undetermined at this time.*

Sonoma Water disagrees partially with this finding. The County of Sonoma (Permit Sonoma) is in the process of developing a Specific Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report for SDC. As part of this process, Valley of the Moon Water District has prepared a Water Supply

Assessment which was adopted on July 12, 2022. The Water Supply Assessment identifies on-site surface water resources for serving future development on the SDC property.

#### Required Response to Recommendations

*R1. By September 30, 2022, Permit Sonoma, Sonoma Water, the Valley of the Moon Water District, and the City of Sonoma Water Department meet to ensure that in any SDC Specific Plan, the water resources of the site are utilized for any future development with limited reliance on water from the Sonoma Aqueduct. (F5)*

Sonoma Water agrees with this recommendation and it is being implemented. Sonoma Water staff have been meeting with Permit Sonoma and Valley of the Moon Water District staff to discuss the Water Supply Assessment (which has now been adopted by the Valley of the Moon District Board of Directors). The Water Supply Assessment identifies sufficient water resources on-site to serve the level of future development being considered for the SDC Specific Plan area. Sonoma Water staff have provided input to Permit Sonoma on development of the Specific Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report.

The draft Specific Plan and draft environmental impact report (DEIR) were released by Permit Sonoma on August 10, 2022, and are available online at <https://www.sdcspecificplan.com/>. The draft Specific Plan includes the following goal and policies to ensure that onsite water resources are used for future development and to limit reliance on other water sources by requiring recycled water during construction:

*Goal 6-E. Water Supplies: Safeguard SDC's water supplies and water rights, ensuring adequate availability of water for residents, businesses, fire suppression needs, ecosystem services, and groundwater recharge.*

*Policy 6-26. Ensure the SDC site's water rights are retained for uses within the core campus and for habitat preservation, ecological services, groundwater recharge in the open space area, and to increase the reliability of the regional water supply.*

Discussions between the agencies will continue as needed as the County responds to comments on the DEIR and brings the draft Specific Plan forward for consideration. The agencies meet again on August 18, 2022. The Sonoma County Planning Commission and then Board of Supervisors are expected to hold hearings on the draft Specific Plan and EIR before the end of the calendar year.

*R2. By September 30, 2022, Permit Sonoma, Sonoma Water, the Valley of the Moon Water District, and the City of Sonoma Water Department meet to ensure that a SDC Specific Plan includes an outline for the sharing of water resources of the site during emergencies. (F3)*

The recommendation has been partially implemented, and will be further implemented in the future. The draft Specific Plan and draft environmental impact report (DEIR) were released on August 10, 2022 and are available online at <https://www.sdcspecificplan.com/>. The draft

Specific Plan includes the following goal and high-level policy to ensure that sharing of water resources in an emergency is addressed:

*Goal 6-E. Water Supplies: Safeguard SDC's water supplies and water rights, ensuring adequate availability of water for residents, businesses, fire suppression needs, ecosystem services, and groundwater recharge.*

*Policy 6-27. Maintain water supply and filtration at the site and ensure adequate flexibility and supply to serve regional needs in case of an emergency.*

Based on discussions with Permit Sonoma, Sonoma Water expects that a more detailed outline of emergency water sharing would occur after adoption of the SDC Specific Plan. All named parties are in the process of scheduling additional meetings to discuss regional water supply planning issues. The agencies meet again on August 18, 2022.

Sonoma Water strongly supports regional water supply resource planning and has been spearheading such efforts for many years. As referenced in the Grand Jury's report, Sonoma Water along with its consultant, Jacobs, has been leading the development of a Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study. Sonoma Water is coordinating with its water contractors (including Valley of the Moon Water District and the City of Sonoma) to conduct the study. The study has resulted in the development of a decision support framework model that considers regional and local water supply sources and infrastructure of both Sonoma Water and its retail customers. This tool enables the simulation of emergency water supply shortages to assess impacts to service in addition to evaluating potential mitigation projects to reduce the risk and/or duration of such shortages. The study has completed an assessment of drought resiliency and has identified a suite of both near term and longer term potential opportunities to coordinate water supply operations and share water resources with and among the water contractors as a response to water shortage due to drought. A technical memo was prepared that describes the analysis and its recommendations. The study is currently evaluating the resiliency of Sonoma Water's water supply and transmission facilities to seismic events. The study is being informed by Sonoma Water's recently updated Natural Hazard Reliability Assessment prepared by Infra Terra on behalf of Sonoma Water.

Through the Regional Water Supply Resiliency Study and Sonoma Water's existing water supply agreements with the City of Sonoma, Valley of the Moon Water District, and the State of California for SDC, Sonoma Water will continue to work with these entities on coordinated and resilient regional water resources planning. In addition, as mentioned above, Sonoma Water staff have been meeting with and providing input to Permit Sonoma and Valley of the Moon Water District staff on development of the SDC Specific Plan and its associated Environmental Impact Report. These discussions will continue.