



CITY OF PETALUMA

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Kevin McDonnell
Mayor

November 20, 2023

Brian Barnacle
Janice Cader-Thompson,
Dist. 1
Mike Healy
Karen Nau, Dist. 3
Dennis Pocekay
John Shribbs, Dist. 2
Councilmembers

DESIGNATION/TITLE (e.g., The Honorable) FIRST & LAST NAME

Address

City, State Zip

Subject: City of Petaluma's Support for New Eel-Russian Facility

Dear **DESIGNATION/TITLE LAST NAME:**

City Manager's Office
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

Phone (707) 778-4345

E-Mail:
citymgr@cityofpetaluma.org

On behalf of the City of Petaluma City Council, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposal submitted to Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) by the Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission, Round Valley Indian Tribes, and the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water). This important proposal advances a regional solution for preserving flows and fisheries in the Russian River and improving Eel River fisheries.

The majority of the City of Petaluma's water supply is provided by Sonoma Water, which utilizes the Russian River System to produce and deliver safe, reliable, consistent potable water for its residents. The Potter Valley Project is instrumental in maintaining and supplementing flows into Lake Mendocino and the upper Russian River; without it, the water supply in the Russian River System will be reduced.

Economic Development
Phone (707) 778-4549
Fax (707) 778-4586

Housing Division
Phone (707) 778-4555

**Information Technology
Division**
Phone (707) 778-4417
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As you may know, PG&E plans to decommission its Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project and end water diversions from the Eel River into the Russian River. This proposal seeks to maintain these diversions while not delaying PG&E's plans to remove Scott and Cape Horn Dams. The proposed New Eel-Russian Facility would allow water to be transferred to the Russian River when flows are high enough in the Eel River while providing for effective and timely fish migration past the new diversion facilities. These diversions are critical to the Russian River watershed's health, the ongoing water supply for numerous communities in Sonoma, Mendocino, and Marin counties, and Russian River fisheries.

Russian River water users have made significant strides in reducing water use, improving water use efficiency, and developing alternative supplies (for example, Sonoma Water and its retail water customers take nearly 40 percent less water from the Russian River than they did 20 years ago,



despite a growing population). However, halting the diversions, even temporarily, would directly threaten the drinking water supply for more than 97,000 people living in Russian River communities and make the drinking water supply for 600,000 additional people less reliable.

We believe that this project will support maintaining potable water for the region's residents, protecting healthy flows within the Russian River System, and sustaining fisheries and wildlife habitat in the watershed. If the Eel-Russian Facility Project is not created, the water supply in the Russian River System may be impacted, and the reliability of our community's water supply may be adversely affected. Additionally, the lack of diverted water could potentially cause tens of millions of dollars of economic damage annually, require drastic conservation measures and increased water rates, curtail needed new housing, and expand the region's vulnerability to droughts, wildfires, and climate change.

In conclusion, we hope that we can count on your support for this proposal from this moment forward, throughout the regulatory process, and up to project completion. We genuinely thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Kevin McDonnell
Mayor

cc: City Council