



September 25, 1998

Dear Interim Council Member,

Thank you for your perseverance and commitment to the Russian River Watershed Community Council process. Like some Interim Council members, we had hoped to finalize a council structure at our September 12th meeting. Although we didn't achieve this objective, we did make progress in identifying a shared definition of success and in committing to form the Council at our October 3rd meeting in Cloverdale.

We also feel that it was important to discuss the Interim Council's watershed concerns. By identifying issues early in the process, there is more time to review the potential integration of specific watershed issues into a Project Study Plan (PSP) and to ensure that it reflects Council priorities. If approved, the PSP could make funding available from the US Army Corps of Engineers and the California Resources Agency to support Council operations such as facilitation, public outreach and education, studies, and planning activities to improve the River's health.

In order to ensure that we succeed in forming the Russian River Watershed Community Council at the next meeting, our first task will be to select the 64 Interim Council members who will deliberate during the meeting. We will ask each interest area group (environmental, economic, agency, and public) to quickly caucus at the start of the meeting to select 16 people. By doing this, we'll have a reasonably balanced voting body to decide on final council structure and other agenda items. We also propose using a 67% voting rule, so that any imbalance between the number of representatives from Mendocino and Sonoma will not influence decisionmaking.

As preparation for the meeting, we also ask your help by reviewing the enclosed materials which the facilitators and Resources Agency coordinator drafted in response to your requests on September 12:

- Agenda for next meeting,
- A summary of issues identified on September 12,
- Generic models for council structure and process, and
- A list of milestones for decisions, actions or programs in the Russian River.

We have also enclosed a specific model for the final council that we, as county supervisors, would like you to consider for the next meeting.

The Corps will provide, also as requested, a draft Russian River Watershed Study Project Study Plan (PSP) for your review on the Internet by September 28 at their web site at www.spn.usace.army.mil (see Russian River Ecosystem Restoration). Since you asked that the Corps prepare this before you had a chance to prioritize Council objectives, the current draft contains all the issues you identified at the last meeting. At the next meeting, you will have an opportunity to identify which of those issues are suitable for funding through the PSP.

The next Russian River Watershed Community Council meeting will be held on Saturday, October 3 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Veteran's Memorial Hall, 205 West First Street in Cloverdale. We appreciate the time and energy that you are putting into this effort, and hope that you can attend. Please contact Cathy Bleier with the Department of Conservation at 916-322-9721 if you have any questions, or Karen Rippey at the Corps of Engineers at 415-977-8537. We look forward to seeing you and launching the Council at the next meeting.

Sincerely,



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