



AGENCY: City Council  
MEETING DATE: May 10, 2021  
DEPARTMENT: City Manager/Public Works  
PRESENTED BY: T. Miller/J. Smith  
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## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

### **TITLE:**

**Receive Report and Consider Adoption of City Council Resolution Recommending and Encouraging Voluntary Implementation of Stage 1 Water Conservation Measures in Fort Bragg**

### **ISSUE:**

The City of Fort Bragg Municipal Code Chapter 14.06, Water Conservation, sets forth the parameters for the City to declare a water emergency and implement mandatory water conservation consistent with the Stage or level of the emergency. However, staff has determined that the parameters as set forth in the Code occur too late in a water shortage for water conservation to be truly effective in managing a water emergency. Action is necessary before the City crosses those thresholds and not after.

The City has not met any of the thresholds to declare a water emergency and implement water conservation measures but staff feels it prudent to ask our water customers to target a Stage 1 conservation goal to reduce normal water usage by 10% for this time of year.

### **ANALYSIS:**

Fort Bragg Municipal Code Chapter 14.06, Water Conservation, section 14.06.020 was most recently updated on January 25, 2016 and sets forth the three independent triggers that measure the City's ability to replenish water storage. The City has not currently met any one of those requirements.

However, Governor Newsom [declared a state of emergency](#) for Mendocino and Sonoma County due to drought conditions on April 21, 2021. That followed the declaration by USDA on March 5, 2021, that 50 counties in California were designated as primary natural disaster areas due to recent drought, including Mendocino County. Current flows in the Noyo River are now trending lower than any drought year on record, including 1977 (see Attachment 2). City staff is already preparing for drought conditions this summer by working with CalOES to procure additional water resources, including portable desalinization equipment.

The City of Fort Bragg's water supply system relies solely on three surface water sources: Waterfall Gulch (tributary to Hare Creek), Newman Gulch (tributary to Noyo River), and the Noyo River (diversion is at Madsen Hole). In 2015, the City's water supply system could only store small amounts of water that provided enough to maintain proper water system pressure and to provide a safety margin for fire-fighting flows. Five years later, the City has made great progress with water storage by including an additional 1.5 million gallon finished water storage tank and the Summers Lane Reservoir with a raw water capacity of 14.7 million gallons. This brings our total water storage capacity to 22.6 million gallons.

During the winter and spring, pumping of the Noyo River is used only to supplement the Waterfall Gulch and Newman Gulch sources. The two tributary sources generally provide a higher quality of raw water and they gravity-feed to the water treatment plant, whereas water from the City's Noyo River diversion must be pumped. As summer progresses and the flows in the tributary streams diminish, the Noyo River diversion is used more frequently and in greater quantities.

By making small reductions in our water usage today, we may avoid a higher level Water Emergency later. Under the current Municipal Code, the City cannot mandate a Stage 1 level of water conservation without meeting one of the three thresholds in section 14.06.020 or after conducting a public hearing with proper notice and making appropriate findings of necessity (California Water Code 375).

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Adopt Resolution recommending and encouraging voluntary implementation of Stage 1 water conservation measures which target a 10% decrease in water usage from the same time in the base year.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):**

1. Do not adopt the Resolution.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Reduced water usage will impact Water Fund revenues during the time frame customers practice water conservation, however, the water fund's reserves and fund balance can absorb the loss. A small reduction now may mitigate the necessity of more significant mandatory water conservation measures in the future that would have a greater impact on revenue.

**GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACT:**

Reduced water usage will have an incremental reduction in pumping and water treatment, which will result in a small decrease in the use of electricity and resulting greenhouse gas emissions.

**CONSISTENCY:**

N/A

**IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:**

The request for voluntary compliance with Stage 1 water conservation measures would be immediate and if implemented water usage could be reduced immediately.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. Noyo River Flows Graph

**NOTIFICATION:**

N/A.