



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Planning, Building and Environmental Services

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David Morrison
Director

MEMORANDUM

To:	WICC Members	From:	David Morrison, Director Planning, Building, and Environmental Services
Date:	October 28, 2021	Re:	Water Conservation and Drought Task Force

QUESTION

Should the role and the membership of the WICC be revised to allow it to also serve as a countywide Water Conservation and Drought Task Force?

BACKGROUND

SB 552 (Hertzberg) was signed by the Governor last month. Please see attached.

The bill requires every County to establish a new Drought and Water Shortage Task Force by January 1, 2022, in order to be compliant with the legislation. The legislation requires that the Task Force be a standing committee. Each County is to invite representatives from the state and other local governments, including groundwater sustainability agencies, community-based organizations, local water suppliers, and local residents, to participate in the Task Force.

The purpose of the Task Force would be to create a new Drought and Water Shortage Plan. The Plan would look at potential drought risks and propose interim and long-term solutions for water shortages that affect both State designated small water systems (we have 7 in the County) and individual owner domestic wells. The Plan may be stand-alone, or can be a component in the Hazard Mitigation Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, Climate Action Plan, or General Plan.

At a minimum, the plan must address:

- Consolidations for existing water systems and domestic wells;
- Domestic well drinking water mitigation programs;
- Provision of emergency and interim drinking water solutions;

- Analysis of steps needed to implement the plan; and
- Analysis of local, state, and federal funding sources available to implement the plan.

ANALYSIS

During discussion of the update to the Strategic Plan at the July 22, 2021, meeting, some members talked about having the WICC play a stronger role in making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, while others indicated interest in taking on more of an analytical role. Other members spoke of the need to take a broader view of the watershed, to include more than surface flows.

Staff would be interested in a discussion by WICC members about their interest in revising the WICC to also serve as a countywide Water Conservation and Drought Task Force. There would be several advantages to the County for expanding the role of the WICC:

- As an existing standing committee, the County would be able to come into compliance with the new legislation within the very short time frame established by the legislation.
- The WICC already has representatives from local governments (cities, RCD, Parks and Open Space District), the federal government (NRCS), the GSA (County), at least one community based organization (Land Trust), and local residents (at-large members). The membership may need to be altered to include local water suppliers, State agencies, and other community based organizations.
- The WICC currently has a countywide perspective, is inter-disciplinary, and has extensive knowledge regarding water-related issues and information related to Napa County.
- Recruiting new volunteers to serve on public committees is increasingly challenging, and the WICC is ready made to step into this needed role.
- Since the WICC is already engaged in developing its new strategic plan for the next 3-5 years, this seems like an opportune time to integrate the need for water conservation and drought planning into the discussion.