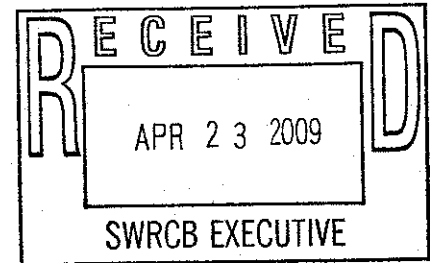


From: Carol Lloyd <carol@creatinglifeworthliving.com>
To: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov
Date: Thu, Apr 23, 2009 6:21 PM
Subject: russian river nightmare

April 23, 2007

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Clerk to the Board
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RE: Comments for May 6th Workshop on Order WR 2009-0027-DWR

Dear Chairman Hoppin and Members of the Board,

I am writing to express my concern regarding impacts related to Order 2009-0027- DWR and modifications in permit terms that would reduce those impacts. The reduction in flows will cause severe impacts to water quality, recreation, community water systems, over-summering juvenile salmon and Steelhead as well as the lower River economy that depends on a healthy Russian River.

My husband and I decided to buy a house on the Russian River after a short vacation in 2004 when we were amazed to find a swimmable, beautiful river only 90 minutes from San Francisco. What a perfect place to bring our two young daughters! The following year we bought a ramshackle house in Summerhome Park -- at the height of the real estate market, knowing then that the ONLY way we could afford the place would be to turn it into a vacation rental. Since then we have spent over a hundred thousand dollars on repairs, furniture, and landscaping -- literally putting our whole savings into transforming a neglected cabin into our beautiful little house.

Now with the river flows being reduced I'm afraid it will mean the end of our dream and a substantial blow to our finances. If the river is reduced, it will go dry and our renters will cancel. If we cannot rent our home THIS summer we will be forced to sell it and with the river flows reduced I expect *nobody* will want to buy it. Summerhome Park is a 100-year-old neighborhood built around families boating and swimming in the river during the summer months and if the river flows are reduced, it will lose its central attraction. Reducing water flow may seem like a mild cautionary move to conserve resources. However, I believe it will trigger a dangerous domino effect for the economy of Sonoma County. Since we bought our home, prices in the neighborhood have already dropped some 40% because of the economy. I

wouldn't be surprised if values dropped an additional 50% or 60% in Russian River towns simply because of a dry river.

In order to reduce the impacts from reduced flows under Order 2009-0027-DWR we urge you on May 6 to take action to protect water quality and beneficial uses in the Russian River. Specifically we urge you to:

- Increase frequency of chemical water quality monitoring to every two weeks with results posted promptly on a public website to proactively prevent water quality problems such as algae blooms from increased nutrient concentrations
- Include new provisions in the order to require flow changes in response to violations in water quality standards or as needed to protect juvenile ESA listed fish over the summer, the water agency released water to protect grapes from frost on April 14 to 16th so we expect increases to protect water quality as well
- Installation of additional gauges as needed to ensure instantaneous flow compliance levels are maintained, in 2004 and 2007 compliance levels were violated under previous orders
- A minimum of 25% mandatory conservation for SCWA customers and all users downstream of Dry Creek to help maintain flows and conserve water in case of multi-year drought.
- Mandatory conservation by all permitted water diversions upstream of Dry Creek including agricultural and rural residential diversions and streamside wells pumping underflow
- Additional prohibitions in the Order on diversions that are not permitted in critically dry conditions or if needed a separate order restraining those unpermitted diversions to protect water storage in Lake Mendocino and maintain higher flows
- Keep order prohibition on commercial turf irrigation in SCWA service area and expand to include all commercial turf using water from the Russian River

We believe that modifying the order to include these provisions will improve protection of water quality, juvenile endangered fish and likely result in somewhat higher flows due to reduced diversions. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our comments.

As a real estate columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle for the past nine years, I understand the complex effect water plans can have on a housing prices. As a diehard environmentalist, I share the goal of protecting the river species. However, I do not understand why wineries and other agri-business are being allowed to dry up a beautiful, natural river as a result of their unchecked water use.

Yours,

Carol Lloyd

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