



# Media Release

## **Most Property Owners and Water Suppliers Comply With Russian River Informational Order; Complaints Issued for the Rest**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SACRAMENTO** -- Approximately 80 percent of more than 10,000 property owners and water suppliers in four Russian River tributary watersheds have complied with a State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Informational Order issued this past fall to protect Central Coast coho salmon and steelhead.

The State Water Board issued 1,881 Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) complaints in the past week to the remaining 20 percent of property owners and water suppliers in the four tributary watersheds who failed to comply with the Order.

The complaints were issued to property owners in the Dutch Bill, Green Valley, Mark West and Mill Creek watersheds, who were required to submit information on their sources and uses of water. The information was due in late August and September, and a reminder letter was sent in late October.

The ACL complaints carry a potential fine of up to \$500 per day of violation, which could total up to \$24,000 to \$31,000, depending on the watershed. But if the property owners and water suppliers submit the required information within 20 days of receiving the ACL complaint, no fine will be issued. Property owners also have the option of requesting a hearing before the State Water Board within 20 days of receiving the complaint, which could result in a reduced or increased fine.

“The point of these ACL complaints is not to levy fines or generate revenue,” said Barbara Evoy, Deputy Director of the State Water Board’s Division of Water Rights. “There is a true need for this water use information in order to protect these important fish species.”

Individuals who receive an ACL Complaint should read each document carefully and respond within 20 days of receipt of the ACL Complaint.

### **Background**

On June 17, 2015, the State Water Board adopted an emergency regulation to protect federal- and state-listed anadromous fish in the four Russian River tributary watersheds. The emergency regulation requires: (1) enhanced water conservation in critical areas of the four watersheds; and (2) information on water use if requested by the State Water Board.

The enhanced conservation is intended to maintain the small amount of water necessary to support the minimum temperature and oxygen conditions needed for summer rearing and migration of coho salmon

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



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and steelhead in the four watersheds. The information on water use, which was requested by the State Water Board, will be used to inform future actions that may be needed if the enhanced conservation measures are not sufficient.

The State Water Board has been working with the community, along with State and federal agencies this summer and fall to monitor conditions in the four creeks.

For more information on the Russian River Tributary Informational Order, visit [here](#).

For more information on the Russian River Tributaries Emergency Regulation, visit [here](#).

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