

MENDOCINO COUNTY DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN

20 MAY 2025
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

AGENDA

1. Summary of Senate Bill (SB) 552
2. DRP Overview
3. Summary of Outreach Efforts
4. Public Review Period and Comments Received
5. Resolution to Adopt DRP and Next Steps



<https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=17090>



SB-552 AND DRP DEVELOPMENT

SB 552 COUNTY REQUIREMENTS (CA WATER CODE § 10609.70):

1

Establish a Standing County Drought Task Force

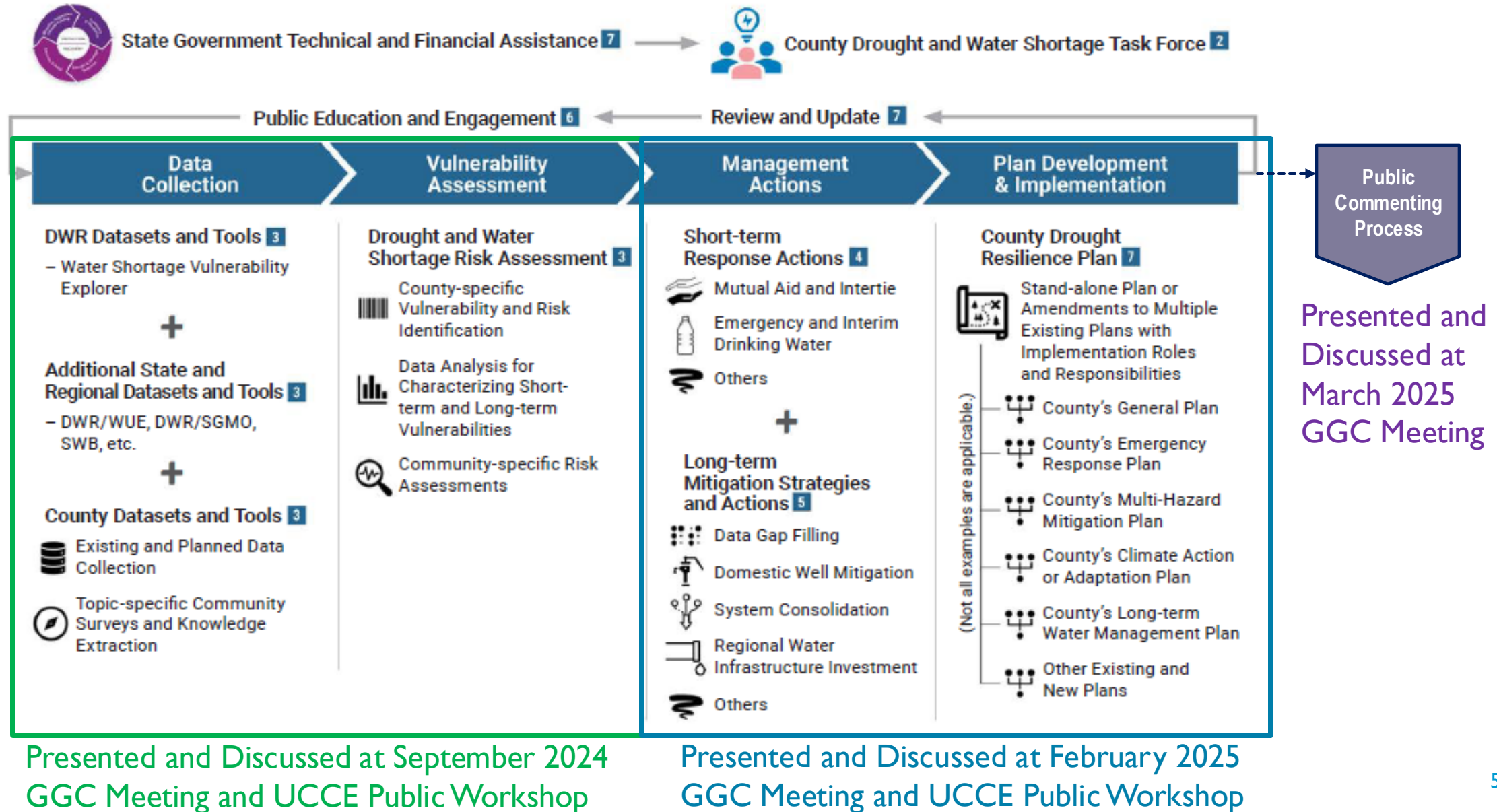
- To facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells
- Invite representatives from the state and other local governments (GSAs, Water Suppliers, Residents) to participate in the task force

2

Develop a Drought Resilience Plan

- Develop a plan that includes potential drought and water shortage risk and proposed interim and long-term solutions for state small water systems and domestic wells.

DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN DEVELOPMENT



DRP DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

	2024							2025					
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
DRP Chapter				Risk Assessment					Short- & Long-term Strategies	Implementation Roadmap	Public Review		Final DRP
CDTF Meeting													
Community Meeting													 We Are Here

GGC Meeting

UCCE Workshop

BoS Meeting

- Future CDTF meetings will be held semi-annually during non-drought times as outlined in the DRP. Dates of these future meetings are TBD.



DRP OVERVIEW

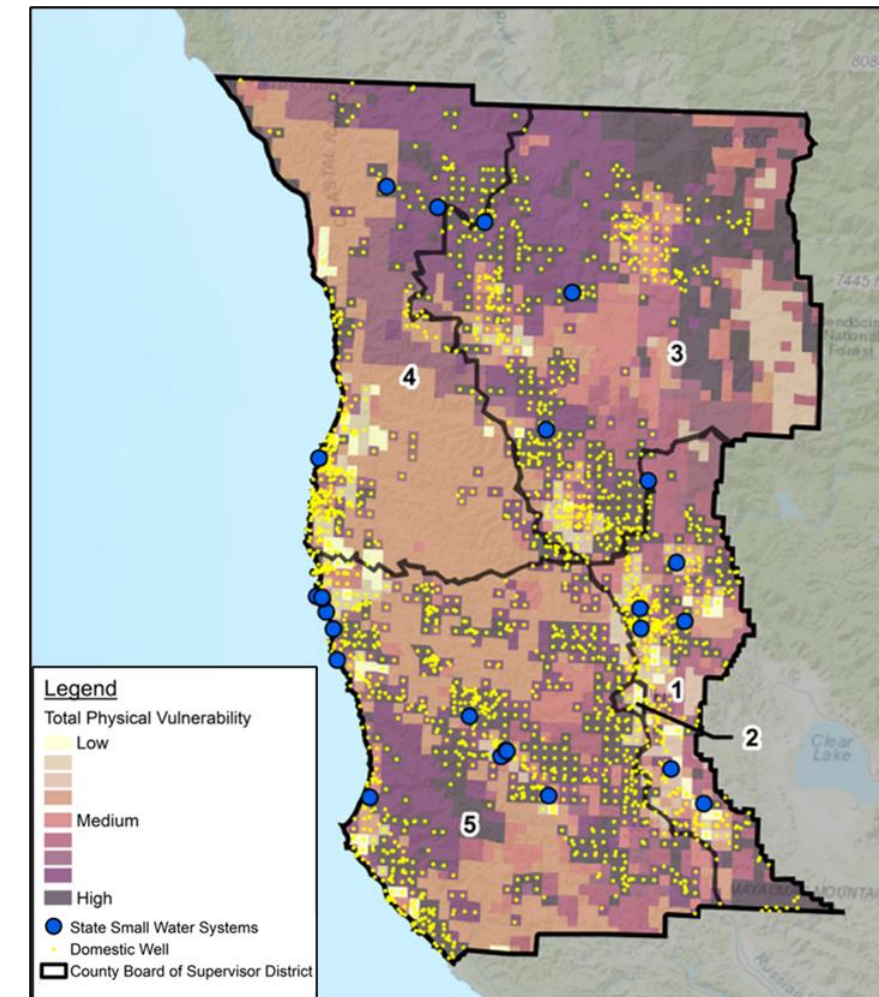
RISK ASSESSMENT RESULTS – PHYSICAL VULNERABILITY

Domestic Wells

- All areas mapped should be considered, however highest risk areas (dark brown) include:
 - City of Fort Bragg
 - Census Designated Places: Calpella, Talmage, Brooktrails, Covelo, Boonville, Philo, Manchester, Laytonville, Redwood Valley, Potter Valley
 - Unincorporated Communities: Mendocino (town), Pine Grove, Caspar, Whitesboro, Navarro, Fish Rock, The Oaks, Yorkville
 - Tribes: Redwood Valley Rancheria, Pinoleville Rancheria, Coyote Valley Reservation, Yokayo Tribe of Indians
 - Other Areas:
 - South and East of Willits, including the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians
 - Southeast of Point Arena

State Small Water Systems*

- 25 out of 27 (93%) state small water systems* show high physical and/or social vulnerability to drought.



*A State Small Water System provides piped water to the public for human consumption for at least five, but not more than 14, service connections, and does not regularly serve drinking water to more than an average of 25 individuals daily for more than 60 days out of the year.



COUNTY'S OBJECTIVE AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DRP

Objective:

Facilitate increased and structured drought preparedness for domestic wells and State Small Water Systems under its Jurisdiction

Role of the County:

- Not a water supplier with no annual budget to undertake water supply reliability/resiliency projects.
- Will rely on coordination and collaboration with local entities for meaningful improvements in water resiliency.

Inform, Educate,
Outreach, and Engage

Track and Monitor Conditions, Implement Appropriate Ordinances
and Declarations

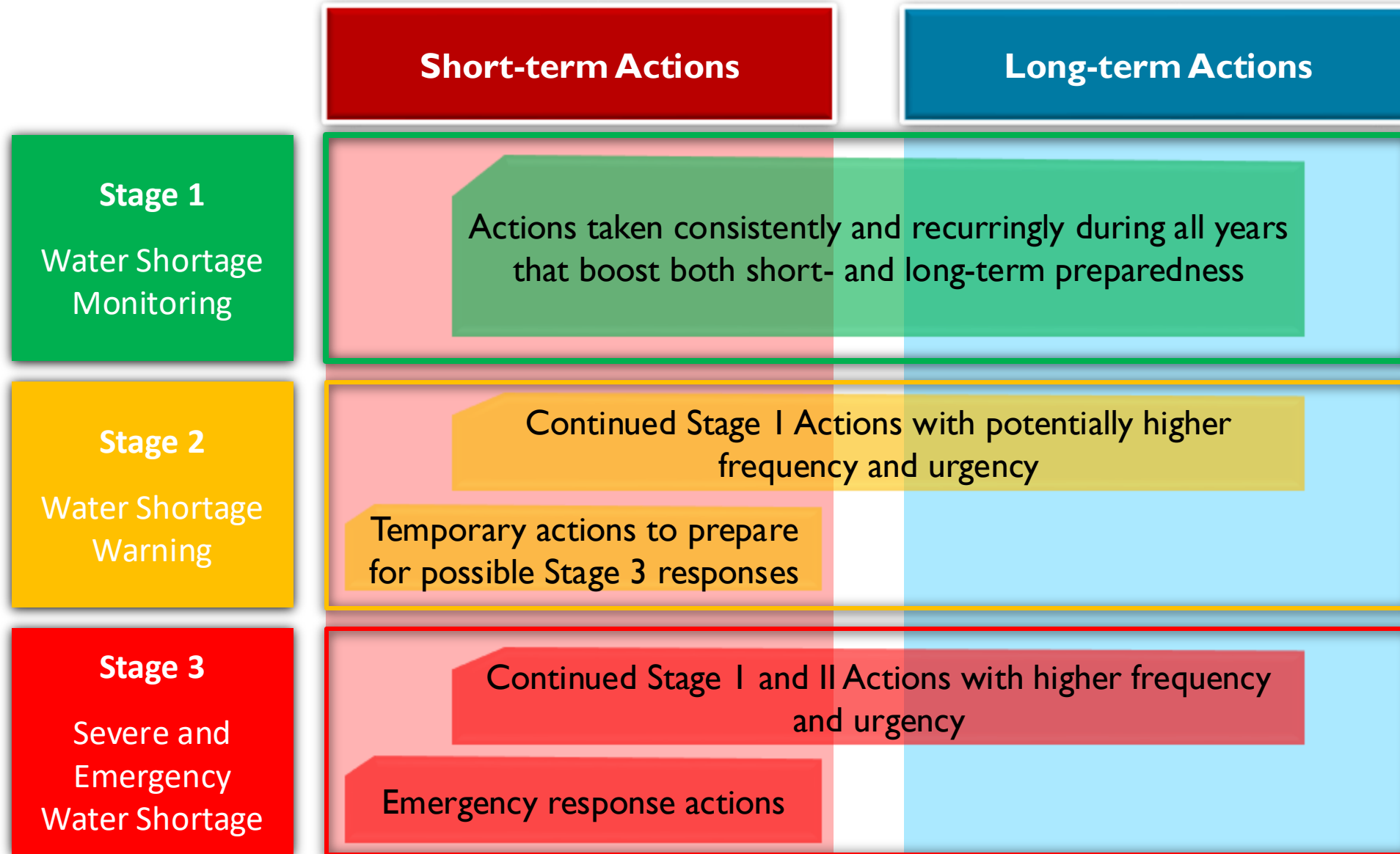
Facilitate and Provide Venue for Coordination,
Information Sharing, Communication, Collaboration,
and Partnerships

Pursue
Funding

Facilitate and Lead
Emergency Actions

County Responsibilities

RESPONSE ACTION FRAMEWORK



DEFINING DROUGHT STAGE TRIGGERS

- Defined drought triggers according to regional and County-wide conditions that are consistent with past declarations and by adding dry wells as an additional metric.
- County-wide: Using U.S. Drought Monitor weekly designations (D0-D4)
- Regional:
 - Inland: Comparing Lake Mendocino reported storage to its target storage curve
 - Coastal: Comparing total rainfall for Big-Navarro-Garcia Watershed to its long-term average



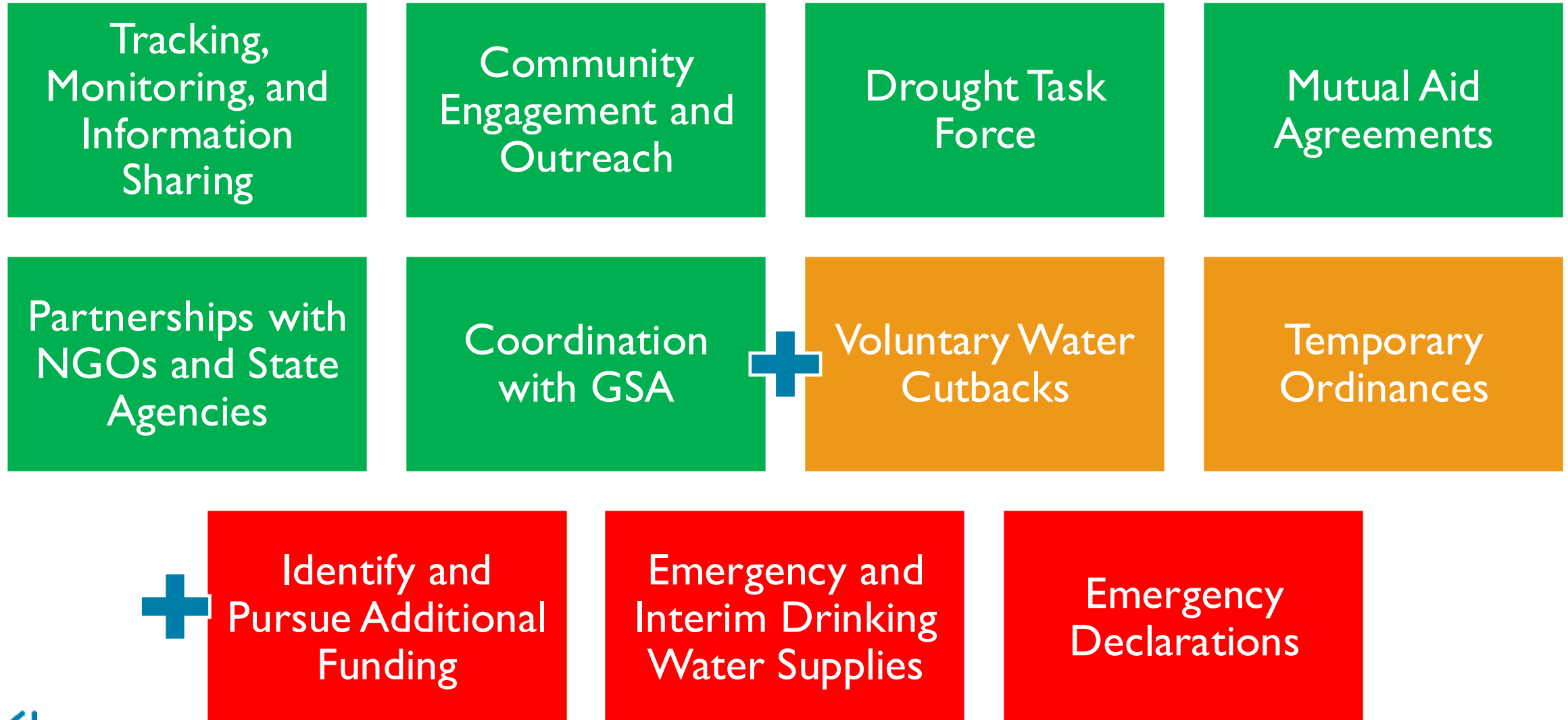


DEFINING DROUGHT STAGE TRIGGERS

Drought Stage	COASTAL REGION		INLAND REGION		COUNTY
	Dry Well Reports	Current Year Hydrology	Dry Well Reports	Current Year Hydrology	U.S. Drought Monitor
1 – Water Shortage Monitoring	Less than 4 reports over any three-month period	Two-year precipitation total is greater than 80% of average	Less than 4 reports over any three-month period	Lake Mendocino total storage is greater than 70% of total target water supply curve	None; OR D0 Abnormally Dry
2 – Water Shortage Warning	4 – 12 reports over any three-month period	Two-year precipitation total is 50 – 80% of average	4 – 6 reports over any three-month period	Lake Mendocino total storage is 45 - 70% of total target water supply curve	D1 Moderate Drought; OR D2 Drought-Severe for less than 8 consecutive weeks
3 – Severe and Emergency Water Shortage	More than 12 reports over any three-month period	Two-year precipitation total is less than 50% average	More than 6 reports over any three-month period	Lake Mendocino total storage is less than 45% of total target water supply curve	D2 Drought-Severe for 8 or more consecutive weeks; OR D3 Drought-Extreme; OR D4 Drought-Exceptional

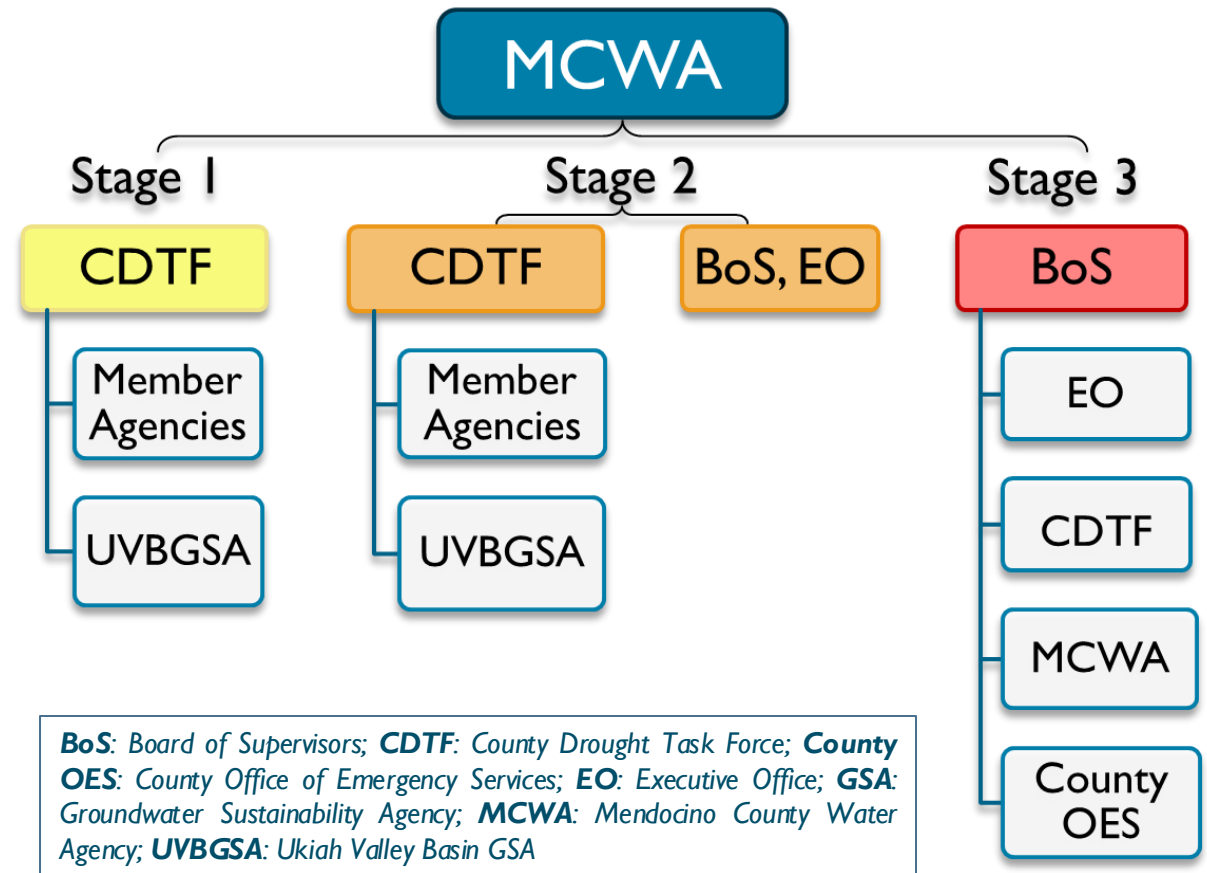


DROUGHT STAGES AND RESPONSE ACTIONS



IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

- The DRP will be implemented through a **collective effort** among MCWA, County departments, and local agencies, including CDTF members.
- The DRP is a **standalone document** that will be implemented in conjunction with other state, County, and local planning documents.
- The lead agency/agencies responsible for implementing actions are dependent on the drought stage and specific response action.
- **Adaptive Management**
 - County will assess and update the DRP as needed.
 - Updates to the DRP and implementation of actions are contingent upon funding and resource availability.

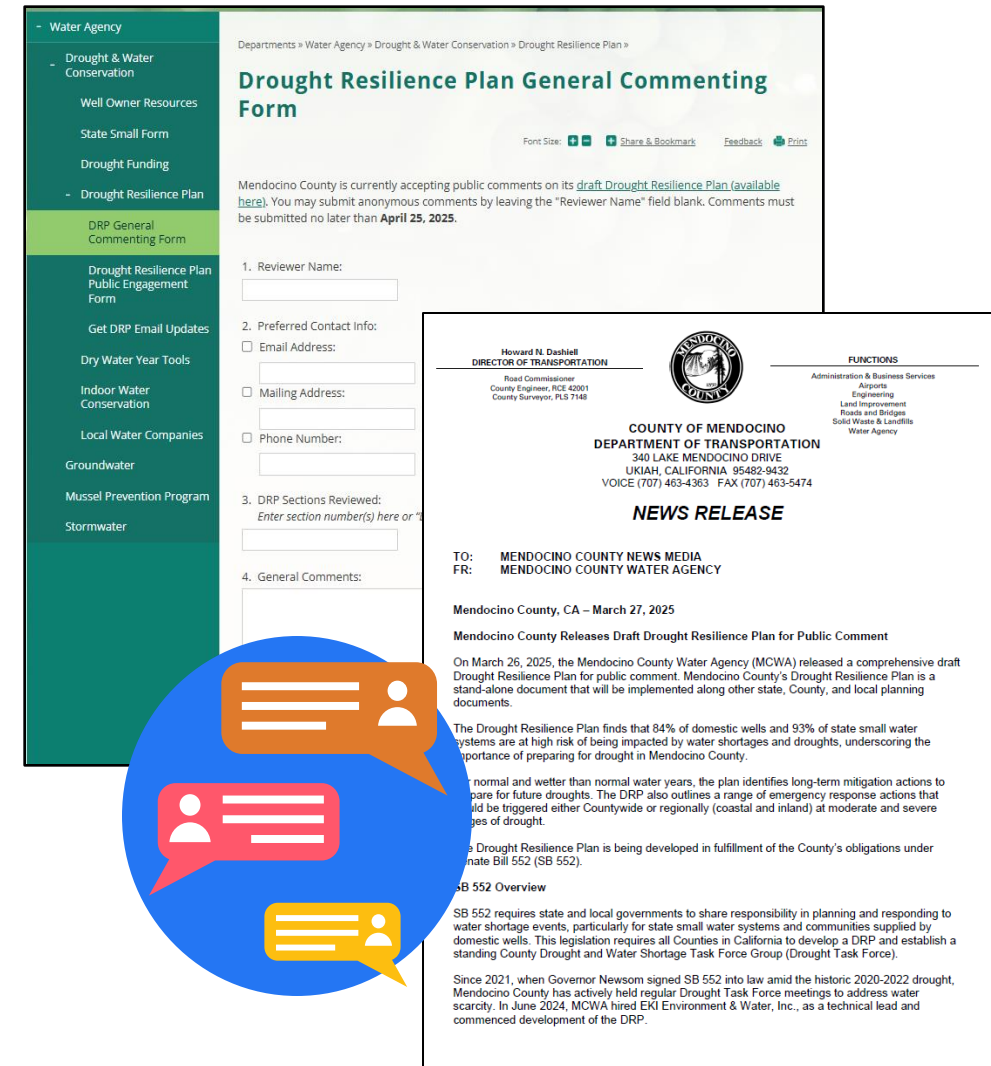




SUMMARY OF PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

- The County held a public commenting period from March 26, 2025 – April 25, 2025.
- During this period, members of the public had the opportunity to submit comments on the Draft DRP document both online and in person.
- This process allowed the County to:
 - **Gather broad feedback** from across the County
 - **Encourage collaboration**
 - **Ensure transparency** in the DRP development process



The image displays two documents related to the Drought Resilience Plan (DRP) public review period. On the left is the 'Drought Resilience Plan General Commenting Form' from Mendocino County. The form includes a sidebar with navigation links such as 'Water Agency', 'Drought & Water Conservation', 'Well Owner Resources', 'State Small Form', 'Drought Funding', 'Drought Resilience Plan', 'DRP General Commenting Form', 'Drought Resilience Plan Public Engagement Form', 'Get DRP Email Updates', 'Dry Water Year Tools', 'Indoor Water Conservation', 'Local Water Companies', 'Groundwater', 'Mussel Prevention Program', and 'Stormwater'. The main content area contains the title 'Drought Resilience Plan General Commenting Form', a 'Font Size' selector, 'Share & Bookmark', 'Feedback', and 'Print' links. Below these are instructions: 'Mendocino County is currently accepting public comments on its [draft Drought Resilience Plan \(available here\)](#). You may submit anonymous comments by leaving the "Reviewer Name" field blank. Comments must be submitted no later than **April 25, 2025**.' The form has four sections: 1. Reviewer Name (text input), 2. Preferred Contact Info (checkboxes for Email Address, Mailing Address, and Phone Number), 3. DRP Sections Reviewed (text input for 'Enter section number(s) here or "all"'), and 4. General Comments (text area). On the right is a 'NEWS RELEASE' from the County of Mendocino, Department of Transportation. It is dated March 27, 2025, and is addressed to 'MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS MEDIA' and 'MENDOCINO COUNTY WATER AGENCY'. The release states: 'Mendocino County Releases Draft Drought Resilience Plan for Public Comment'. It mentions that on March 26, 2025, the Mendocino County Water Agency (MCWA) released a comprehensive draft Drought Resilience Plan for public comment. It also notes that the plan finds that 84% of domestic wells and 93% of state small water systems are at high risk of being impacted by water shortages and droughts, underscoring the importance of preparing for drought in Mendocino County. The release concludes by stating that the Drought Resilience Plan is being developed in fulfillment of the County's obligations under State Bill 552 (SB 552). A link to 'SB 552 Overview' is provided. The release further explains that SB 552 requires state and local governments to share responsibility in planning and responding to water shortage events, particularly for state small water systems and communities supplied by domestic wells. It mentions that this legislation requires all Counties in California to develop a DRP and establish a standing County Drought and Water Shortage Task Force Group (Drought Task Force). Finally, it notes that since 2021, when Governor Newsom signed SB 552 into law amid the historic 2020-2022 drought, Mendocino County has actively held regular Drought Task Force meetings to address water scarcity. In June 2024, MCWA hired EKI Environment & Water, Inc., as a technical lead and commenced development of the DRP.

OVERVIEW OF COMMENTS RECEIVED



Three public comments were submitted on the Draft DRP.
Full comments are available in Appendix D to the Final DRP.

Key Concerns Raised

⚠️ *Decommissioning of Potter Valley Project*

- Urged suppliers to explore more water storage options, upgrade interties, and identify aquifer recharge projects ahead of droughts

⚠️ *Human Right to Water Allocations*

- Concern that current allocations under CA law are too high; suggested future DRP updates related to water conservation

⚠️ *Groundwater Use for Cannabis Cultivation*

- Recommended strict monitoring and metering focused on groundwater use from cannabis farms

Response to Comments

- Since the County is not a water supplier, it does not have jurisdiction over water storage projects or intertie requirements between systems. However, it can facilitate and support coordination efforts between systems, as outlined in the DRP.
- DRP is a living document and will be updated as needed based on new data, regulations, and to respond to changing drought patterns.
- Regulation of groundwater use is outside the scope of SB-552 and DRP and should be handled by groundwater sustainability agencies and/or under different ordinances and authorities.



SUMMARY OF OUTREACH EFFORTS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- While CWC §10609.70 does not set specific guidelines for public engagement, DWR encourages outreach to support DRP development public process.
- DRP Development Public Process:
 - **UCCE Public Workshops**
 - Held in September 2024 and February 2025
 - **CDTF Meetings**
 - Held in September 2024, February and March 2025
 - **County BoS Meeting**; May 2025



DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN WEBPAGE

- Background, information, and news related to SB 552 and the DRP Development Process
- Additional Materials:
 - **Final DRP Document**
 - DRP Public Engagement Form
 - DRP Email Update Sign-up
 - DRP Factsheets (in English and Spanish)
 - Slides from previous CDTF meetings and public workshops
 - List of State and federal funding opportunities for drought-related projects



The screenshot shows the Mendocino County website's Drought Resilience Plan page. On the left is a teal sidebar with a navigation menu: 'Water Agency' (expanded), 'Drought & Water Conservation' (expanded), 'Drought Funding', 'Drought Resilience Plan' (expanded), 'Drought Resilience Plan Public Engagement Form', 'Get DRP Email Updates', 'Groundwater', 'Mussel Prevention Program', and 'Stormwater'. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail 'Departments » Water Agency » Drought & Water Conservation »' and the title 'Drought Resilience Plan'. It includes links for 'Font Size', 'Share & Bookmark', 'Feedback', and 'Print'. The 'About SB 552' section explains that in September 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill (SB) 552, requiring state and local governments to share responsibility in planning and responding to water shortage events. The 'County Compliance' section states that the County and its Water Agency (MCWA) have been effectively complying with SB 552 since 2021. The 'DRP Development' section describes the four main steps of the workflow: data collection, vulnerability/risk assessment, development of short-term response actions and long-term mitigation strategies, and plan implementation.

<https://www.mendocinocounty.gov/departments/water-agency/drought-water-conservation/drought-resilience-plan>



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

- Outreach Activities
 - Educational Materials:
 - Flyers posted countywide; Factsheets in English and Spanish
 - Media Engagement:
 - Radio interview on KZYX's The Ecology Hour
 - Press releases to local newspapers and radio and Social media promotions
- Community Engagement
 - Workshops: UCCE Public Workshops (September 2024, February 2025)
 - Events and Presentations:
 - Redwood Empire Fair, Round Valley Blackberry Festival
 - Presentations to Hopland MAC and GrassRoots Vision Workgroup
 - Tribal and Stakeholder Meetings:
 - Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians
 - RCAC and DWR County Café Series
 - Key Takeaways:
 - Open dialogue helped refine DRP
 - Community input shaped outreach priorities and future actions



CONDADO DE MENDOCINO PLAN DE RESILIENCIA ANTE LA SEQUÍA

El Plan de Resiliencia ante la Sequía (DRP, por sus siglas en inglés) está destinado a facilitar la preparación ante la escasez de agua para sistemas de agua pequeños, comunidades rurales y pozos domésticos causado por sequías u otras emergencias.

El Grupo de Trabajo para la Sequía del Condado de Mendocino fue creado para facilitar las respuestas antes, durante y después de los desastres.

El Proyecto de Ley del Senado (SB) 552 fue firmado en 2021, exigiendo que los condados desarrollen un DRP para estar preparados ante la sequía

El desarrollo del DRP tiene 4 pasos:

1. Recolección de Datos: Identificar bases de datos y herramientas a nivel estatal y regional; realizar entrevistas y encuestas a la comunidad.

2. Evaluación de Vulnerabilidad y Riesgo: Identificar las áreas del condado de Mendocino que son más susceptibles a la escasez de agua, incluyendo pozos domésticos, hogares con tomas de agua superficial privadas y pequeños sistemas estatales de agua.

3. Estrategias de Mitigación a Corto y Largo Plazo: En coordinación con la comunidad y con gestores de agua, se establecerán estrategias que incluyan acciones de emergencia y medidas preventivas.

4. Implementación del plan: El DRP del condado se va implementarse como un esfuerzo colectivo entre los múltiples departamentos del condado y otras agencias estatales y locales.



En mayo de 2024, el condado recibió un fondo económico para facilitar el desarrollo del DRP, que comenzó en junio de 2024.



MENDOCINO COUNTY NEWS

NEWS CRIME TRAFFIC FIRE CANNABIS ENVIRONMENT GOVERNMENT

LATEST NEWS Fire Burning Northwest of Potter Valley PG&E for Drastic Flow Cuts to Lake Me

**MENDOCINO COUNTY LAUNCHES
INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN WATER
RESILIENCE**



RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE DRP AND NEXT STEPS

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT

- Staff recommendation: Adopt proposed resolution for DRP adoption

NEXT STEPS

- Upload Final DRP to DWR's [County Drought Resilience Planning Assistance Program Portal](#) and submit to DWR
- If you would like to stay updated on future CDTF meetings and announcements:
 - Sign up for email updates on the DRP webpage [here](#)

REMINDERS

- The DRP is intended to be a **living document**, with periodic assessments and updates as needed based on:
 - New information and/or data sources
 - Evolving drought conditions throughout the County
 - Sufficiency of drought response actions/triggers
- Updates to the DRP are contingent on available funding and require continued public engagement from the public and CDTF members, including:
 - Attendance and participation at CDTF meetings
 - Reporting dry wells to [DWR's Dry Well Reporting System](#)



END