Water Emergency Planning in Mendocino County

A Report on Proposition 84 Planning Grant #4600009393
Mendocino County Water Emergency Preparedness Plans

Deborah Stanger Edelman
Mendocino County Resource Conservation District

Project Tasks

Work With Tribal And Small Rural Water Districts To:

1) Identify priorities and assess needs
2) Conduct workshops for reducing water use
3) Publish an on-line resource guide
4) Conduct water audits
5) Assist with water emergency planning

Needs Assessment Survey

Surveyed 50 Small Water Suppliers and Tribes

Received 17 Responses (34%)

Median Size was 80 customers

Needs Assessment Findings

Primary vulnerability was water supply insecurity: lack of storage or back-up water supply.

- Many depend on wells and/or have compromised water rights
- Most do not meter their customers but would like to
- Many have insufficient storage
- Most are short staffed

Needs Assessment Findings

Needs focused on:

- Securing new sources of water
- Installing additional water storage capacity
- Meters for customers
- Money and staff for needs and program expansion

Some did not see themselves as needing technical assistance or planning: “We need a full lake.”

Assistance Opportunities

Help requested from the MCRCD focused on:

- Assistance with grant writing (meters, storage)
- Free outreach materials
- Help educating customers
- Free water audits
- Help adopting drought pricing policies

Outreach

Four Water Conservation Workshop

- Mendocino Community Center
- Sherwood Rancheria
- Potter Valley Tribe
- Tabling at Ukiah Farmers Market

Water Wise Radio Series on KZYX Public Radio

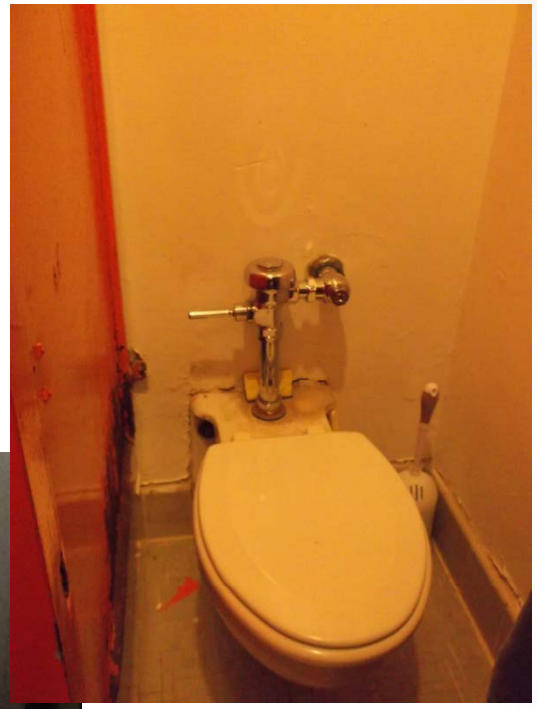
- Rainwater Capture
- Greywater Use and Design
- Landscaping in Drought
- Indoor Water Conservation: Beyond the Short Shower

Outreach

Water Audits and Water Audit Training:

Sherwood Rancheria and

City of Ten Thousand Buddhas



City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

- 42 buildings
- 670,000 sq ft
- Replacing 122 residential toilets and 436 commercial toilets

Estimated Savings

2,142,514 Gallons Saved Per Year!

Drought Emergency Planning

- Drought Contingency Plans are legal documents
- Some small districts had already completed a plan. Others were not interested.
- Most needed help getting started or moving through the steps
- MCRCD developed a “cheat sheet” to assist with planning

On-Line Resource Guide

Successes

- Water Audit Training
- City of Ten Thousand Buddhas Water Savings
- Drought Planning “Cheat Sheet”
- Public Education

Lessons Learned

1) Water Supply Security and Metering: Crucial for Small Suppliers
2) Outreach: Go To Where The Crowds Are
3) Drought Contingency Plans: Assistance Not Development!
4) Water Audit Training Improves Water Audit Outcomes

Next Steps

Future Efforts to Assist Small Districts and Tribes Should Focus On:

- Assistance with Grant Writing
- Additional Free Water Audits
- Water Audit Trainings
- Public Outreach and Education Events
- Assistance With Drought Emergency Planning

Many Thanks to the NCRP For Funding This Project!

MENDOCINO COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Deborah Stanger Edelman
deborah.edelman@mcrcd.org
707-462-3664 ext 106

This project paid for with funding from:
North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP)/Prop 84