



Updates from the Mendocino County
INLAND WATER & POWER COMMISSION

Securing Our Water Future Through New Diversion and Storage Solutions

The Region Is Facing a Major Water System Transition

PG&E has decided to dismantle the Potter Valley Project, including Scott Dam at Lake Pillsbury. As the owner of the project, PG&E determined that continuing operations is no longer economically viable. Local agencies cannot force PG&E to continue operating the project.

IWPC's responsibility is to move quickly and strategically to secure a reliable water future with supply and storage solutions we can control and deliver.



Protect the Legal Right to Water

IWPC reached a historic **Water Diversion Agreement** with Tribal, environmental, and regional partners to ensure diversions can continue after PG&E removes the project. This agreement creates the **legal pathway to continue diverting water** into the Russian River watershed.



Build a New Trans Basin Diversion

The **New Eel-Russian Facility** will replace the Potter Valley Project infrastructure and enable continued diversions from the Eel River into the Russian River watershed. The NERF will supply water to homes and communities, agriculture, businesses and jobs across Mendocino, Sonoma, and Marin counties.



Build Water Storage

Water must be captured during wet periods and **stored for use** during drought and dry seasons. That means we must build new storage capacity.

Preparing for the Future Means Focusing on Achievable Solutions

PG&E owns Scott Dam and decided to remove it. No public agency or private entity stepped forward to assume ownership and liability for Scott Dam because it is not economically viable. Consultant developed cost estimates show that repairing Scott Dam and operating the Project could cost between \$300–500M in repairs, fish passage construction, relicensing, and tens of millions per year in long-term maintenance.

Fighting dam removal at this point would jeopardize the Water Diversion Agreement, which requires that IWPC does not publicly advocate to keep Scott Dam. But **we CAN work toward real and meaningful alternatives** for water supply security.



Diversion Alone Is Not Enough: New Storage Is Essential

Mendocino County IWPC and technical consultants evaluated multiple water supply options and prioritized **4 storage strategies** that provide the greatest benefit and most realistic path forward:



Water Yield: Highest

1 Expand Lake Mendocino Storage

Raising Coyote Valley dam is the most important long-term investment in regional water reliability. It could double Lake Mendocino storage, allowing for an additional potential 70,000 acre-feet (AF) of water supply storage.

Next Steps:

- Provide \$4M in local funding share for Army Corps study
- Secure \$1M for legal, consulting, and advocacy efforts
- Prepare for up to \$75–150M in local costs for construction (with large federal funding support)

Water Yield: Medium

2 Groundwater Storage and Recharge

Investing in groundwater storage would provide a scalable, locally controlled supply. Groundwater storage could provide approximately 3,500 AF per year of additional supply to Potter Valley.

Next Steps:

- Continue feasibility studies to evaluate potential capacity
- Invest \$2M for test wells and monitoring
- Prepare for \$5–20M in local construction costs

Water Yield: Medium

3 Expand Potter Valley Pond Storage

Pond storage expansion provides flexible and incremental storage options for local agricultural users. Total capacity is yet undetermined.

Next Steps:

- Invest \$100–200K in site assessment and feasibility work
- Prepare for \$1–5M in local construction costs
- Pursue potential private investments

Water Yield: High

4 Evaluate New Tributary Surface Storage

New surface storage on a tributary to the Russian River, upstream of Lake Mendocino, could provide a potential for 10,000–15,000 AF of new storage to serve Potter Valley.

Next Steps:

- Invest \$3M in site assessment and geotechnical studies
- Prepare for \$50M in potential construction investment, plus private investment

Investing now in feasibility and planning for these new storage options allows our region to compete for state and federal funding. Delaying action risks losing funding opportunities and jeopardizing water reliability. **Building new storage will secure our future water supply and protect our communities, farms, businesses, and regional economy for generations to come.**

IWPC was formed as a joint powers authority to serve as stewards of the Russian and Eel River watersheds, safeguarding the water that plays such a vital role to the region's economic development, environmental quality, and general well-being. IWPC members include:

- County of Mendocino
- City of Ukiah
- Redwood Valley County Water District
- Potter Valley Irrigation District
- Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District

For additional information contact IWPC@mendoiwpc.com