

## **Sonoma County Water Coalition Resolution on the Protection of Sonoma County Water Resources**

January 2010

Whereas human population increases and subsequent expanded water use are depleting limited water supplies;

Whereas global warming and consequent changing climate are causing a chain of circumstances whereby less clean water will be available in the future;

Whereas increased pollution of limited fresh water resources is causing degradation of our oceans, our groundwater, and our waterways;

Whereas many native animal species and plant populations are being greatly diminished and are dying out at unprecedented rates due to pollution, habitat degradation and over-harvesting;

Whereas agencies responsible for protecting water and ecosystem resources are subject to political pressure and, in many cases are being persuaded to ignore scientific evidence and accepted scientific values;

Whereas public water and wastewater infrastructure have not been adequately maintained and are resulting in water waste due to leaky pipes and hardware;

Whereas private property rights, historic water rights and well log confidentiality have limited public policy options and blocked the collection of critical information needed for effective management of ground water resources;

Whereas some land use practices, such as inappropriate forestry and agriculture, and urbanization adjacent to our waterways are adversely impacting surface water quality;

Whereas many of our local waterways have been declared impaired for temperature and sediment, and some for dissolved oxygen, mercury, pathogens, and nutrients;

Whereas little is known about bioaccumulation and the synergistic effects of pollutants as they may interact under reduced flows and other degraded conditions;

Whereas these impairments are very likely to be contributing to species loss, further ecological degradation, and disruption of the ecological balance;

Whereas time is of the essence and changes in our water management priorities are imperative if we are to ensure water resources for future generations;

In order to help change future policy direction toward the protection of our water resources, Sonoma County Water Coalition (SCWC), consisting of 30 organizations

representing more than 24,000 concerned citizens, resolves as follows:

SCWC will continue to work with elected officials, governmental agencies and others to focus attention on water resource issues, give input on proposed water policy and contribute to the improvement of our local water environment;

SCWC will advocate for development that will require no net increase in potable water demand;

SCWC will advocate for reduced greenhouse gas emissions with special focus on those emissions created by water use and by water and wastewater infrastructure;

SCWC will continue to lobby for groundwater management programs that emphasize both natural and enhanced recharge and include retaining rainwater and irrigation runoff as close to the site of origin as possible;

SCWC will advocate for protection and restoration of our waterways, wetlands, forests, and other native habitats;

SCWC will advocate for advanced wastewater treatment options that assure that any discharge of treated wastewater is of the highest quality;

SCWC will advocate for conservation and source control as the first defense against water waste and water pollution;

SCWC will advocate for infrastructure repair as a first resort in order to minimize pollution and diminish water waste by water and wastewater utilities;

SCWC will advocate for advanced testing and regulation of emerging contaminants, including personal care products and pharmaceuticals, and, where that is not possible,

SCWC will promote the Precautionary Principle which advocates avoiding harm first, before toxic substances are discharged, in circumstances where toxic impacts cannot be immediately addressed;

Therefore, be it resolved that Sonoma County Water Coalition will devote itself to educating its members, decision-makers and the public, advocating for effective policies to repair ecosystem damage, and working to ensure clean water supplies for future generations.

END