

Minutes, February 17, 2022  
Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Committee  
[Video Available here.](#)

Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata opens meeting at 5:35

Pledge of Allegiance

Diane Shaw, new Representative from Pocket Canyon, was to be sworn in, but failed to appear.

Roll Call: Present= Nic Pereira, Lisa Nahmanson, Tony Goodwin, Alice Teeter, Kyra Wink, Vesta Copestakes, Pip Marquez de la Plata

Minute 4:30: Chair/Vice Chair election led by Leo Chyi, District Director  
Kyra nominated Pip, Lisa Nahmanson seconded. Voting approved unanimously.  
Pip nominated Kyra, Lisa Nahmanson seconded, voting approved unanimously

Approve agenda – Vesta Moved, Tony Seconded, approved unanimously

Conflict of Interest, none

Correspondence, none

Minute 9: approval of minutes

Motion to approve by Vesta, Lisa seconded approval, approved by Council

Council Comment for things not on the agenda: 1 minute each

Vesta: announced Forestville Town Hall to be held March 30<sup>th</sup> Hybrid meeting.

Nic: Fire Safe Guerneville wildfire readiness week, February 20-26<sup>th</sup>  
[www.firesafeGuerneville.org](http://www.firesafeGuerneville.org)

Public Comment for items not on the agenda:

No public Comment.

Minute 13 to see the full presentation by Claudia Vecchio, CEO Sonoma County Tourism (SCT) Highlights:

Presentation on partnership with Leave No Trace for better stewardship from travelers. Changed focus of SCT from being a numbers game. Real success metrics have been number of visitors.

Held 'Let's talk tourism' discussions which framed evolution of SCT. Claudia heard from residents and businesses the need to take this in a new direction. So in 2018 shifted from being a destination marketing organization to being a destination stewardship organization.

You know we are funded by lodging tax, and it's a conversation to help lodging managers and owners understand that this isn't a benevolent decision. This is a business decision to encourage visitor-ship and stewardship of the region. This is a business decision. Tourism drives our economy, but it doesn't just happen to us, we can create a framework encouraging responsible travelers who enjoy protecting and

preserving the area's bountiful natural and cultural resources and cultural resources.  
Creating programs for stewardship.

- 1) Kind traveler cooperative – money going back to local non-profits such as Russian Riverkeeper.
- 2) Travel Kindly Pledge
- 3) Tourism Cares clean-up day
- 4) Rewards for Rubbish coming soon

Idea of making a positive impact is very compelling to visitors.

About 18 months ago created a partnership with Regional Parks and Leave No Trace to really lay the foundations and the framework for moving forward in a very sustainable way

7 Principles

Know Before You Go

Sonoma County's beautiful and varied terrain beckons travelers to hike through towering redwood forests, paddle along meandering rivers, or simply unwind to the sounds of nature. With so many things to see and do, it's best to take some time to plan ahead. When you're prepared for your adventure, you and your group are more likely to have a good time and help protect the outdoors.

- **Learn about the areas you plan to visit.** Go online to regularly check the conditions ahead of time, as they may change frequently due to weather, temperature swings and drought.
- **Be prepared for crowded parking lots, trails and potential closures.** Parking lots at some of our more popular parks and trailheads can fill early on weekends and holidays. Plan to arrive early in the morning or later in the day for the best chance of finding parking.
- **Avoid parking in residential neighborhoods.** If a parking lot is full, have a "Plan B" destination in mind.
- **River and ocean safety is key.** While in the water, always wear a life jacket and do not push yourself past your experience level. Before heading to the river, go online to check river conditions and water temperatures. If visiting the coast, check ocean-use policies and learn about riptides and sleeper waves.
- **Bringing your dog along?** Keep your canines leashed when enjoying dog-friendly destinations, bring your furry friend some extra water, and a plastic bag to pack out their waste (all the way to a trash can).
- **Red flag warnings and campfire restrictions may be in place.** Warm temperatures, low humidities and strong winds combine to create dangerous wildfire conditions. When campfires are prohibited, have alternative methods for staying warm, cooking food and enjoying your time that do not involve campfires.

## Stick to Trails and Be a Water Wise Camper

While shortcuts may be tempting, please don't take (or create) them. Some seemingly small actions can have unintended consequences. Respect private property and stay on designated trails. Your shortcut may be a neighbor's backyard or important wildlife habitat. Other small actions — like conserving water — can make a big difference. When we minimize human impact in our outdoor spaces, we help keep them pristine, beautiful and healthy for all.

- **Walk, ride and photograph on designated trails.** Designated trails are intentionally built and help to prevent erosion and protect vegetation from being trampled. Once damaged, vegetation may not grow back.
- **Stay back from the bluffs.** Be careful when taking photos near coastal cliffs. While the backdrop can be enticing, the rocks and shale formations are unstable. Stay on designated trails and heed warning signs.
- **Be water-wise this camping season.** Northern California is experiencing a drought and water restrictions are in place at some campgrounds. Check restrictions and recommendations ahead of time.
- **Camp prepared!** Weather is variable in Sonoma County, often with cool mornings and sunny, hot afternoons. Camp in layers for comfort. It's also important to stay hydrated. Bring along a reusable water bottle to stay hydrated and limit waste.

## Trash Your Trash and Pick Up Pet Waste

If you bring it into the outdoors, take it back with you. Discarded to-go containers, soda cans, plastic floats, etc. all have far-reaching, negative impacts on wildlife and the environment. Don't forget about responsibility when it comes to human and pet waste.

- **Pack it in, pack it out.** Trash hurts wildlife and contaminates waterways. Pack out everything you pack in — or be a hero and pick up other trash and litter to leave the place better than you found it.
- **If a trash can is full, pack it, don't stack it.** Don't contribute to overflowing trash cans in parks. Take your garbage with you until you can dispose of it properly.
- **Take your raft or tube home with you.** You brought it along — don't leave it behind. When left on shore or in the water, rafts, tubes and other floats harm wildlife and the river ecosystem.
- **Keep water clean.** Soap, food, human or pet waste in lakes or streams causes harm to wildlife and contaminates waterways. Be at least 200 feet or 70 big steps away from all water sources when cleaning or using soap.
- **When you have to go, use restrooms or outhouses.** Going to the bathroom off trail or by the side of the road in a neighborhood may lead to area closures.

- **Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in a trash can.** Compared to wildlife or grazing animals, pet waste contains harmful bacteria that cause human illness and contaminate the natural environment.
- **Pack out all fishing lines and hooks.** Discarded fishing line and hooks cause unnecessary harm to birds and other aquatic wildlife. An accidentally swallowed fishing hook can lead to suffering and death.

#### Leave It As You Find It

There are new things to discover and explore around every corner. Take pictures and make memories, but please don't take natural items or leave your mark on rocks and trees. Combined small actions add up, and can have lasting impacts on the wildlife and environment.

- **Leave sea stars, shells, rocks and wildflowers as you find them** so others can also experience the thrill of discovery. A photograph makes for a much better keepsake – and preserves these natural treasures for everyone to enjoy.
- **Treat wildflowers and other living plants with respect.** Picking, carving, hacking or peeling plants and trees can harm or kill them.
- **Leave gates as you find them.** Many of Sonoma County's open spaces are used for grazing animals like sheep, cattle and goats. Keep gates open where already open, and closed where already closed. Intentionally tampering with grazing fences can result in harm to people and animals.

#### Be Extremely Careful with Fire

Sonoma County's dry summers elevate the risk of wildfires, and restrictions may be in place during certain times of the year. The best place to build a fire is within an existing fire ring in a well-placed campsite. Keep the fire small and burning only for the time you are using it – then completely extinguish it.

- **Check Red Flag Warnings and fire restriction advisories.** You may not be authorized to have a campfire depending on drought or weather conditions. If campfires are prohibited, have alternative methods for staying warm, cooking food and enjoying your time that do not involve campfires.
- **If you are allowed to have a campfire, have enough water on hand at all times** to completely extinguish your campfire when necessary. Burn all wood to ash and be sure the fire is completely out and cold before you leave it.
- **Buy it where you burn it.** Don't bring firewood from home; buy it from a local Sonoma County vendor. When people move wood from place to place, they may also be moving invasive insects and diseases that threaten California's landscape.
- **Build fires only in designated fire pits.** Keep your fire small, manageable and within the confines of a fire pit. Beach bonfires are prohibited in Sonoma County.

- **A campfire isn't a trash can.** Burned trash releases harmful toxins that you and others will breathe in. Pack out all trash, litter and food scraps.

### Keep Wildlife Wild

Sonoma County is celebrated for its unique microclimates and biodiversity, supporting an array of birds, mammals, amphibians, insects and more. Some are cute, others squirmy, but all are important. It's best to observe them from a distance and keep them safe and wild.

- **Give wildlife space (but not your food).** Observe or photograph wildlife and all grazing livestock from a distance. Getting close to photograph or feed an animal may seem harmless, but each one of these interactions can lead to far-reaching consequences, including injury to humans and wildlife. Bring a telephoto lens or binoculars to help observe from afar.
- **Protect wildlife – and your food – by securely storing your meals and trash.** Many park campgrounds in Sonoma County provide safe places to store your food and trash.
- **Avoid unexpected encounters with black bears and mountain lions.** To be safe, watch for signs of these animals, keep a far distance when spotted and maintain a clean campsite—never bring food into your tent.
- **Pay big attention to small creatures.** From birds to wildflowers, you're bound to be amazed by Sonoma County's biodiversity – but it's important to be prepared. Rattlesnakes, ticks, and blue-green algae can have serious consequences for you, your friends, and pets. Learn about managing the risks before your adventure.

### Share The Outdoors

Each person's way to experience nature is unique. Some seek the outdoors for wildlife viewing or to immerse in the quiet sounds of nature. Others come to exercise or socialize with friends alongside a beautiful landscape. Although our reasons for visiting may be varied, there's room for all if we respect others in the outdoors.

- **Be considerate when passing others on trails.** Always yield to those traveling uphill, as well as those using a wheelchair or on horseback.
- **Keep your pet leashed and under control to protect it, other visitors and wildlife.** If your furry friend needs a place to run around, visit any of the designated dog parks in the county.
- **Be considerate of others enjoying the same shared space.** Keep noise at a low volume, give others space and be courteous to those around you.
- **Be aware of your use of technology on the trail.** Use headphones if you enjoy music on the trail. Check rules and regulations before using a drone. Drones are prohibited in Sonoma County Regional Parks.

- **Watch for working animals.** We graze cows, sheep and goats seasonally and year-round in some of our parks. [Learn more about sharing the trail with cattle.](#)
- **Use social media to promote good outdoor stewardship.** Be mindful of what your images portray, and what your images may encourage others to do. Think of the incredible potential that social media has to educate other outdoor enthusiasts about enjoying Sonoma County's open spaces responsibly.

Have been in phase 1, creating the foundation now with stakeholders – discovery, listening sessions, input, training SCT and Sonoma County staff on being better partners around stewardship. Now moving into design and implementation phases. Creating a tourism master plan for 20 years hence.

Questions:

Lisa Nahmanson: As chair of the trash Committee so I'd like to reach out to you, and then also, maybe you could come back in, say, 6 months to give us an us an update on outcomes in the first couple of phases. Thank you so much.

Vesta: I really appreciate that you're moving away from numbers, because there is no humanity in numbers, and many of biggest problem that many of these decision makers make is that they make they make decisions based on numbers and numbers alone. So thank you very, much. Are you working with the county with the revitalize Confluence marketing committee that was put together was put together last year, where they are trying to also increase responsibility of those who live of both people who live here as well as tourists? Claudia: let me look into that.

I'm one of the people who picks up trash all the time, and one of the things I just cleaned a park and ride, and it's and ride, and it's astonishing how after how one day, after cleaning the park and ride, cars started coming in because there were wasn't glass all over the place. So if you take care of it, if we take care of our home, people tend to respect it more and be a little more careful. Because, whatever it is that they were going to toss out their car suddenly becomes an eyesore instead of one of among many.

Claudia:

Working on incentivizing good behavior, because good behavior, because that's when behavior changes when behavior changes. So understand that that we're that we're looking at ways to incentivize good behavior.

Nic: need to emphasize the be a good neighbor for residents as well.

Kelly with SCT is big involvement with the branding piece

Public comment: Vera Yates on need for infrastructure – restrooms, trash, crews to maintain services.

Minute 43 presentation on lower Russian River wastewater, SCWA presenters Lynn Roselli who's going to lead for the who's going to lead for the water agency , and Kent Gyffe and David Royale

Pip: wastewater issues that are being faced are part of the lower Russian river. These kind of infrastructure issues are not isolated to one one single community. They probably go across many and it's good for people to understand some of the infrastructure issues that infrastructure issues that you you don't necessarily think about in think about in your daily life.

See attached presentation or view video at minute 44.

Highlights:

#### Overview of District

The Russian river county sanitation District sanitation District has a service area of 2,700 acres . The plant began operation in 1983, Sonoma Water took over operations in 1995, and the plant was designed to treat an average average dry weather flow of .71 million gallons per day to advanced Tertiary wastewater treatment standards, the most advanced that is available.

Conducted a sewer line study and computer model of the more than 60,000 linear feet cleaned annually.

The district has 11 lift stations now, just as comparisons, Sonoma Valley sanitation District to our east has 2 District to our east has 2 lift stations. They have 11,000 customers. Russian River has River has 11 left stations and 2,500 customers. It's a significant amount of lift stations, and they all require operations, maintenance, and infrastructure upgrades, and of course, the lift stations. The lift stations have pumps in them, and these pumps require frequent maintenance , and we want to make it clear to all of our customers the importance of not putting anything down the toilet that doesn't belong down the toilet. We find every manner of things we find every manner of things stuck in these these pumps : Sneakers, rags, wipes clothing, toys, tools, you name it. It's an extremely expensive and time-consuming to get these things out. Don't put items that don't belong down the toilets!

2004 Upgrade to 3<sup>rd</sup> unit processes, added infrastructure to expand tertiary system with a \$4.2 million state loan paying through 2024.

2011 added UV disinfection – excellent disinfection system, \$4 million with \$2 million in interest free state loans paying back through 2032.

2014 added 2 aeration sludge basins for \$2.8 million to reduce nitrogen discharges to the river.

3 secondary clarifiers – in the process now of seismic retrofits. \$3.1 million cost offset by a 2.28 FEMA grant.

2 holding ponds with 4.5 million gallons capacity.

Irrigation system to irrigate forest and Northwood golfcourse for \$680,000

#### FY 2022-2023 projects

- 1) Force main headworks and lift main project. 10 year and \$8 million State funded. State covers 75% of design, 100% of construction contracts. This will help fix some of aging infrastructure need

- 2) Electrical service replacement projects: 3 lift stations, \$6 million.
- 3) A. UV system retrofit, up to \$1.3 million,  
B. Main lift underground diesel tank, \$1 million,  
C. \$750,000 for local hazard mitigation grant plan.

#### FY 2022-2023 rates

- Showed pie chart of \$9.5 million in expenses planned for 2022-2023 budget.
- Showed revenue pie chart of \$9.5 million of which \$5.9 million comes from sewer charges, rest from grant funding.

8.9% Rate increase is needed to address mounting infrastructure issue. Working to cover as much capital costs as possible. Average \$13.2 dollars per customer/month. System has too few customers to cover all the costs of infrastructure, operations and maintenance needed.

Reviewed Outreach information. Refer to website and water use efficiency rebates.

#### Council Comments:

Vesta: how much are wipes in system are a problem?

David Royale Operations and Maintenance manager answered – huge problem, marketed as disposable. Legislation underway to stop that kind of labeling. Wipes in sewers is a huge problem. Kills pumps.

Nic: define SSO for us SCWA: Sanitary system overflow.

Would like a town hall in an open forum sometime in April to have more of a Q&A forum. Guerneville Park lift station, neighbors are unhappy about work at that lot happening against the agreement and request a meeting with neighbors to talk about issues there

Lisa: aging infrastructure- what is aging?

Ken Gylffe engineer. System activated in 1983, most expansions highlighted.

Mechanical elements are 40 years. Not designed to operate more than 40 years of service. Dire needs to upgrade and rehabilitate lift stations.

#### Public Comment:

Lucy Hardcastle - what percentage of households are on the sewer system versus septic tanks tanks?

SCWA: if you are inside boundaries of the district, you are on sewer system.

Leo: \$350,000 for a report on septic/sewer/TMDL

Mike Nicholls: Can you run a 5-7 year forecast to smooth out rate increases?

Lynn/SCWA: do have 5+ year financial plans. Have been trying not to increase rates and trying to operate and maintain and maintain the system and because we are in a period with high inflation, construction construction costs, and material construction costs, and equipment costs,

fuel costs that are significantly higher. Therefore We have found the need



for to have a higher rate increase going forward to bring the district closer to being able to be self-supported.

Cynthia Strecker:

Thank you for all these major and needed upgrades. Wondering about the violations at the Guerneville plant. Last large one at 2019 flood. Will improvements bring plant into compliance with State Water Boards criteria.

David Royal: violations come when storms come in and overwhelm the system. Want to have no violations, trying to figure out how to mitigate issues of storm overflow, but can't guarantee under conditions of major storm and flooding events.

compliance all the time. but with the flooding But with the flooding events out But with the flooding events out there in particular, Russian River poses

Our permit prohibits any illegal discharge of wastewater any time.

It's a challenge that we face every winter.

Brenda Adelman:

Thanks for the presentation. It's answered some of the questions had for quite a while. Disappointed by the rate increase, but seems needed.

I basically have one question: there is a 120 unit

motel with the swimming pool and other facilities that are going to add to the system right in a location where some of the worst problems have been.

SCWA: not aware of the issue. Require developers mitigate for the increase, is this already in the general plan?

Pip: Sweetwater Spring Board has known of project for a long time, so aware capacity is there. Surprised you don't know of it and would like you to look into it and get back to us.

Leo: permit BZA hearing on February 24<sup>th</sup> for use permit. Materials posted on Permit Sonoma website.

FB question: Van Berkmoes asking about adding properties to the system. They live in Northwood. As far as SCWA knows, there is no plan at this point to increase footprint of the district.

Comments:

Mark – 120 hotel demand adds load burden on failing system.

Nic: Developer has stated that he has received an ok that there is room in the system for this resort. Made claim over and over, distressing to hear that SCWA does not know about the project.

Proposed letter to PG&E from Mike Nicholls.

Motion to approve?

Nic moves to adopt, Pip seconds. Unanimously approved.

Any public comment? Mike Nicholls: Add Jill Ravitch to the letter in copy list as she is part of the suit.

Lisa: comments on the letter: Amazing letter. Your computer wrote treat instead of threat. Could add a punchy subject line. Took a photo of the pole and pole number as people who are copied on the letter may want to look up the pole. Amazing letter.

Nic – votes to accept amendment to letter. Motion seconded by Vesta, letter approved.  
Lisa – do we want to invite them to a forum here?

Staff Reports:

Council Reports:

Lisa / Trash Committee: Trash Tracker led to our inviting Claudia to speak on Leave No Trace. Next will be free mattress disposal and then bringing more trash bins in. Plus more visibility to Adopt a Road and adopt a highway program to get more roads covered. Vesta can't do it all on her own!

1:32: 10 Council comments: Is there an orange bag program to pick up trash? Disposal without costing us money after we pick up.

Pip – county would pitch in money for community dumpster clean up days. Lisa: let's do it, I'll find out about it from Recology. Deliver the day of the clean up so it isn't filled before the day with personal trash.

Public Comment: no Public Comment.

Lynda joined: updates

- Lower Russian River Specific Area Plan getting going

What do we want the future of the life at the Russian Russian River to be?

Where do we want to have bike and pedestrian access?

• Simultaneously. We're also actually launching our local governance study from district formation - this is something that Elise Weiland is working on.

- County wide wastewater study ongoing now.

- work with caltrans on the ada improvements for downtown Guerneville.

Investing in plans means we then can leverage grants to make projects happen.

Council questions:

Vesta – looking for specific plan for Guerneville 20 years ago, can't find on website.

Have historic plans sunsetted. Good for 20 years. Lynda has seen them, know they exist. Will make sure copies are available. Want more bike and pedestrian access.

Kyra – Moscow Road calls and questions. Parking enforcement – local community meeting, problems with FEMA delaying Moscow road repair. (added note – since solved after the meeting). Parking enforcement – Elise is working on this and will get the answer to the date.

Pip: FEMA – projects initially approved delayed or denied? Including Rio Nido culvert?

Lynda – they are rejecting designs. EMA struggling with staffing resources.

Pip: Is there anything we can do? Lynda: write a letter from the MAC?

Nic: can call an emergency meeting to get the letter done if needed. Lynda, great idea.  
Lucy Hardcastle: downtown Forestville sidewalk work, would like to see lighting district funds for better lighting.

David Wable – comment on downtown soup kitchen, downtown businesses upset.

Lynda – moving forward we hope with George's Hideaway, don't have capacity for more at this point. Are there better locations for soup provision services? Can we put it in the Vets parking lot? Looking into community solutions and would like help from Guerneville MAC reps.

Austin in Q&A – update on Monte Rio bridge construction. Lynda – will have it on BOS calendar this year. Opportunities to do more beautification? What other amenities?

Ran survey for light options – pole B and evening construction work each both received 75% of the vote.

Kyra: Land Use Update: Last meeting January 27<sup>th</sup>, discussed Kings Ridge bike event. Permit was denied, expect an updated map to be submitted. Reviewed that Lok/Dubrava project going to the BZA February 24<sup>th</sup>

At hour 2:04:06 Vesta Copestakes and Gary Helfrich of Permit Sonoma reviewed upcoming rental ordinance changes. View full discussion on the video.

Highlights below:

Sonoma County supervisors are considering big changes to the County's vacation rental ordinance.

The ordinance is scheduled for review March 17, after 18 months of work, and the public has several opportunities for comment.

The surge in short term rentals has created challenges that current regulations are not adequate to address. Planners at Permit Sonoma have been working on revisions to the Sonoma County Short-Term Vacation Rental ordinance, with significant input from community voices. The revisions to this ordinance (ORD21-0005) are in review by the Planning Commission and County Counsel. This ordinance applies to unhosted rentals where no responsible party lives on the property.

Public review is scheduled for March 17, 2022 at a Planning Commission hearing that will include the Vacation Rental Ordinance. You can sign up for email updates for dates, times, copies of the agenda, and revised ordinance to review prior to the hearing. Next, the Planning Commission has tentatively set April 19 to present the final revised ordinance to the Board of Supervisors

## *More info*

### **Sign up for email notices**

at: [https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/CASONOMA/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=CA\\_SONOMA\\_34](https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/CASONOMA/subscriber/new?topic_id=CA_SONOMA_34)

### **Current regulations and policies can be found**

at: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Vacation-Rentals/>

Top among the concerns is enforcement of rules that make sharing our residential neighborhoods with this business tolerable. Density of vacation rentals vs. homes, parking limitations, emergency preparedness, noise, lights, and more are identified and addressed.

### **Enforcement to include a new compliance hotline**

Sonoma County is in the final stages of contracting for a 24-hour complaint hotline that will be operated and maintained by a third-party vendor. This eliminates the confusing search for who to call to report an infraction and creates a record of action taken to respond to complaints. One simple phone call starts the process of addressing a problem then follows through on getting it resolved quickly and reporting back to the complainer on what has, or has not, been accomplished. Complaints include noise, lights, parking, etc. This hotline is moving forward under the old ordinance, and so will be launched independently of the ordinance change.

### **Vacation rental licenses will need to be renewed annually**

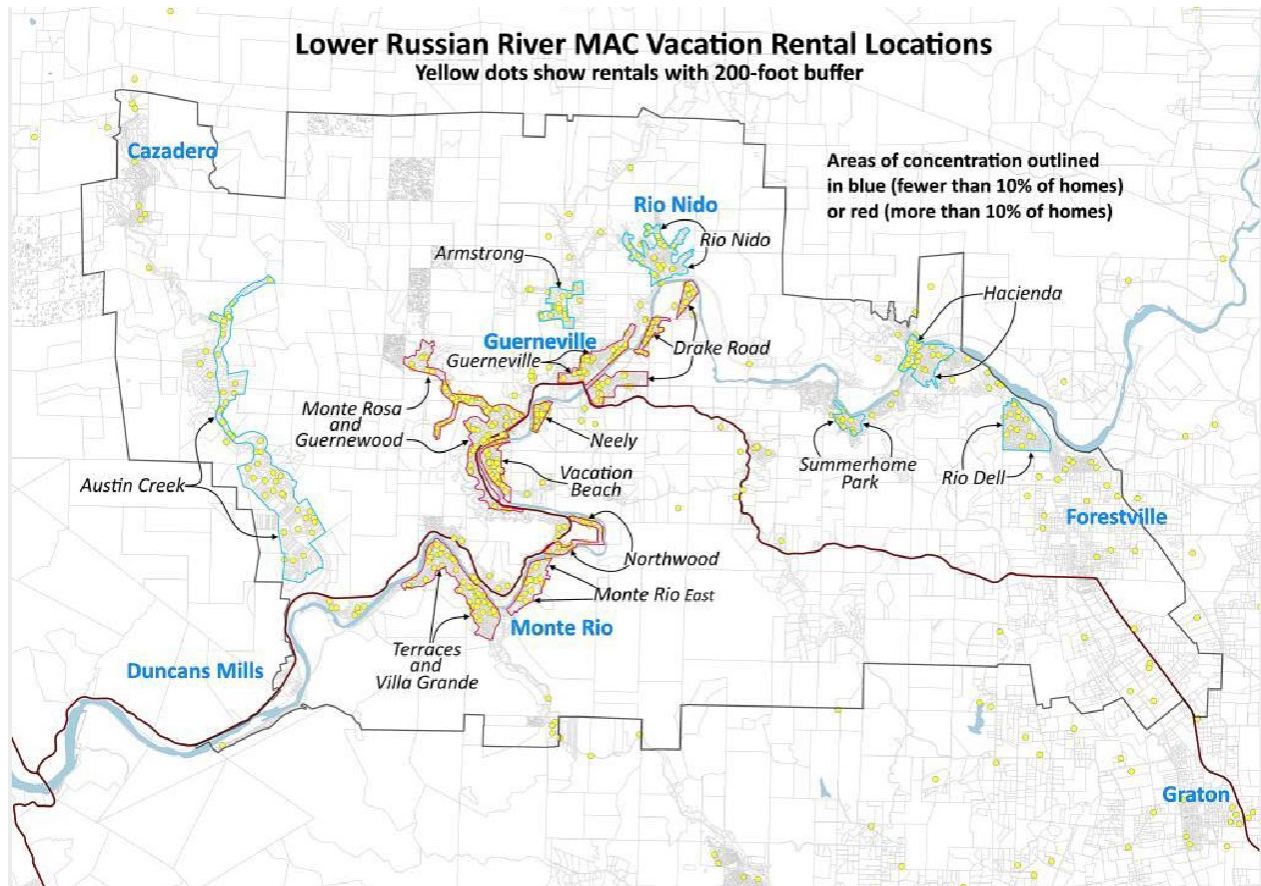
In addition to obtaining a zoning permit allowing a property to have a vacation rental, operation will require a vacation rental license that gets renewed annually. This license may be temporarily suspended for violating operating standards or subject to nonrenewal where the operator has a history of non-compliance. Licenses may also be revoked in more serious cases of non-compliance. If a license is revoked, a new license for the parcel will not be issued for a period of 2 years.

### **Rentals will be required to have a nearby property manager**

Rentals must have a certified property manager who lives within 30 road miles of each rental and respond to complaints within 60 minutes during the day and 30 minutes during quiet hours (10 p.m. -7 a.m.) whenever the property is being rented on a transient basis. Property managers must meet standards of performance in order to keep their business license/certificate.

### **More attention will be paid to building code status and fire inspections**

Vacation rental licenses will not be issued to any parcel with open code enforcement complaints and/or building permits that have not received a final inspection. Prior to issuing a vacation rental license, the property will be inspected by the County fire marshal or local fire protection district for compliance with building and fire safety codes, including but not limited to smoke/CO2 detectors, adequate egress from all bedrooms, adequate defensible space, proper vents on gas-fired appliances, compliant wood stove appliances, and chimneys, etc.



### Density caps are a possibility in crowded neighborhoods

Caps may be applied in neighborhoods where high concentrations of vacation rentals are adversely impacting neighborhood character, or have inadequate parking or emergency access, or local housing stock is at risk from conversion to visitor-serving uses. Caps are set at 10% of the local housing stock and no new vacation rentals may be licensed until the number of active vacation rentals is less than 10% of the local housing stock. The initial 10% cap may be lowered if found to be inadequate to preserve neighborhood character and protect public safety.

### Parking requirements

Off-street parking is required for all vacation rentals with more than one guest room. The width of roads will also identify if on-street parking can be accommodated or not. Emergency vehicle access must be maintained, and blocking an emergency vehicle may result in license revocation.

### Occupancy limits will be tightened

Maximum occupancy is limited to 12 guests regardless of the size of the home (current ordinance allows up to 18 during the day and unlimited guests on specific holidays). Vacation Rentals served by septic systems are limited to the number of bedrooms associated with the septic system. If the system capacity cannot be verified or the

owner is unwilling to provide a septic findings report, vacation rentals occupancy is limited to not more than 4 guests at any time.

### **We'll have new emergency procedures**

Vacation Rentals must provide an evacuation handbook to guests that explains the Sonoma County emergency notification system, evacuation zones, and evacuation routes associated with the rental. Guests must evacuate at the WARNING stage in emergencies. The property manager is responsible for verifying guests have left and is required to report the guests to law enforcement if a mandatory evacuation notice is issued and the manager is unable to contact the guests, cannot verify the guests have vacated the premises, or if the guests refuse to leave.

### **Fire safety is an important part of the new ordinance**

Outdoor fires, pits, and charcoal or wood-burning BBQs are prohibited during designated fire seasons and Red Flag Warnings.

This proposed ordinance has been widely workshopped with the community. Permit Sonoma Staff has presented workshops at meeting of Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Commission, Springs Municipal Advisory Council (MAC), Lower Russian River MAC, Sonoma Coast MAC, Geyserville Planning Committee, The Sea Ranch Association, Mission Highlands Homeowners Association, and Gehricke Rd. Fire Safe Council.

Outreach to industry stakeholder groups included North Bay Association of Realtors, Sonoma Coast Vacation Rental Owners, Sonoma County Coalition of Hosts, and The Sea Ranch Hosting Coalition. Input from these groups has significantly informed the changes in the ordinance. The Lower Russian River MAC meetings in December and February included full presentations on the changes.

Committee website with text and reports at [russianrivermac.org](http://russianrivermac.org)

Call For agenda items:

Kyra: CAG wastewater presentation

Nic: how to get people with presentations to get them in advance. Pip: can work on it.

Vesta: request an update on Russian River Confluence / Branding project from Elise

Tony would like to see how to see tourism promoting healthy families in the community. Vesta – housing element is critical. Pp said would follow up with Tony.

Vesta motion to adjourn, Tony seconded, unanimous consent at 2:34:10 Adjourned