

GMAC Questions for North Gualala Water Company

- 1.) It appears we are entering yet another significant drought year. Beyond the current messaging about “Mandatory Conservation”, what does NGWC intend to do to more aggressively encourage its customers to significantly reduce water consumption? What will NGWC do to enforce any new or existing water usage restrictions?
 - a. NGWC is already operating under its Mandatory Conservation tariff, which requires staff to do drive-by monitoring of all areas weekly to monitor for disallowed outdoor water use. However, if river flows dip to prior year lows, NGWC will more aggressively tackle wasteful/excessive use through increased monitoring of those users who historical high use based on meter reading data. NGWC will continue public messaging on new water restrictions that come down from the State, should the State impose anything new. NGWC has authority under its existing tariffs to turn off customers for excessive waste as well as fine those who continue to waste after their first warning. However, waste and excessive use are not one in the same and it does take some investigative work to determine any given customer’s water use.
- 2.) Is NGWC supportive of customer efforts to capture rain water for use in landscaping and other outdoor uses? Is there any way NGWC can facilitate the acquisition of storage tanks for its customers?
 - a. Yes, customers should capture what they can, where they can for outdoor use. NGWC worked with the Gualala River Watershed Council (GRWC) to provide a significant number of 5,000-gallon water tanks to residents over the last few years. NGWC is open to partnering with an organization such as GRWC for this type of program again in the future if possible.
- 3.) What is the current status of the hook-up moratorium and what is needed to eventually allow for new hook-ups?
 - a. The hook up moratorium is still in place. NGWC needs source capacity and we continue to actively work toward this.
- 4.) Does NGWC provide any incentives for customers to upgrade household items such as toilets, shower heads, washing machines to help reduce water consumption?
 - a. NGWC does not provide financial incentives. However, we do educate customers that upgrading water use appliances and fixtures such as toilets, dishwashers, shower heads, and washing machines will lower customer’s bills through reduced water consumption. In fact, these upgrades will eventually pay for themselves. The beneficiary of the upgrade is the customer.
- 5.) What is the current production status of the main well at Elk Prairie? Does the well’s production vary depending on the time of year?
 - a. Draw from Elk Prairie varies based on customer demand. NGWC makes a point to preferentially utilize our coastal surface water sources during lower flows, especially during the summer and late fall to augment/replace draw on the Elk Prairie sources when possible. However, these coastal sources also lose capacity during the lower flow times of the year.

- 6.) How many days of water usage (approximately) is stored in all of NGWC's storage tanks?
 - a. We can store approximately 1.6 million gallons. Average winter time usage would be about 30 days. Average summer use is closer to 10 days. It's important to note that coastal tourist areas such as Gualala often have larger populations during the summer months and residents may also be using water for vegetable gardening.
- 7.) Could NGWC provide its customers with an annual forecast of water availability in the summer months, dry fall months, and even into Nov., Dec. and dry winter months ?
 - a. I'm not sure what is being asked here. Our district remains under Mandatory Conservation requirements when river flows are below bypass levels as set forth in our tariff. NGWC is not in the business of watershed or weather forecasting.
- 8.) What are NGWC's current capabilities and future plans, if any, to collect the excessive rainwater during atmospheric river storm events and other significant rains such as this past April and in this past fall and year ending of 2021?
 - a. Without a reservoir capturing this water is not practical/possible with current infrastructure. It's important to note that even with a reservoir or other rain-storage structure(s), the water would need to be run through a treatment facility in order for it to be suitable for customer consumption. This would require either another pipeline (to get to an existing treatment facility) or a new treatment facility.
- 9.) The necessity of a water reservoir has been discussed for some time. What can the greater Gualala public expect, as to water source and storage possibilities, in the next few years?
 - a. We are looking into placement of a reservoir in the water district. My understanding is that there will be significant number of hurdles for construction and operation once a location is found. Bringing a reservoir online will take several years even with continuous effort given the lack of available land, the incredible cost of planning/construction/associated facilities, and the numerous studies and permits that are required for such a large project. It's important to note that the majority of NGWC's district is in the Coastal Zone so there are additional environmental requirements.
- 10.) It is our understanding that the upgrade of water storage (new ca. 225- 250,000 gallon tank) at the bottom of Pacific Woods Rd. (replacing the existing storage capability and capacity), will further assist with water storage loss and collection line water loss issues. Is this accurate ?
 - a. It is designed to help augment our surface water sources to increase production capacity of the coastal surface water sources.
- 11.) Are there other areas within the NGWC district boundaries where collection / transmission line water loss issues are present ? And, are there plans to work on these areas ?
 - a. We are unaware of excessive water loss issues in distribution lines. When we find a leaking pipe or a leaking mainline is brought to our attention, we fix it.
- 12.) What has been done to the NGWC facilities since the inception of the CA SWRCB instigated water moratorium (approx. 2008) , in order to improve existing and future water service to its customers and the community, and to make progress towards eventual lifting of the water moratorium ?
 - a. NGWC filed its water supply contingency plan (WSCP) with the SWRCB in 2009 and received final approval in 2015. Once approved, NGWC began implementing this plan.

The WSCP laid out the plan we have followed: applying to the State for water rights, drilling groundwater wells, pursuing inter-tie with The Sea Ranch water system, investigating desalinization possibilities, ensuring we correct water losses in identified areas and reducing water loss in general, and lastly looking for reservoir sites ourselves.

13.) There has been much talk about the abilities of the public and private sectors to work together towards acquiring grant monies for needed infrastructure. Can you update us on NGWC efforts to secure grants? (Note: Senator Mike McGuire recently stated that over the past 6 months California has awarded over \$93 million in grants for water and drought infrastructure projects here on the North Coast and the North Bay.)

- a. NGWC just completed its first project utilizing a matching grant for the 200,000 gallon tank mentioned in question 10. This took about 7 years to bring to completion. We are approved for another almost-fully covered grant to repair the Parr tank and its aged pipeline. This project took almost 2 years to get to where we are. We are working to determine if NGWC is even eligible for the grants you mentioned. As an investor-owned utility, NGWC is limited in eligibility for most grant programs. We are still putting most our effort into finding a viable reservoir site within the system. This is why I always encourage GMAC to assist NGWC to identify a reservoir site because that is the first hurdle. At this time, it is not clear if the infrastructure grants mentioned could be used by NGWC for any project or for a reservoir specifically.