

Steve and Sharon,

Thank you for reaching out, and for sharing the drone footage — it's a helpful visual for residents to see current conditions on the river.

Here is an update on the City's water system status:

The City is currently drawing water from the Eel River Infiltration Gallery. The river's channel still has sufficient volume passing the intake pipes to keep the Infiltration Gallery operating normally.

To manage the lower river levels, our Operations team has proactively reduced the withdrawal rate from 600 gpm down to 500 gpm, with the ability to reduce further to 300 gpm if conditions require it. Another way of putting it is that we run the gallery for a longer period of time but at a reduced gpm level. For context, current average City demand is approximately 280-300 gpm, and last year around late September we reduced withdrawal to roughly 400 gpm, so this year's adjustment is consistent with, and a bit ahead of, that pattern.

Regarding the Rio Dell Metropolitan wells: they are not currently in use. Construction on the Water Distribution Project in the Bellevue and Eeloa areas is happening near the well sites, so we're holding off until that work wraps up in order to avoid any possible complications to the project. Once construction is complete, the plan is to run the wells for a short duration to help offset the amount of water being drawn from the Eel River. On the river levels themselves: comparing the Scotia gauge readings and assuming the accuracy of the monitoring equipment, the water level elevation and flow are running roughly 7% higher than this time last year (August 1 2026 compared to August 1, 2025).

So while flows are still being watched closely, current conditions are somewhat improved compared to this same period last year, although both years are below 2024. If you are wondering about the difference between the Scotia Gauge and what Redway is reporting, remember that Redway is on the South Fork of the Eel, while we're on the main river served by the South Fork, but also the North, Middle and the main stem up to Lake Pillsbury.

We'll continue to monitor river conditions and adjust withdrawal rates as needed to protect both water supply reliability and the health of the river. For Rio Dell, the more critical questions will come in September and October when the area typically receives at least a couple smaller rain events that bolster supply in the river ahead of the full winter onslaught. Assuming a dry period extending into those months that threatens supply or the river, we will start at a Stage 2 Water Emergency which calls for mandatory water conservation measures, initially most focused on outdoor landscape watering, including the city's use of outdoor water. The stages escalate from there.

Please let us know if you have any follow-up questions, and thank you for helping keep residents informed.

Best regards,

Kyle Knopp

City Manager

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From: Steve <steve@riodelltimes.com>

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2026 10:46 AM

To: Kyle Knopp <knoppk@cityofriodell.ca.gov>

Cc: Jessica Hill <hillj@cityofriodell.ca.gov>

Subject: PRA: City Water Update

We would like to request an update from the city on the current status of city water considering the low water flow in the Eel River. Is the city using the secondary water wells over in Metropolitan now and if so, how much of the water is coming from there versus the river. What is the status of the water intake gallery during the low flows?

Any other information related to the city tap water and information that residents need to know is appreciated.

Drone footage of the Eel River as of 8/8/26 is posted at [our website](#) and [YouTube](#).

Regards,

Steve and Sharon Wolff

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