

GENERAL MANAGER - SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY
[Santa Rosa, CA]



GENERAL MANAGER

Sonoma County Water Agency
(Santa Rosa, CA)

ROBERTS CONSULTING GROUP INC

rcg

GENERAL MANAGER – SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

[Santa Rosa, CA]

THE AREA

Sonoma County is conveniently located less than 30 miles north of San Francisco. It boasts over 200 award-winning wineries, scenic coastline and beaches, the winding Russian River, majestic redwoods, 21 challenging golf courses, museums, galleries, diverse festivals, fine dining, and charming inns and spas. The County encompasses over one million acres of land and water, rich in scenic beauty with an array of parks, recreational facilities, campsites and lakes. Open space and agricultural land account for a great majority of Sonoma County acreage.

Fueled by job growth and quality of life, Sonoma County has continued a modest growth rate, having reached nearly 500,000 residents. A majority of these residents (69%) live within the city limits of the County's nine cities. They are, in order of population: Santa Rosa (the County seat), Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Windsor, Healdsburg, Sonoma, Cloverdale, Sebastopol and Cotati. 67.8% of the population is Caucasian, with 23.5% Hispanic, 3.7% Asian, 1.6% African American, .9% American Indian and 2.5 percent Other.

The County's economy is extremely diverse, relying on agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, services and high technology industries. Agriculture (including wine grapes and livestock/poultry) and tourism are two of the major drivers of the Sonoma County economy. The tourism industry generates over \$1 billion annually, with more than seven million visitors each year. Unemployment rates for Sonoma County have increased since 2005, yet the County has consistently maintained a level lower than the California average.

While home prices reflect the value of living in an area that offers an abundance of amenities, the prices of Sonoma County homes remain one of the last true real estate bargains in the greater Bay Area. There are 40 K-12 school districts in the County. Over 71,000 students attend the 179 public schools that are located in Sonoma County. Higher education opportunities are available at Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University, among other institutions. Healthcare resources include Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa, St. Joseph Health System, and Kaiser-Permanente, in addition to others.

THE AGENCY

The Sonoma County Water Agency is a special district formed by the California State legislature in 1949 and is responsible for providing a safe and reliable water supply to its customers in Sonoma and Marin counties. The Agency also maintains 300 miles of flood control channels and provides sanitation services. With a FY 2010-11 budget of approximately \$185 million, the Agency employs about 200 staff and consists of five divisions, including: Engineering and Resource Planning, Environmental Resources and Public Affairs, Operations, Maintenance, and Administrative Services. The Agency supports the concept of environmental sustainability, focusing on renewable power sources, and strives to be a leader in its water conservation and fishery restoration programs.

"The mission of the Sonoma County Water Agency is to effectively manage the resources in our care for the benefit of people and the environment through resource and environmental stewardship, technical innovation and responsible fiscal management." Their vision statement is "The Sonoma County Water Agency is a regional leader in water resources management. The Water Agency strives to look forward, beyond today's issues, to anticipate ways to advance its mission. Additionally, the Water Agency continues to adapt its mission in response to changing opportunities, keeping the Water Agency at the forefront of developments in the water industry."

The four core functions of the Agency are water supply, water transmission, flood control, and wastewater collection and treatment. As a wholesale water supplier, the Agency is responsible for securing and maintaining

water rights and encouraging water conservation and reuse to meet the present and future reasonable demands of its customers. The Agency's water transmission system provides for wholesale domestic water delivery to eight primary contractors (the cities of Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Sonoma, Rohnert Park and Cotati; Town of Windsor; Valley of the Moon Water District; and North Marin Water District), the Marin Municipal Water District, and other smaller customers, who in turn deliver drinking water to more than 600,000 residents. For flood control, the Agency designs, constructs and maintains certain flood control facilities. The Agency provides sanitation functions to county sanitation districts and Agency zones.

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors acts as the Water Agency's Board of Directors. The five members of the Board are elected by district, on a non-partisan basis, for four-year staggered terms. In addition, the Water Advisory Committee (WAC) represents the eight major cities and water districts that receive water delivered by the Water Agency aqueduct system. The Committee helps make decisions regarding water supply issues in the Water Agency's service area. Members of the WAC are eight elected officials, each appointed by their respective Council or Board.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Water Agency and its contractors face big challenges, including:

- * An economic downturn that has impacted residents' ability and willingness to pay higher water rates.
- * Aging infrastructure, located in a seismically active region, that will require new projects to increase the reliability of water deliveries.
- * A federal mandate to change the way the Agency does business in order to help save endangered Coho salmon and threatened Steelhead.
- * Uncertain water supply conditions, including the effects of climate change on both the amount and timing of rainfall.
- * Increasing costs of energy and increasing energy demand.



GENERAL MANAGER – SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

[Santa Rosa, CA]

The Water Agency and water contractors have already taken some steps to meet these challenges: individuals are conserving water; the use of recycled water has increased; new sources of water are being explored; and the Water Agency and its contractors are continually improving operations. While these are good steps, they are not enough. That is why the Water Agency Board of Directors held a workshop that focused on strategies to ensure future water supply and to increase the reliability of regional water. Below are nine strategies outlined in the draft Water Supply Strategy Action Plan:

- * Address Dry Creek summer flows.
- * Modify operation of the Russian River system.
- * Evaluate potential climate change impacts on water supply and flood protection.
- * Pursue combined water supply and flood control projects.
- * Work with stakeholders to promote sound, information-based water supply planning programs.
- * Improve transmission system reliability.
- * Take advantage of energy and water synergies.
- * Implement integrated water management.
- * Overcome organizational fragmentation to promote efficiency of water system operations and planning.

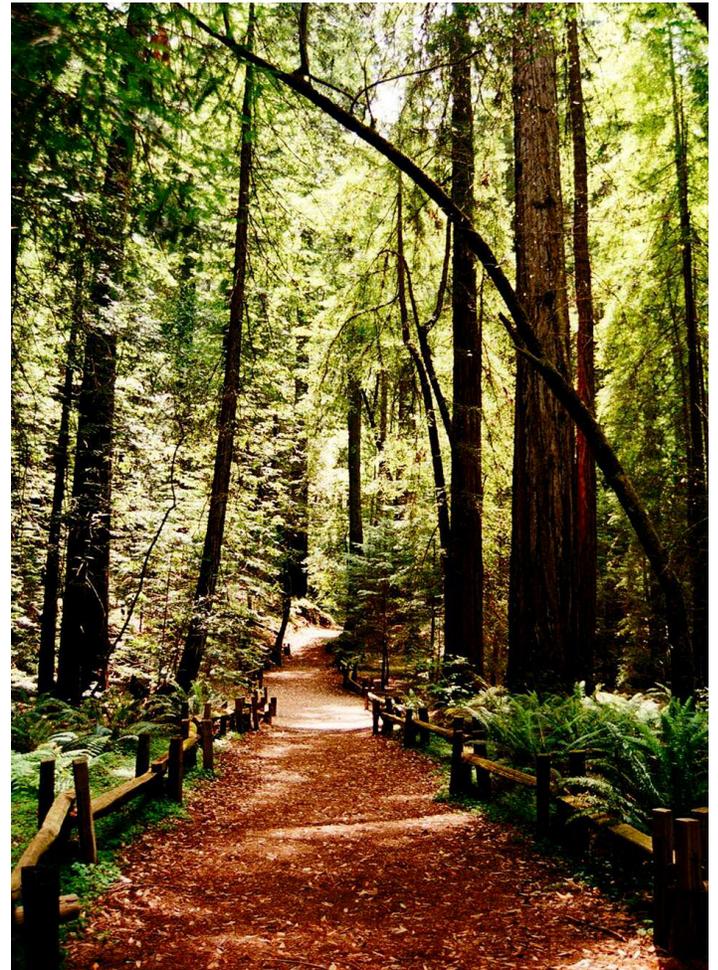
In addition to maintaining relationships with current contractors (including rate structures), among the concerns facing the Agency are the economy, water supply shortages, and compliance with the recent Russian River Biological Opinion. The State of California and local governments are facing unprecedented budget shortfalls. There is potential that the Agency's sole source of funding for flood protection activities may be borrowed by the State to address its deficit. Were this to occur, the Agency would work through legislative channels to seek a plan to mitigate this loss.

Consecutive dry spring conditions and large reductions in releases from the Potter Valley Project into the East Fork Russian River/Lake Mendocino have impacted the amount of water stored in Lake Mendocino in recent years, though this has been mitigated by better rainfall this past spring. Because of the potential for these drought conditions to return, the Agency must reduce the amount of water supplied from the Russian River to its customers. These delivery reductions coincide with the need to perform several new projects and studies associated with the final Russian River Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service for Steelhead trout, Coho salmon and Chinook salmon in the Russian River watershed. Meeting the requirements of the Biological Opinion while maintaining adequate water delivery is a significant issue for the Agency.

The Agency has been working to reduce operational expenses, particularly with respect to the Water Transmission System, because of an anticipated reduction of water sales income. Most of the costs for operations of the Water Transmission System are fixed, therefore larger than normal rate increases are necessary to fund routine operations and maintenance activities, existing debt service, and actions required to comply with the Biological Opinion.

The Agency also needs to work with its stakeholders on long term water supply planning, and continue actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Agency's Board of Directors approved a Strategic Priorities Plan in 2007, identifying nine priorities. Many of these priorities represent multi-year efforts and will extend into future fiscal years. These priorities include:



- * Assist customers to meet their water supply needs.
- * Address impacts on listed salmonid species.
- * Protect water quality and improve the reliability of the water transmission system.
- * Improve the Agency's business efficiency and effectiveness.
- * Lead development of regional sustainability programs and water resource partnerships.
- * Conduct stream maintenance and provide funding for drainage, storm water quality and stream habitat enhancement in flood control zones.
- * Improve public understanding of the Agency and Agency programs.
- * Address critical infrastructure needs for sanitation systems.
- * Improve employee recruitment and retention.

Specific FY 2010-11 Water Agency objectives include:

- * Continue planning and implementation of the Biological Opinion. Specific projects for the year include the Mirabel fish screen replacement, design of pilot mitigation measures in Dry Creek, monitoring of water quality in the estuary, implementation of temporary streamflow changes, and initiation of environmental analyses required to process BO-mandated permanent streamflow changes.

GENERAL MANAGER – SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

[Santa Rosa, CA]

- * Become ISO 14000 and ISO 9001 registered. Complete the necessary improvements in procedures so that ISO registration can be achieved.
- * Work with water contractors to develop the strategies and implementation plans necessary to assure a reliable, sustainable, economical and diversified water supply for the future.
- * Complete work on the 2010 Urban Water Management Plan by December 2010.
- * Complete the development of long term financial plans for each of the Agency's enterprises to help ensure sufficient resources are available to carry out strategic projects while maintaining adequate levels of fund balance reserves.
- * Complete the tenant improvements to the operations building at 1315 Aviation Blvd. and move to a single campus which will allow for significantly better internal communications and more efficient overall operations.
- * Provides leadership and administrative policy direction; coordinates administration of all Agency divisions; evaluates performance of subordinate managers; conducts meetings and conferences with Agency staff; advises the Board of Supervisors regularly of water, wastewater, flood control and conservation issues.
- * Establishes and maintains effective communication and working relationships with related County departments and key officials of federal, state and local agencies.
- * Directs the research, analysis and formulation of the Agency budget; determines departmental budget priorities; prepares and justifies program and budget recommendations to the County Administrator and the Board of Supervisors; ensures that budget expenditures are properly controlled.
- * Establishes and evaluates monitoring and evaluation systems; establishes measurable standards for reviewing the success of the plan and the new water, wastewater and flood control systems and services.

THE POSITION

Subject to determination of policy by the Board of Directors and the County Administrator, the General Manager plans, organizes, directs and coordinates all activities and functions of the Sonoma County Water Agency in relation to the management and conservation of water resources and reclamation, and performs related duties as required.

The Water Agency General Manager is the principal administrative person in overall charge of the Agency. He/She is in a position of trust and confidence, and serves as the Agency head and appointing authority for all employees in the Agency. This person provides advice and consultation on all matters related to the requirements of the Agency and in all matters relating to water, sanitation, recycling, conservation, environmental affairs and flood control.

The General Manager serves at the will and pleasure of the Agency Board of Directors. Typical duties of the position include, but are not limited to:

- * Interviews and selects top management staff; reviews and approves staff training programs; recommends changes in position classification consistent with organizational structure; evaluates the performance of subordinate managers; approves or disapproves merit salary increases; adjusts employee grievances within limits of delegated authority, has authority to hire and discharge in the Water Agency; delegates authority and holds subordinate managers accountable for the efficient administration of their divisions or sections.
- * Develops a program to monitor and manage stream flows in the Russian River and consideration for all beneficial uses; ensures future water planning and modeling of water availability and usage for resource management purposes.
- * Negotiates contracts with other agencies for intake, treatment, storage, transmission and resale of water.
- * Directs and coordinates preparation of rate schedules for the resale of water delivered to other agencies and customers; directs and coordinates preparation of rate schedules for the collection, treatment, storage and disposal of wastewater, and the reuse of reclaimed water for customers served by the Agency.



GENERAL MANAGER – SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

[Santa Rosa, CA]



- * Directs and coordinates the preparation and administration of the Agency budget; reviews and evaluates current programs, anticipates future needs, and formulates long range goals of the Agency.
- * Consults with legal counsel concerning matters of litigation, contracts and Agency operations; monitors legislation at the federal, state and local levels; directs and coordinates changes required by new legislations.
- * Plans and directs the selection, training, assignment, supervision and evaluation of employees; plans and directs Agency employees in areas of financial and program management.
- * Coordinates planning and other activities of the Agency with those of other public agencies and various County departments.
- * Coordinates preparation and release to the media of information related to the programs and services of the Water Agency.
- * Advises the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator of any changes in State laws or regulations that will have an impact on the delivery of water, wastewater, flood control and reclamation services; provides the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator with specific plans, costs and recommendations needed to meet legal requirements.
- * Confers with and advises citizen groups, advisory bodies and others concerned with Agency programs and activities; represents the Agency and speaks before public bodies, groups, organizations and the public on matters pertaining to Agency programs and activities; and attends conferences and seminars to keep informed of new developments and technologies.
- * Directs the preparation of a wide variety of plans and reports, and maintenance of Agency records and documents.

THE CANDIDATE

Education and Experience

- * Any combination of education and training which would provide the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and abilities listed would be qualifying. A typical way to achieve this would be through graduation from an accredited college or university, with a bachelor's degree in engineering, public administration, business administration, environmental studies, geography, economics, physical and biological sciences, or a closely related field. A degree in civil engineering is desirable, although not a requirement.
- * Candidates should have extensive administrative and management experience, which would provide an opportunity to acquire the knowledge

and abilities listed. Normally this would include six years of professional management experience in a large public agency including water, wastewater, city or county government. Responsibility for the development and implementation of complex public works/utility projects, programs, goals, policies and strategies is highly desired.

- * California experience, as well as experience with a water wholesaler, would be a plus.
- * Possession of a valid certification of registration as a Professional Engineer issued by the State Board of Registration for Civil and Professional Engineers is highly desired.
- * Possession of a valid driver's license at the appropriate level including special endorsements, as required by the State of California, may be required depending upon assignment to perform the essential job functions of the position.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

It is important for the selected candidate to have excellent interpersonal skills, both oral and written communication skills, and be a team builder. He/She should have extensive knowledge of the principles and practices of water, wastewater and water resources management and administration; and the political attitudes and concerns surrounding water and wastewater conservation, control and utilization; as well as thorough knowledge of:

- * Laws, regulations and legal opinions relating to water rights, water supply and transmission activities, water quality, environmental activities, wastewater and water reuse activities, and flood and drainage control activities.
- * Economics and infrastructure financing of domestic water supply and transmission systems, sanitation systems, reclamation and flood control systems.
- * The principles and practices of public works administration and organization including personnel and fiscal management.
- * Working knowledge of budgetary practices and procedures.

This person should also be able to:

- * Plan, organize and coordinate the activities of an agency with diverse major ongoing program responsibilities.
- * Establish and maintain harmonious working relationships with subordinates, representatives of other County departments, public agencies, private contractors, engineers, architects and the general public.
- * Plan, organize and coordinate the activities of a large department of highly specialized professional and technical employees.



GENERAL MANAGER – SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

[Santa Rosa, CA]

- * Interpret, explain and apply applicable laws, rules, regulations, ordinances and federal, state and local legislation.
- * Prepare and direct the preparation of simple, concise and comprehensive written reports and oral presentations containing alternate solutions and recommendations regarding specific resources, plans and policies.
- * Provide effective leadership in the development of new or improved procedures and policies.
- * Evaluate departmental policies and procedures.
- * Define problem areas, and direct the implementation of policy decisions and practices to improve department operations.
- * Exercise initiative, ingenuity and sound judgment in solving difficult administrative, economic, technical and personnel problems.
- * Serve as technical advisor to public officials, boards and the general public on water resources, sanitation and flood control matters.
- * Analyze and review staff reports and recommendations, and provide constructive criticism.
- * Effectively interview, select, train, supervise and evaluate subordinate managers.
- * Supervise and control the expenditure of funds and resources for the Agency.
- * Dental Plan – Excellent family coverage for Employee and dependents at a minimal employee premium of \$13 bi-weekly.
- * Vision Care, Disability Insurance and Life Insurance (two times annual salary) – County pays full costs of premiums.
- * Comprehensive Medical Examination – Department Heads are eligible to receive an annual comprehensive medical examination paid by the County.
- * Cash Allowance – A cash allowance of approximately \$600 per month is paid to each employee.
- * IRS Section 125 Plan Benefits – The County provides an IRS 125 plan that allows employees to pay for child care and medical care on a pre-tax basis. Additionally, all employee's costs for medical and dental are paid on a pre-tax basis via the premium conversion benefit in the 125 plan.
- * Retirement – County Retirement Act of 1937 with 3% @ 60 formula. Fully integrated with Social Security.
- * Deferred Compensation – County contribution of 5% of salary to an IRS 401(a) deferred compensation account. The County's 401(a) contribution is included in the employee earnings for the 1937 Act retirement compensation base. Employee may also contribute on a pre-tax basis to an IRS 457 plan up to the IRS annual maximum.
- * Retiree Medical Benefit – The County contributes into a Health Reimbursement Arrangement for the employee while employed to fund post employment Retiree Health Benefits.

Management Style and Personal Traits

The ideal candidate will be collaborative, a consensus builder, encourage participative decision-making, and delegate, yet monitor staff performance (not a micro-manager). He/She should excel at selecting and motivating subordinate staff. This person should be a team player who works well with contractors and other agencies, should be able to multi-task, and be willing to take reasonable risks. In addition, he/she should treat all Board members evenhandedly and keep the Board fully informed in a timely manner.

The selected candidate should be a leader who can articulate a vision for the Agency, "see the big picture," be politically savvy and able to work effectively with local, state and federal officials, as well as appointees of funding and regulatory agencies. He/She should be intelligent, innovative, confident and have a professional presence. Finally, this person should be patient, a good listener and have a sense of humor.

COMPENSATION

The annualized salary range for this position is \$175,902 to \$213,804, with hiring dependent upon the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. In addition, management benefits are provided which typically include:

- * Vacation – Accrual of 15 days annually for the first ten years; up to 24 days annually based on length of service. An additional 7.5 days (60 hours) of management leave annually which may be taken as time off or cash payments.
- * Holidays – County observes 11 holidays per year plus 17 hours of "floating" holiday hours.
- * Sick Leave – Accrual of 12 days annually with no limit on accumulation. Employees are paid 25% of accumulated sick leave upon voluntary separation or 100% credit at retirement.
- * Health Plan – Choice of three health plans (one PPO and two HMO) with the County contribution of approximately \$500 per month.

- * Vehicle Allowance - \$215 per pay period.
- * Professional Development Funds – Reimbursement up to \$950 per fiscal year for job related activities such as periodicals and training materials, professional dues and memberships, and purchase of professional literature. An additional \$300 allowance is available for reimbursement of certain taxable expenses, such as physical fitness. (Note: Due to budget issues, all professional development funds are currently suspended through FY 2010/11.)
- * Relocation Reimbursement Programs – Reimbursement for household relocation is available.

Due to ongoing fiscal issues, the County of Sonoma has implemented a Mandatory Time Off Program for FY 2010-11 and FY 2011-12 of eight days and five days respectively. Details of the program are available upon request.

HOW TO APPLY

Send resumes by **December 15, 2010 (email preferred)** to:

ROBERTS CONSULTING GROUP INC

PO Box 16692
Beverly Hills, CA 90209
Telephone: (818) 783-7752
Facsimile: (818) 783-6377
Email: robertsrcg@msn.com

Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer

Additional information about the Sonoma County Water Agency can be found on their website at www.scwa.ca.gov.

