Rector Dam Water Could Run Out in Aug.

A water shortage advisory for all of Yountville was issued Tuesday by an engineer for the State Water Resources Control Board.

In an email message sent to CalVet administrators and copied to Town of Yountville staffers, a member of the CalVet Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water stated, “I am gathering information on the water situation for the Veterans Home. Based on lack of rain and historical low reservoir level for February, it is projected that the Veterans Home will not be able to divert water for treat- ment this coming summer.”

Guy Schott, P.E., who works in the Santa Rosa office of the Water Resources Control Board, added, “It’s estimated that the Rector Reservoir would reach Carryover Storage Capacity in 26 weeks or by late August 2018. The assumptions are little rain in forecast and little change in reservoir demands. This is a conservative estimate as increase in evaporation and system demands and decrease in inflow to the reservoir are not considered.”

Town Manager Steve Rogers explained when water levels reach carryover storage capacity it is anticipated that the Veterans Home will not be able to divert water for treat- ment and delivery to its cus- tomers, including the Town of Yountville and the Veterans Home itself. This could result in the Town needing to activ- ate its emergency well and purchase water from the City of Napa to address water sup- ply needs.

Schott advised the Veterans Home “to immediately consid- er banking as much water as it can while water is available for purchase through the City of Napa.”

The Town of Yountville was also encouraged to purchase water from Napa immediately.

Schott asked the Home to provide an immediate plan of action of the current situation by Friday (February 16). Rogers shared the advisory with the Town Council and commented, “Clearly this news is extremely concerning and represents the first time that the Town has been advised that there is the possi- bility of a water supply issue ... Town staff will be reaching out to the Home to work on learning more about the situa- tion, their plan and communi- cation plan.”

Once more specific informa- tion is provided, staff will pre- sent a proposed response plan to the Town Council, Rogers added.

The Town has a $2 million drought reserve fund. To date Yountville has recorded slightly less than nine inches of rain this year. Last year, an especially wet one, the town had already recorded 40 inches of precipitation.

Hearing on Rate Increases Is Tuesday

A public hearing on the controversial water and sewer rate increases proposed annually in Yountville over the next five years is the main item on Tuesday’s (February 20) agenda of the Yountville Town Council. The hearing is set to begin at 6 p.m. at Town Hall.

The close of the hearing will mark the deadline for written protests to one or both of the increases under the terms of Prog. 21B. At that time if it appears protests were submitted by 441 ratepayers or more (a majority), further discussion will be halted until the protests can be verified. If, during the hearing, it is determined a majority protest was received the rate proposal will be declared defeated by protest.

If the number of protests at the end of the hearing are outside of the range of a majority, the Council is expected to discuss and take action. The five members could propose or make changes and modifications to either or both of the proposals as long as their actions do not exceed the more than the original proposal of seven percent for water and 12 percent for sewer.

Army of Locals Tracks Canny, Old Canine for 20 Days

Meanwhile back in Yountville ... It was our third day here, and I just went out for some dog food. When I came back to the brown, it was gone,” chef Greg Weiner, new executive chef for Estate Yountville, told me. “I must have pulled the door closed all the way.”

Ralph Cautela and Sean Mayhew from the Vintage House transition team were in town and set out to help find Brown. Neighbor Kristin Freund immediately got the word out on Nextdoor Yountville.

This pet-loving town responded in huge fashion. Mallory Urran McGilvray from Silver Trident called her friend Laticia Sahs at Hope and Grace. Once a professional dog tracker, Sahs reached out to Yountville PD.

“A good sign campaign is so important, especially in the first 48 hours,” she told me. So signs went up, and the first call came in. Bronson had been seen on Lincoln, and several neighbors went out with leashes and food searching the area.

Five miserable days went by without another Bronson sighting until Cyndi Gates saw his poster at the golf course. She had seen him on Vineyard View but lost track of him.

“Both of us have a se of the highway. We saw a dog across the street. It was the same dog.” She told me. New signs went up in that direction, and anxious volun- teers followed.

After work each night, Weiner drove around where Brown had been seen, searching until at least midnight. Each new sighting helped Sahs track Bronson’s pattern.

“The fact that he wore a blue harness helped to elim- inate false sightings,” Sahs said.

Mt. Veeder resident Paul Woodward and Joanna Ouddegast offered to let her set humane traps and cameras on their property. And, yes, he was seen at a compost pile. Other neighbors, too, reported sightings from their security cameras and loaned Weiner their ATV to search the property.

“Thankfully, since the fires,” Red told me, “we’ve not seen any bobcats or mountain lions.”

For 20 days, Sahs was repositioning her signs late one night up on Mt. Veeder. From the corner of her eye, she saw a skunk wandering down the road ... with Bronson along side. Knowing how skittish he’s been, she made her- self down out ahead of him (Continued on Page 8)