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June 16, 2025

TO: Rio Dell City Council

FROM: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

SUBJECT: Annual Adjustment to Solid Waste Franchise Agreement Held by Recology Eel River

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Approve the proposed rate adjustment with Recology Eel River and accept it as an amendment to the Solid Waste and Recycling Franchise Agreement, effective July 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The Solid Waste Franchise Agreement for the City of Rio Dell is with Recology Eel River (RER).

As documented in the packet and submitted by Recology, the new overall disposal rate per ton is \$211.71 compared to \$176.73 and \$162.66 during the prior two years. This equates to a 19.8 percent increase from the prior year. The CPI increase calculation for the year is an increase of 2.39 percent. The CPI calculation only impacts the portion of the rates associated with Recology's collection component. It is important to note that fees associated with the Humboldt Waste Management Authority (HWMA) represent the bulk of both the increase and overall per ton tipping fee.

The HWMA fees total \$195.23 per ton for 2026, compared to \$160.46 per ton in 2025 — an increase of approximately \$34.77 per ton. The largest driver of this increase is the HWMA Operations pass-through, which rose from \$94.33 to \$135.94 per ton. The ERD fees total \$16.48 per ton for 2026, up modestly from \$16.27 in 2025. Together, HWMA and ERD fees represent approximately 92% of the total per-ton tipping fee, with the remaining 8% attributable to Recology's collection-related costs.

The recycling (RCY) processing component has also increased significantly for the 2026 rate year. The RCY processing percentage of revenues rises to 8.35%, up from 4.40% in 2025. This reflects both higher per-ton processing fees (\$177.14 vs. \$153.79) and a carry-over balance owed from prior years. The actual 2025 RCY tons processed were 247.44, compared to the projected 191.10, contributing to a total owed for the 2026 rate year of \$63,562.

The current franchise agreement with Recology Eel River expires on December 31, 2026. Staff will be returning to the City Council later this year with options and recommendations. Collective Franchise negotiations with Recology (undertaken in coordination with the cities of Arcata, Eureka, Fortuna and the County) are now projected to have an implementation date of January 1, 2027.

Key Rate Changes Effective July 1, 2026:

- Total disposal rate per ton increases from \$176.73 to \$211.71 (19.8% increase).
- Residential 32-gallon cart (1x weekly) rate increases from \$38.26 to \$43.08 per month.
- Commercial 1 cubic yard bin (1x weekly) rate increases from \$131.31 to \$155.68 per month.
- Curbside recycling rate increases from \$8.72 to \$9.26 per month.
- Green waste rate increases from \$4.03 to \$4.28 per month.
- Debris box rental/haul rental period updated from 7 days to 3 days for all sizes.

A representative from Recology will be available to present and answer questions.

Attachments:

Recology Eel River Rate Calculation — Effective July 1, 2026.

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