



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

Sustainability, Resilience, Innovation Group

• Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation GM Monthly Report

Summary

Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office July 2025 Monthly Activities

Purpose

Informational

Activities in Support of the GM Business Plan

GOAL: Execute CAMP4W Implementation Strategy to Integrate Climate Adaptation District-Wide

1) Assess Climate Risks and Vulnerabilities

SRI staff is conducting several climate risk and vulnerability assessments for specific projects and facilities, including Pure Water Southern California, while also specifically assessing fire risks at critical Metropolitan facilities.

2) Set and Refine Targets and Policies

SRI is developing a set of policy recommendations to include climate adaptation and sustainable agriculture in the State Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund expenditure plan. Staff is also preparing for the next presentation on potential affordability approaches for Board consideration.

3) Identify Climate Adaptation Strategies

The SRI Office tracks progress on studies and initiatives to adapt to climate change throughout the District. Progress will be regularly reported through the relevant groups and/or the CAMP4W Quarterly Report. The SRI team is also developing a work plan for fire management planning and pursuing state funding opportunities for planning and implementation.

4) Evaluate Projects and Programs Using CAMP4W Assessment Criteria

The CAMP4W Assessment Team presented its initial assessment of Pure Water Southern California to the One Water Committee and will refine that and several other assessments for Board and Member Agency review in the coming months.

5) Integrate Climate Considerations and Implement Adaptation Strategies

SRI is developing sustainable landscaping guidelines for Metropolitan facilities that consider water use, energy use, extreme heat and fire risk. SRI is also working with groups through the district to integrate climate adaptation into the daily operations, planning, and decision-making.

6) Monitor and Report Progress

The first quarterly CAMP4W oral report was presented to the One Water Committee. Progress was made in several categories including integration of CAMP4W priorities in the GM's annual business plan, initiation of CAMP4W project and program assessments, development of an agency-wide tracking tool for adaptation efforts and specific work with teams such as CIP, Asset Management, and Power Operations on CAMP4W implementation.

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GOAL: Decide on Sites Reservoir and Protect Bay-Delta Interests

1) Implement Risk Reduction Strategies to Protect Delta Assets and Minimize Supply Disruption

SRI and Bay-Delta staff presented next steps for protecting Metropolitan's interests related to the four Delta islands. Specifically, staff proposes executing lease agreements for rice on two islands to reduce subsidence and generate revenue now while staff prepares a Value Assessment of the islands for Board consideration of ownership options moving forward. For the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife provided concurrence on the determination that the project qualifies for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects. Staff prepared and filed a Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation.

GOAL: Complete Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Planning, for Board to Consider Pure Water Southern California

1) Complete EIR Analyses and Public Process

The public review period for the draft EIR for the Pure Water Southern California Program closed on July 14, 2025. Environmental Planning staff supported a series of public meetings during the review period. Staff began drafting responses to public comments and preparing the Final EIR, as well as supporting the CAMP4W assessment of the program.

GOAL: Improve the Workplace and Promote START Values

1) Use Annual Assessments to Inform Workplace Improvement Strategies

SRI completed its employee evaluations and goal-setting process for 2024. Individual and team goals will be aligned to the GM's Strategic Priorities in a comprehensive SRI Workplan.

GOAL: Provide Organizational Stability and Deliver Operational Excellence

1) Support a Smooth and Efficient Transition to the Next GM

SRI provides cross-functional leadership and strategic planning for initiatives across the District. SRI-led collaborative efforts (e.g., CAP, CAMP4W, Process Matters, Innovation, grants management, zero-emission vehicle task force, fire management planning, and lands management) provides efficiency, structure, and oversight that will help inform a smooth GM transition.

For example, Process Matters is a staff-driven continuous improvement initiative that aligns with Metropolitan's values by actively listening to employee feedback and identifying practical steps to streamline internal processes. It supports the Strategic Priority of providing organizational stability and delivering operational excellence by fostering a culture of transparency, collaboration, and accountability.

As Metropolitan prepares for a leadership transition, Process Matters offers a framework for continuity by enabling frontline staff to highlight inefficiencies, test improvements, and share what works. This grassroots approach, along with the Five-Year CAMP4W Implementation Strategy, helps ensure smoother operations today while building a stronger, more resilient foundation for the future.

Additional SRI Activities

Sustainability and Resilience

SRI staff held its bi-monthly Climate Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Working Group (IWG) meeting which featured discussions on how a multi-benefit landscape restoration project on Webb Tract will reduce greenhouse gas emissions; on the stormwater pilot program for both direct-use and recharge; and a presentation from the Centralized Grants Management Office (CGMO) on available grant resources, expertise and tools. The CAP IWG is a critical team that guides the implementation of the 42 measures adopted in the CAP to reduce Met's

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GHG emissions across all operations and construction to meet the Board's adopted goals of reducing emissions by 40 percent by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality by 2045.

On June 2nd, 2025, SRI staff hosted SCS Global Services to assess Metropolitan's 2024 greenhouse gas inventory compliance with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Mandatory Reporting Regulation. On July 17, SCS Global submitted a positive verification statement to CARB, completing the required audit process.

Climate change has significant and growing impacts on occupational health and safety across many sectors. For Safety Awareness Month, SRI staff attended Safety Fairs throughout the district, presenting and providing information on the efforts that Metropolitan is undertaking to address climate change, specifically the district-wide work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across operations and construction.

The Chief SRI Officer participated in a [live forum](#) on KQED with Metropolitan Director Mark Gold and NYT Reporter Michael Kimmelman on water efficiency and climate adaptation efforts in Southern California.

Centralized Grants Management Office

On Wednesday, July 9, CGMO staff hosted a quarterly meeting of the Southern California Grants Network in hybrid format, with attendees from Metropolitan, member agencies, other local water districts, and representatives from community colleges and non-profit workforce development organizations. The primary focus was workforce development initiatives at Metropolitan and member agencies, as well as initiatives currently in development at non-profit organizations such as the ACWA Foundation and Work Force Resource Solutions, to foster future collaborations and the coordinated pursuit of grant funding at the state and federal levels.

CGMO staff also held numerous internal and external meetings in pursuit of two grant applications. Metropolitan staff provided industry expertise and technical support in the development of a new career technical education (CTE) program Letter of Interest submitted by Palo Verde College on July 11, in collaboration with the ACWA Foundation. The grant proposal, entitled "Canals to Careers: Industry-Led CTE Pathways into Water, Agriculture, and Transportation," seeks to address staffing shortages at Metropolitan's desert facilities, in addition to meeting other local hiring demands. Additionally, CGMO staff coordinated the development of a wildfire prevention grant proposal, due to Cal Fire in early August, that would advance Metropolitan's fire management program.

Finally, throughout the month, CGMO staff attended several webinars hosted by the Southern California Water Coalition, Cal Fire, and the Environmental Protection Agency, which focused on legislative priorities, funding opportunities for critical water infrastructure, active wildfire prevention grant opportunities, and successful water industry workforce development programs in other states.

Innovation, Pilots, and Emerging Technologies

Metropolitan launched the Pilot Partnership this quarter to empower staff to help identify, accelerate, and steward innovation pilots aligned with the agency's strategic priorities. The partnership provides a dedicated forum for staff to collaborate across departments, test new approaches, and resolve operational challenges through targeted experimentation. This initiative also supports Metropolitan's Strategic Priorities and will play a key role in piloting early-stage ideas emerging from the Process Matters continuous improvement effort.

Following an initial set of recommendations discussed with executive management in June, the Process Matters effort has evolved into an agency-wide continuous improvement initiative. The initial recommendations included five quick wins slated for near-term implementation in Q3 2025, such as standardizing buffers between meetings to reduce burnout and enhance productivity. Moving forward, Process Matters will provide a platform to test and refine staff-driven process improvement ideas on an ongoing basis.

Environmental Planning Services

Staff continued preparation of addenda to the Program EIR for the Weymouth Wheeler Gate Security Improvements and Weymouth Water Quality Lab Building Improvements projects, and continued to support the progressive design building process for the Sepulveda Feeder Pump Stations Project. Staff received comments from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the Biological Assessment for the Inland Feeder/Foothill Pump Station Intertie Project and are preparing responses to comments and finalizing the document. Environmental monitoring of construction activities continued for the PCCP Second Lower Feeder Reach 3B, Weymouth Basins 5 to 8 Rehabilitation, and La Verne Shops Upgrades projects. Construction is complete on the Perris Valley

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Pipeline Interstate 215 Project, and staff prepared the final project completion memo and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program documentation.

Critical operations and maintenance activities were supported by the Environmental Planning Section. Staff provided CEQA and regulatory clearances and conducted biological resource surveys and environmental monitoring for activities throughout the service area, including conducting biological resource surveys at 23 communication tower sites extending from Cathedral City, California, to Lake Havasu, Arizona and Las Vegas, Nevada. In addition, staff reviewed and analyzed CEQA notices for 19 external projects to determine the potential impacts on Metropolitan and protect Metropolitan's right-of-way and facilities; comment letters were prepared and submitted for projects that had the potential for impacts.

The Environmental Planning Section continued oversight of reserve management activities to protect valuable natural resources and meet Metropolitan's mitigation obligations. Security patrols were conducted throughout the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Reserve and the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve (MSR) to prevent trespassing, vandalism, poaching, theft, and to protect the reserves' natural and cultural resources, facilities, and equipment. Specific activities at the Lake Mathews Reserve included applying herbicide to mowed areas to prevent regrowth of noxious weeds and repairing patrol roads and fencing. Activities at the MSR included applying herbicide treatments to eliminate invasive plants (Sahara mustard, yellow starthistle), maintaining greenhouse container plants and collecting mulefat cuttings to propagate for future restoration site planting, conducting vegetation maintenance for fire and habitat management, and continued operation of seasonal brown-headed cowbird traps. The Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center was open on Saturdays.

Land Management

An entry permit was issued to Insituform Technologies on behalf of the Los Angeles County Sanitation District for the use of Metropolitan's fee-owned land in connection with the Sanitation District's Soledad Canyon Trunk Sewer Rehabilitation Project. Metropolitan is helping facilitate the project by accommodating temporary sewage bypass pipes on its land.