



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

External Affairs

• External Affairs Monthly Activities Report for April 2024

Summary

This report provides a summary of External Affairs’ group activities for March 2024.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Highlights

Chair Ortega, GM Hagekhalil, AGM Upadhyay, and Chief SRI Officer Crosson provided an overview of CAMP4W and other water issues to member agencies including the San Fernando City Council (April 2), Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD (April 10), Las Virgenes MWD (April 16), Eastern MWD (April 17), Long Beach Utilities Commission (April 18), Compton City Council (April 23), Santa Monica City Council (April 23), and West Basin MWD (April 27).



Throughout the month, Chair Ortega and Metropolitan leaders met with member agencies and local city councils to provide updates on Southern California’s water supply conditions, sustainability initiatives, planned investments to ensure continued reliability and resiliency, and CAMP4W



Coordinated arrangements for Colorado River Board of California meeting and tour at Diamond Valley Lake. (April 10)

Director Erdman provided opening remarks at the Pando Populus event at California Institute of Technology. Metropolitan and Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts are sponsors of a program to create a “spotlight on water” for college and university students. (April 14)

Director Dick and AGM Zinke attended the Southern California Water Coalition quarterly luncheon on “Digital Democracy, Voter Sentiment, and Advocating for Water Infrastructure”. (April 19)



GM Monthly Report April 2024

Metropolitan was recognized as the Utility of the Year by the Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce. GM Hagekhalil, Metropolitan staff, and local leaders including Mayor Bass attended. (April 19)

Metropolitan hosted representatives from the Abu Dhabi Department of Energy, led by His Excellency Eng. Awaidha Al Marar. The group toured the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center and met with GM Hagekhalil. (April 25)

Metropolitan sponsored and Chief SRI Officer Crosson presented on Sustainability issues at LACI Spring Power Day. (April 26)

Chair Ortega, GM Hagekhalil, Colorado River Resources Manager Hasencamp, and staff attended a signing ceremony of the Water Resiliency Act among Colorado River Tribes, State of Arizona, and the U.S Department of the Interior. (April 26)

In coordination with the SRI office, organized and hosted an Earth Day Lunch and Learn event for Metropolitan employees highlighting innovation and sustainability initiatives. (April 30)

Chair Ortega, Directors Erdman, Goldberg, McMillan, and Morris, GM Hagekhalil, and staff attended a reception honoring Metropolitan's Heather Collins in her new role as AWWA President; ACWA President Cathy Green and ACWA Vice President Ernie Avila. (April 30)



CAP President Goddard, USBR Commissioner Touton, GM Hagekhalil, Arizona Governor Hobbs, CRIT Chairwoman Flores, Department of Interior Secretary Haaland, Arizona DWR Director Buschatzke, and Board Chair Ortega, Jr.



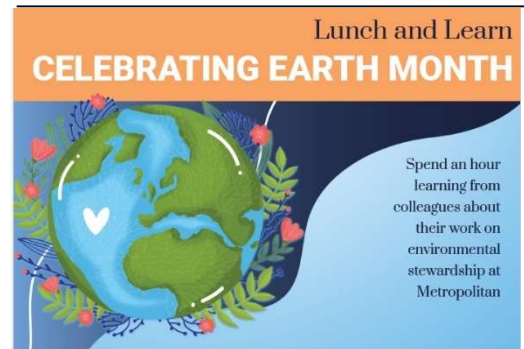
Heather Collins
AWWA President



Cathy Green



Ernie Avila



Legislative Services

Federal

Metropolitan hosted House Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources Chair Rouzer (NC-7) and Rep. Napolitano (CA-31), and staff to tour the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center and learn more about the future of recycled water in Southern California. (April 2)



R - Congressional leaders and staff joined Metropolitan at the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center; L- Representative Rouzer



Legislation was introduced in Congress to advance numerous Metropolitan priorities including liability protection for water agencies if per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are designated as hazardous

GM Monthly Report April 2024

substances (H.R. 7944), creating a permanent federal low-income homeowner water assistance program (H.R. 8032), and extending the Bureau of Reclamation's large-scale water recycling program (H.R. 7990).

State

GM Hagekhalil and Metropolitan staff met with legislators and staff to urge support for board-approved priorities in the proposed climate bond and other legislative priorities moving through the legislature. This included meetings with Asm Isaac Bryan, Chair of Asm Natural Resources Committee, and Asm Tina McKinnor, Chair of the Los Angeles Legislative Delegation. (April 4)

Metropolitan advocated in support of several bills in the state Legislature, including SB 903 (Skinner) focused on banning PFAS, AB 2409 (Papan) focused on infrastructure permitting transparency, AB 1827 (Papan) which clarifies Prop-218, and AB 2610 (Garcia), which will support conservation on the Colorado River.



Community Leaders Briefing in Orange County

Metropolitan advocated a support if amended position on SB 1390 (Caballero) to ensure protection for our existing water rights. .

Several bills of interest are moving through the legislature where Metropolitan has not taken a position, but is actively monitoring. AB 2614 (Ramos) regarding tribal uses of water, passed out of Asm Appropriations Committee and a package a bills intended to build on the State's Conservation as a California Way of Life regulations passed out of policy committee: AB 3121 (Hart), SB 1110 (Ashby), SB 1185 (Niello) and SB 1330 (Archuleta).

Local

This month, Metropolitan staff presented, monitored, and/or participated in 80 webinars, meetings, and events with community organizations and trade associations, board members, and federal or state elected officials on Metropolitan activities and other water-specific topics.

Directors Dick and Seckel and GM Hagekhalil discussed regional partnerships and water reliability at the Community Leaders Briefing in Orange County with Assemblymember Davies (R-Oceanside). (April 6)

Media and Communications

- Coordinated an interview with LA Times editorial writer Robert Greene, board Chair Ortega and GM Hagekhalil on Metropolitan's adopted biennial budget and rates and charges; provided separate interviews with GM Hagekhalil and KPCC reporter Leslie Berenstein Rojas and LA Times' Ian James on Metropolitan's budget, rates, and charges.
- Responded to questions from the city of Beverly Hills and the Beverly Hills Press regarding a suspected leak on Santa Monica Feeder and necessary excavation.
- Set up an interview between Water Education Foundation's Nick Cahill and Bay-Delta Initiative's Hawk regarding Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in-stream flow and related issues.
- Coordinated a live interview at Compton Earth Day event between KBLA-AM 1580 and Director McCoy.
- Provided responses to questions on Metropolitan's investment management services Request for Qualifications from Zack Cziryak, editor of Texas-based Financial Investment News.

GM Monthly Report April 2024

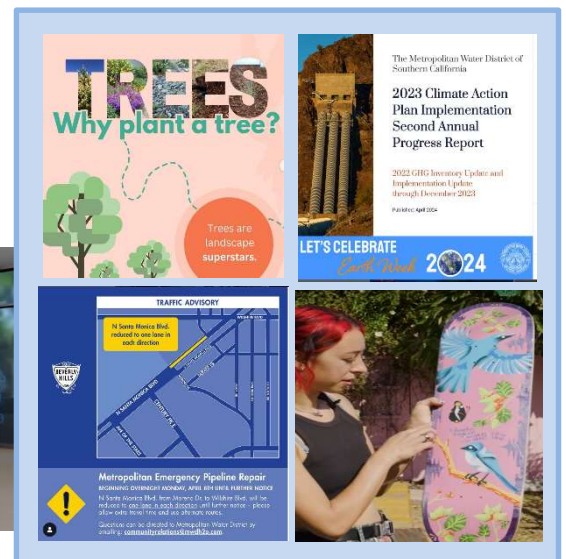
- Coordinated an interview with Talking Issues Podcast and Chair Ortega regarding the importance of Metropolitan, challenges for water delivery, and how the district will serve the region's future needs.
- Arranged an interview between Information Technology's Margolis and Wall Street Journal's Catherine Stupp about cybersecurity in the water sector.
- Coordinated KNX-AM interview with GM Hagekhalil and responded to questions from Southern California News Group regarding Local Resources Program agreements.
- Arranged separate interviews between KNBC-TV Channel 4's Conan Nolan and Politico's Camille von Kaenel about the results of the state's snow survey and Gov. Newsom's support of Delta Conveyance Project.
- Set up an interview for Global Water Intelligence's new Water Leaders Podcast and GM Hagekhalil regarding Pure Water Southern California and other water issues.
- Set up an interview between KPCC/LAist Jacob Margolis and GM Hagekhalil regarding water supply outlook.
- Arranged an interview between SRI's Hightower and KBLA-AM 1580 regarding water equity and communities of color as part of Metropolitan's partnership with the station on its 12-month Climate Justice Initiative.

Press Releases

- Metropolitan Board's adoption of biennial budget, rates, and charges
- S&P and Moody's reaffirming Metropolitan's strong credit ratings
- Metropolitan Board's approval of four Local Resource Program agreements
- Urgent shutdown of the Santa Monica Feeder in Beverly Hills

Creative Design, Website and Social Media

- Completed installation of new Water Quality Laboratory gallery museum celebrating the 50th anniversary, new regional inspection trip book for local tours, new postcard project for inspection trips, and fact sheets for the water quality co-op program and apprentice program.



- Received more than 68,000 visits to mwdh2o.com, and generated over 46,000 visits on bewaterwise.com, with the tree rebate page, and California Friendly/native plants the most frequented; added homepage features spotlighting the newly-revised Leadership Today Water Tomorrow report, Addressing Climate Change and the High Desert Water Bank alignment with CAMP4W.
- Posted an Instagram reel featuring professional skateboarder Lizzie Armanto showcasing her native plant skate deck through the district's sponsorship with Theodore Payne 2024 Native Plant Garden Tours.

GM Monthly Report April 2024

- Created a series of graphics highlighting Metropolitan’s work in sustainability, including a new microplastics lab and the annual Climate Action Plan Implementation Progress Report.
- Highlighted Employee Resource Group activities, including a Cesar Chavez Day partnership with the Hispanic Employees Association and photos from the Armenian American Employee Group’s Armenian History Month event.

Community Outreach

Notified communities of urgent maintenance activities on Santa Monica Feeder in Beverly Hills (April 8-9); coordinated meetings with Teresina HOA for AMP Urgent Repair (April 15); and met with community members to on Second Lower Feeder (April 18).

Led two inspection trips to the State Water Project and four trips to the Colorado River.

Participated in Strength-Based Community Change Earth Day (April 27) and LA County Resiliency Summit (April 29).

Supported tours of Jensen Treatment Plant for LA Trade Technical College Water Treatment Plant operator students (April 8), Jensen for College of the Canyons Water Technologies students (April 18), Skinner for Mt. San Jacinto Water Treatment Plant Operator Students (April 24), and Weymouth and Water Quality Lab for AWWA Young Professionals (April 25).

Sponsored and participated in the following water conservation and education projects and events:

- Pando Populus, Inc—Camp Pando
- Niguel Botanical Preserve Earth Day
- Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative Forum
- Oceanographic Teaching Stations Earth Day Festival
- Walnut Valley Water District Earth Day Celebration
- Coastal Christian Academy Water Refill & Educational Station
- Friends of the Los Angeles River Earth Day
- Sustainable Claremont Earth Day
- City of Hawthorne Earth Day Festival
- American Fisheries Society CA-NV Chapter



GM Monthly Report April 2024

- CORO Women in Leadership luncheon
- Theodore Payne Garden Tour
- AWA Ventura County Water Symposium

Pure Water Southern California

- Provided presentations, workshops and tours of the Napolitano Innovation Center Tour for Member Agency PWSC Outreach Workgroup (April 3), Carson Economic Development Commission (April 4), City of Azusa (April 8), Cal Poly Pomona students (April 9), LADWP Water Employees' Club (April 10), Eastern Municipal Water District (April 11), LMU Biology students (April 13, 20), UCLA nursing students (April 17), Member Agency Legislative Coordinators (April 19), Occidental College students (April 20); Bellflower City Council (April 22), Recycled Water Communications Working Group (April 23), Long Beach Utilities Commissioners and City Councilmembers (April 24); and Groundwater Resources Association of California (April 29)
- Discussed the Pure Water Program with the cities of Irwindale, Bellflower and Whittier, and LA Metro. Met with Marathon Refinery to discuss proposed project (April 30)

Education

- Interacted with 1,500 teachers, students, and adults through in-person and online meetings and events
- Conducted a half-day clinic for advanced Scouts to earn the Soil and Water Conservation merit badge
- Participated in the California Environmental Education Foundation's Teacher Institute, MWDOC's Water Energy Education Alliance Leadership Roundtable, University of LaVerne's Business Council, and Water Replenishment District's Water Industry Workforce Development Group
- Fourteen schools with 1,020 students entered Strategic Energy Innovations Earth Day Challenge 2024, a virtual competition for secondary schools sponsored by Metropolitan. The schools are within the service areas for San Diego County Water Authority, City of Fullerton, West Basin Municipal Water District, and Central Basin Municipal Water District.
- Displayed student art exhibit at Western Municipal Water District and Rancho California Water District
- The Water Engineering 4 Good (WE4G) awards ceremony marked the successful completion of WE4G 2024. Seven schools completed the competition. Garvey Intermediate School Team 1 (USGVMWD) won the Middle School Division and Oxford Academy (OCWD) won in the High School Division.

