



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

Sustainability, Resilience, Innovation Group

• Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Group Monthly Activities

Summary

SRI Activities for the month of September 2025

Purpose

Informational

Activities in Support of the GM Business Plan

GOAL: Execute CAMP4W Implementation Strategy to Integrate Climate Adaptation Districtwide

The cross-functional CAMP4W team continues to implement planning updates and initiatives to advance resilience. At this month's CAMP4W Task Force Meeting, the team presented updates to the IRP Needs Assessment assumptions based on new information, discussed the proposed approach to assessing portfolios and shared initial assessments of the Pure Water and Sites Reservoir projects.

The team also continues to assess critical facilities for fire risk and is preparing to address the most vulnerable in the coming months.

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

1) Implement risk reduction strategies to protect Delta assets and minimize supply disruption

For the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project, Environmental Planning staff continued preparation of regulatory permit applications, including submittal of the draft application package for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Restoration Management Permit for preliminary review by the agency.

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

1) Complete EIR analyses and public process

Environmental Planning staff continued drafting responses to public comments on the Draft EIR and preparing the Final EIR for the Pure Water Southern California Program, as well as supporting the CAMP4W assessment of the program and Senate Bill (SB) 149 certification coordination. Staff anticipates bringing the EIR to the Board for certification in January 2026.

GOAL: Improve the Workplace and Promote START Values

SRI continues to gather monthly in person to share ideas and connect. The Group also provides regular opportunities for engagement through workshops and lunch and learn events with staff districtwide.

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Additional SRI Activities

Sustainability and Resilience

Climate Action Plan

This month MWD's Climate Action planning was showcased in the US Water Alliance's new Net Zero Fundamentals Series highlighting Metropolitan's approach to performance management for climate action, combining science, accountability, and innovation as seen through the Bay-Delta Initiative projects on Webb Tract and Bacon Island.

MWD also joined the panel on decarbonizing water at the Southern California Water Dialogue's September luncheon meeting. Staff presented on Met's Climate Action Plan and climate mitigation progress.

Sustainability and Resilience (SR) staff also attended external meetings of the Water Utility Climate Alliance, as well as webinars on accelerating climate action in the built environment.

ZEV

SR staff continued to coordinate with the Fleet Services Unit, IOPSS, and Metropolitan regulatory staff, along with the California Municipal Utilities Association and the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), to provide comments to CARB on proposed modifications to the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) regulation. SR also collaborated with Metropolitan staff to develop its own comment letter to CARB regarding modifications needed to the ACF regulation that would allow continued compliance with the regulation, while also ensuring that Metropolitan has the appropriate vehicles in its fleet to support the delivery of reliable water supplies which will be submitted by September 15, 2025.

Sustainable Procurement

On September 3, 2025, SR, the Contracting Services Unit, and the Reliable Purchasing Network presented a sustainable procurement workshop to over 80 employees with procurement responsibilities. The presentation included an overview of sustainable procurement and its role in meeting the Climate Action Plan's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Attendees were also introduced to the Metropolitan's new "Sustainable Procurement Guidebook," which provides employees with options to choose more environmentally friendly products and services that meet operational requirements.

Centralized Grants Management Office

CGMO staff met with Metropolitan staff from Water Quality, Power Operations, Environmental Planning, Workforce Development, and Pure Water Southern California to consider active federal solicitations from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Fish & Wildlife, Environmental Protection Agency, National Science Foundation, and Economic Development Administration; state funding opportunities available through the California Energy Commission and the California Wildlife Conservation board; and additional funding opportunities available through the Water Research Foundation and The Funders Network.

Additionally, a collaborative grant proposal that CGMO staff helped co-author, entitled "Canals to Careers: Industry-Led CTE Pathways into Water, Agriculture, & Transportation," was awarded to Palo Verde College through the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The proposal, which features the ACWA Foundation, and Metropolitan's DEI Office and WSO Group as collaborative project partners, helps advance Metropolitan's workforce development objectives in the desert region. With a total budget of \$1.05 million, including \$500,000 in grant funding, Metropolitan and Palo Verde College will co-create a career technical education (CTE) curriculum that will provide Metropolitan's desert facilities with high-performing graduates to address chronic staffing shortages in the desert region.

CGMO staff also attended external meetings of the CA Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force and the Cal Water Efficiency Partnership Task Force, as well as webinars focused on federal funding and DEI programs, ZEV

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charging infrastructure, and collaborative funding opportunities for energy, environment, and climate in Los Angeles.

Innovation, Pilots and Emerging Technologies

This month, Metropolitan's innovation efforts were showcased prominently at leading statewide convenings. At the 10th Annual California Water Data Summit, a video message from General Manager Deven Upadhyay emphasized the vital role of open data in strengthening resilience, underscoring that transparency and collaboration are key to addressing California's most pressing water challenges.

The summit featured major state leaders, including Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot and State Water Board Chair Joaquin Esquivel, and spotlighted the contributions of our own Water Resources Specialist and California Data Collaborative Co-Chair, Lindsay McPhail. Her leadership alongside state officials reinforced the importance of Metropolitan staff in driving sector-wide innovation.

In addition, the team represented Metropolitan at Sustain SoCal, sharing the district's work at the intersection of climate adaptation, data innovation, and local resource development. SRI Manager Adrian Hightower and Innovation Program Manager Patrick Atwater presented at the event.

Building on this momentum, the innovation program has advanced a pilot partnership with staff across the organization to streamline how Metropolitan tests and deploys new technologies, processes, and collaborative approaches. This effort will make it easier to evaluate promising tools in real-world settings, shorten deployment timelines, and provide a clearer pathway from pilot to practice.

Metropolitan is also advancing the Process Matters continuous improvement initiative, which focuses on mapping and simplifying critical workflows to reduce barriers, improve efficiency, and enhance service delivery. As part of this effort, the team is launching the **IdeaScale platform** to capture and track staff-generated improvement ideas, enabling a more transparent, collaborative, and iterative approach to process reform.

Environmental Planning Services

Environmental Planning staff continued the preparation of two addenda to the Weymouth Improvements Program EIR for the Weymouth Wheeler Gate Security Improvements and Weymouth Water Quality Lab Building Improvements projects. Staff continued the preparation of an addendum to the PCCP Rehabilitation Program EIR for the Sepulveda Feeder Reach 2 South Project and preparation of other supplemental California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation for the PCCP Sepulveda Feeder Reach 9 Project, as well as continued to support the progressive design building process for the Sepulveda Feeder Pump Stations Project and the Lake Mathews New Pressure Control Structure and Electrical Upgrades Project. For the Inland Feeder/Foothill Pump Station Intertie Project, staff continued coordinating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and CDFW on the Incidental Take Permit application under the Endangered Species Act. 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.

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 routine patrol road grading in Orange County. Staff conducted an environmental awareness training for Construction Services Unit managers and supervisory staff at Lake Mathews on September 15. In addition, staff reviewed and analyzed CEQA notices for 14 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 potential for impacts. Staff was present for the release of a juvenile great horned owl by the San Dimas Raptor Rescue. The great horned owl, who had fallen out of its nest at the Weymouth Plant, was found by Environmental Planning staff during a site visit in March. Staff coordinated with the raptor rescue to rescue and care for the owl until its successful release back into the wild.

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Great Horned Owl released at Marshall Canyon, La Verne.

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, and theft and to protect the reserves' natural and cultural resources, facilities, and equipment. Specific activities at the Lake Mathews Reserve included applying herbicide treatment to invasive species, continuing installation and maintenance of artificial burrows for burrowing owls, monitoring Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) to track population dynamics, and conducting patrols and fence repairs. Activities at the MSR included coordinating with researchers to conduct rare plant, herpetology, and small mammal surveys, coordinating with University of California Riverside scientists to conduct Crotch's bumble bee surveys, coordinating with Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency staff to conduct SKR monitoring, maintaining greenhouse container plants and collecting native species cuttings to propagate for future restoration sites, and conducting vegetation maintenance for fire and habitat management. The Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center was open to visitors on Saturdays.

Land Management

Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) was granted a permanent easement for pipeline purposes as part of its Twin Lakes Pump Station Project. The easement is needed for LVMWD's new pipeline, which will ensure increased demands are met during an outage of Metropolitan's West Valley Feeder #2.

Harbor Associates, an adjacent property owner, was issued an entry permit to install pavement on Metropolitan's parcel in connection with the construction of new site improvements within Harbor's abutting industrial parcel. The paving of Metropolitan's parcel will smooth the transition in grading between the two parcels and mitigate stormwater runoff impacts.