



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# Board Report

## Sustainability, Resilience, Innovation Group

### • Sustainability Resilience, and Innovation GM Monthly Report

#### Summary

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Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation May 2025 Monthly Report

#### Purpose

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Informational

#### Detailed Report

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##### SRI Core Activities

SRI kicked off implementation efforts for CAMP4W through providing a primer on the Climate Decision-Making Framework for staff throughout Metropolitan and kicking off the assessments of three major projects. The Chief SRI Officer also presented on CAMP4W at the West Basin Caucus, at a Board Inspection Trip at Weymouth, and at SCAG's monthly webinar focused on Water Resilience. Staff presented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Climate Action Plan Report at the One Water Committee, and the team hosted the first internal Climate Vulnerability Summit to take a comprehensive look at climate risks and participated in the One Water Awards and in planning workshops on Process Matters and Asset Management.

##### Sustainability and Resilience

##### Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) Transition: Advanced Clean Transportation Expo

SRI, Fleet, Operations, and Engineering Services staff working on Metropolitan's transition to ZEVs attended the Advanced Clean Transportation Expo, the world's largest clean energy transportation forum, at the Anaheim Convention Center held April 28-May 1, 2025. Metropolitan attendees engaged with vehicle manufacturers, charging equipment and software providers, and both public and private fleets to learn more about the latest technologies in clean energy vehicles, low-carbon fuels, and services related to the transition to clean energy transportation.



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**Staff attended the Advanced Clean Transportation Expo**

### Climate Action Plan

On May 12, 2025, SRI staff presented the 2024 Climate Action Plan (CAP) Implementation, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Progress Report (APR) to the One Water and Adaptation Committee. The report, which was released during Earth Week on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, highlights Metropolitan's achievements in 2024 and details progress over the past year on a suite of measures designed to help Metropolitan achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. The report also updates the CAP Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions inventory and carbon budget, which tracks how Metropolitan has advanced its GHG reduction goals. The APR highlights the success stories over the past year, including the transition to a vendor-operated off-site IT data center in 2024, powered by 100 percent renewable energy, featuring a closed-loop water recycling system and shared infrastructure, reducing emissions and costs; the turf replacement program and corresponding water savings; the success of the telecommute program in reducing vehicle miles traveled and corresponding emissions; conversion to LED lighting across facilities; commuter fleet electrification; and carbon-free retail electricity purchases. *Success Stories* from the APR are also featured on the *Featured Stories* page of the MWD website. Staff presented the APR to member agencies at the May monthly Water Use Efficiency meeting.

SRI staff is participating on the Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP) Technical Advisory Committee, which is developing a community-informed, stakeholder-driven, and implementation-focused CARP in support of funding regional planning and implementation projects that address the impacts of climate change risks for the region.

SRI staff attended the Agriculture, Food Systems and Waste Streams Event on May 15th at the UCI Beal Innovations Center, hosted by Sustain SoCal. SRI staff engaged with Southern California farmers, researchers, innovators, investors, restaurant workers, non-profits, academics, and corporations to learn about AdTech advancements related to soil health and water use, regenerative agriculture, local farm-to-table initiatives, shifting waste sorting behaviors, and innovations in secondary markets.

### Centralized Grant Management Office

The Centralized Grants Management Office (CGMO) met with MWD staff from the DEI Office, External Affairs, Fleet, and SRI to coordinate and pursue numerous grant funding opportunities that support Metropolitan's workforce development objectives; the education program at Diamond Valley Lake; Fleet's acquisition of ZEVs and installation of EV charging infrastructure; and the prioritization, tracking, and reporting of Metropolitan's grants, research, and innovation projects. CGMO staff also met with representatives from member agencies, local water districts, and community colleges throughout Metropolitan's service area to support the collaborative pursuit of these external funding opportunities.

CGMO staff supported a number of key meetings through May, including the single audit and financial statements audit conducted by MWD's external auditor, DEI's workforce development summit, a meeting with the technology trade delegation from London, and SRI's Climate Vulnerability Risk Assessment summit.

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### Innovation Pilots and Emerging Technologies

The Innovation team has been working closely with External Affairs and Audit on the Process Matters initiative, an organization-wide effort for employees to share their ideas to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Metropolitan's processes. Over 165 ideas from across the organization have been received to improve our processes. In addition, Innovation is hosting a technology trade delegation from London on May 19<sup>th</sup> including executives from emerging companies.

### Environmental Planning

#### Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Support

Environmental Planning Section staff completed preparation of the draft Environmental Impact Report for the Pure Water Southern California program and released the document for public review, which will extend from May 14 to July 14, 2025. For the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project, staff completed the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutory Exemption Restoration Program application package and submitted it to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for review and concurrence. During a monitoring for the Weymouth Plant Wheeler Gate Security Improvements project, staff identified two juvenile horned owls that had fallen as they fledged from a nest at a canopy structure. In consultation with the San Dimas Canyon Nature Center Associates and a raptor rescuer, the owls were relocated to a rescue facility, where they are thriving and set to be released in late summer. Environmental monitoring of construction activities continued for the Rialto Pipeline Rehabilitation, Prestressed Concrete Cylinder Pipe Second Lower Feeder Reach 3B, Weymouth Basins 5 to 8 Rehabilitation, Weymouth Asphalt Rehabilitation, and La Verne Shops Upgrades projects. Final monitoring activities occurred for the Perris Valley Pipeline Interstate 215 project as pipeline construction nears completion.



#### Juvenile Great Horned Owls rescued at the Weymouth Water Treatment Plant

Critical operations and maintenance activities were supported by the Environmental Planning Section. Staff provided CEQA and regulatory clearances and conducted pre-construction surveys and environmental monitoring for activities throughout the service area, including shutdowns of the Rialto Feeder, Glendora Tunnel, and La Verne Pipeline. Staff provided subject matter expert reviews of four proposed and eight amended legislative bills as follows: Assembly Bill (AB) 52 (Native American resources), AB 362 (Water policy: California tribal communities), AB 367 (Water: County of Ventura: fire suppression), AB 372 (Office of Emergency Services: state matching funds: water system infrastructure improvements), AB 975 (California Environmental Quality Act: lake and streambed alteration agreements: exemptions: culverts and bridges), AB 1004 (Tribal financial information: public records: exemption), AB 1227 (California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: wildfire prevention projects), AB 1319 (Protected species: California Endangered Species Act); AB 1485 (Real property tax: documentary transfer tax: exemptions: Native American tribes), and AB 1520 (Public resources: conservation); Senate Bill (SB) 676 (California Environmental Quality Act: judicial streamlining: state of emergency); and Federal Rule 2025-06746; FWS-HQ-ES-2025-0034 (Remove definition of "harm" from Endangered Species Act). In addition, staff reviewed and analyzed CEQA notices for nine external projects to

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determine the potential impacts on Metropolitan and protect Metropolitan's right-of-way and facilities; comments letters were prepared and submitted for projects that had the potential for impacts.

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 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; coordinating with researchers to conduct Quino checkerspot butterfly, northern harrier, herpetology, and small mammal surveys; conducting rare plant surveys for Parry's spineflower, Palmer's grapplinghook, Munz's onion, Payson's jewelflower, and San Jacinto Valley crownscale; and conducting fire and habitat management. The Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center was open on Saturdays and hosted 102 visitors during the month.

### **Land Management**

Nothing to report this month.