



● **Board of Directors**
One Water and Stewardship Committee

6/13/2023 Board Meeting

7-7

Subject

By a two-thirds vote, authorize payment of up to \$932,800 for support of the Colorado River Board and Six Agency Committee for fiscal Year 2023/2024; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

Staff is requesting authorization for the General Manager to make this year's annual payment for Metropolitan's continued participation in activities of the Colorado River Board (CRB) and Six Agency Committee. California established the CRB in 1937 to protect the interests and rights of the state of California with respect to the water and power resources of the Colorado River system. Metropolitan and five other members of the CRB (also known as the Six Agency Committee) make annual cost-sharing payments to the CRB to fund its operations, studies, and special projects. Typically, those six agencies also fund the Colorado River Joint Powers Authority (Authority), which advances California's interests in Colorado River water and power through educational and informational campaigns. The Authority will use funds carried over from prior assessments for activities in fiscal year (FY) 2023/2024.

Details

Background

The Colorado River Board and Six Agency Committee

The CRB provides the official representation for California before the United States and the other Colorado River Basin States. The CRB engages in activities that protect the interests and rights of the state of California, and its agencies and citizens, in the water and power resources of the Colorado River system. Six California agencies entirely fund the CRB through the Six Agency Committee; no State funding occurs. Each agency has a seat on the CRB, which also includes two public members appointed by the Governor and representatives of the California Department of Water Resources and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Six Agency Committee negotiated the most recent cost-sharing arrangement in 2020. In this agreement, urban agencies pay half of the total costs, and agricultural agencies pay the other half. . Metropolitan contributes 32 percent of the total costs; the remaining urban share is paid by the San Diego County Water Authority (10 percent) and the city of Los Angeles (8 percent). **Attachment 1** shows the cost-sharing percentages among the six agencies.

The six agencies jointly provide funds to support CRB functions, technical studies, special projects, and computer modeling. In FY 2022/2023, the CRB and the Six Agency Committee played key roles in:

- Organizing California's agencies to respond to historically dry conditions on the Colorado River system, which included reviewing and commenting on the Notice of Intent and Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to modify the 2007 Interim Guidelines for the Operations of Lakes Powell and Mead.
- Developing a consensus alternative modeling framework and a California modeling framework proposal to protect California's interests.

- Continuing to provide California representation and coordination associated with the binational implementation of Minute No. 323 with Mexico.
- Participating in technical and policy-level Basin States meetings addressing activities and measures to protect critical elevations in the reservoir system and developing additional drought mitigation projects.
- Supporting and cost-sharing funding of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum.

In FY 2023/2024, the CRB and the Six Agency Committee anticipate continuing participation in the programs described above, plus the following key activities:

- Coordinating California agencies’ response to the Draft SEIS to modify the 2007 Interim Guidelines.
- Coordinating with California agencies to develop consensus policy positions to guide California representatives in the renegotiations of the 2007 Interim Operating Guidelines
- Contributing funds to the Basin States’ efforts in winter season weather modification projects in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.
- Participating in the ongoing implementation of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program and the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program.

The total funding request for the CRB and Six Agency Committee is \$2,915,000. Metropolitan’s proportionate share of the FY 2023/2024 funding request is \$932,800. The increase in the CRB and Six Agency Committee budgets are attributable primarily to modeling and legislative support for upcoming negotiations of the Interim Guidelines. An additional increase to the budget is due to normal office and labor cost increases.

Metropolitan’s FY 2023/2024 budget includes \$826,666 for the CRB and Six Agency Committee. Because the requested amount is greater than budgeted, the remaining \$106,134 will be managed within Water Resource Management Group’s overall budget.

Colorado River Joint Powers Authority

The six agencies also fund the Authority, which advances California’s interests in the Colorado River Basin by conducting educational and informational campaigns for the CRB and others. Staff is not requesting funding for FY 2023/2024 for the Authority because the Authority proposes to use \$80,000 in funds carried over from a prior assessment. In FY 2022/2023, the Authority:

- Conducted a tour for Colorado River Authority member agencies to the Upper Colorado River Basin that included stakeholder discussions with representatives of Colorado, Utah, and the Western Area Power Administration, as well as visits to project sites.
- Prepared for oral history interviews and evaluated options for making oral histories more accessible to stakeholders and the public.

In FY 2023/2024, the Authority anticipates the following key activities:

- Modeling and legislative support for the renegotiation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines.
- Continuing the collection of oral histories.
- Providing a 2024 inspection of the Lower Colorado River Basin for California stakeholders.

The following table compares the FY 2023/2024 funding request with the FY 2022/2023 request:

Fund	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24 (est.)
Colorado River Board/Six Agency Committee	\$871,680	\$932,800
Colorado River Joint Powers Authority	\$0	\$0
Total	\$871,680	\$932,800

Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11102: Payment of Dues

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11103: Participation in Projects or Programs Serving District Purposes

Metropolitan Water District Act Section 126: Dissemination of Information (subject to a two-thirds vote requirement)

By Minute Item 40277, dated June 15, 1993, the Board authorized amending the May 13, 1947, agreement to provide for appointment of alternate representatives on the Colorado River Association Six Agency Committee.

By Minute Item 46291, dated July 12, 2005, the Board authorized agreement to create the Colorado River Joint Powers Authority.

By Minute Item 46310, dated July 12, 2005, the Board approved the new funding arrangement for the Colorado River Board based on the proposed cost-sharing percentage.

By Minute Item 50166, dated June 9, 2015, the Board approved executing the Six Agency Committee agreement's amendment to extend the cost-sharing formula through June 30, 2020.

By Minute Item 52019, dated June 9, 2020, the Board approved executing the Six Agency Committee agreement's amendment to extend the cost-sharing formula through June 30, 2025.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21065, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378) because the proposed action will not cause either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and because it involves continuing administrative activities such as general policy and procedure making (Section 15378(b)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines). In addition, the proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment (Section 15378(b)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Board Options

Option #1

By a two-thirds vote, authorize payment of up to \$932,800 for support of the Colorado River Board and Six Agency Committee for FY 2023/2024.

Fiscal Impact: Expend budgeted funds of up to \$932,800 from the FY 2023/2024 budget. The adopted budget contains \$826,666 for this line item. The remaining \$106,134 will be managed within Water Resource Management Group's overall budget.

Business Analysis: Provides continued representation of Metropolitan and California in Colorado River matters by the CRB and Six Agency Committee at present levels.

Option #2

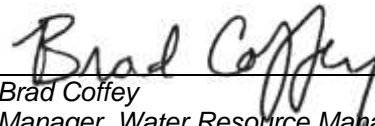
Do not authorize payment of up to \$932,800 for support of the Colorado River Board and Six Agency Committee for FY 2023/2024.

Fiscal Impact: Savings of up to \$932,800

Business Analysis: Will not provide for continued representation of Metropolitan and California interests in Colorado River matters by the CRB and Six Agency Committee at present levels.

Staff Recommendation

Option #1


Brad Coffey
Manager, Water Resource Management

5/25/2023
Date



Ader Hagekhalil
General Manager

5/25/2023
Date

Attachment 1 – Cost-Sharing Summary

Ref# wrm12694227

Cost-Sharing Summary

Funding Source		
<p>IID (Cost Share @ 28.75%) Imperial Irrigation District</p>	<p>CVWD (Cost Share @ 16.25%) Coachella Valley Water District</p>	<p>PVID (Cost Share @ 5.00%) Palo Verde Irrigation District</p>
<p>MWD (Cost Share @ 32.00%) Metropolitan Water District of Southern California</p>	<p>SDCWA (Cost Share @ 10.00%) San Diego County Water Authority</p>	<p>City of LA (Cost Share @ 8.00%) City of Los Angeles (LADWP)</p>

