



Legislation and Communications Committee

External Affairs Activities

Item 7a

March 9, 2026

Presented by: Dee Zinke

Report on
Activities
from
External
Affairs

Subject

External Affairs Activities

Purpose

To provide management announcements
and highlights for External Affairs

Sharing Metropolitan's Priorities

State and Federal Government Outreach

Engaging Legislators

- **Upcoming**
 - March 17-18: Board Sacramento Day
 - Water Matters in-region events with directors, legislators, community leaders
 - District Office briefings

 **Controlling Invasive Species:
Golden Mussels** 

After first being detected in the Port of Stockton in October 2024, golden mussels have quickly spread through California's water delivery system. The invasive species has been detected in various points of the State Water Project, including the east and west branches, reaching infrastructure in Southern California. The extent of the invasion is still under study, but it is already creating a challenge for water managers across the state, who are implementing measures to control their spread.

Like other invasive mussel species, golden mussels can clog water infrastructure and harm ecosystems and water quality. They cannot be eradicated in water delivery systems, with constantly moving water. But they can be controlled through thoughtful, cost-effective management and careful coordination between water agencies.

Metropolitan has been successfully managing a similar invasive species, quagga mussels, in its Colorado River Aqueduct for 18 years, maintaining reliable deliveries despite the ongoing challenge. We are preparing to use similar management techniques to work with the California Department of Water Resources and other water agencies to help control golden mussels in our State Water Project supplies. Because that system involves greater interconnection among many agencies, collaboration is key to their successful control.

What damage can golden mussels cause?

Clog systems: Golden mussels attach in dense clusters, clogging conveyance systems, pipelines, pumps, filters, and hydropower facilities.

Disrupt ecosystems: They alter food webs and nutrient cycles, outcompete native species, transfer contaminants up the food chain, and can severely impact fisheries.

Change water quality: As filter feeders, golden mussels remove particles from the water, causing increased water clarity and allowing more sunlight to penetrate through a water body. This can potentially cause more cyanobacterial blooms, including toxin-producing blooms.



2.17.26

Learning about Recycled Water

Engaging Students and Teachers

WaterReuse Youth Summit

Winning teams present
at WaterReuse
Symposium
March 10, 4 pm

- Collaboration with National WaterReuse, West Basin MWD, and Water Replenishment District
- Focus areas: engineering, water quality and public acceptance



Urban Water Institute Spring Conference

Learning from Colleagues

Discussing Key Issues



- GM Deshmukh: Change Makers
- Liji Thomas, DEI Officer: Beyond the Labels – Understanding Generational Changes in the Workforce
- Heather Collins, AWWA President: How to Change Public Perception
- Bill Hasencamp, Colorado Resources Manager: A Changing Colorado River



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