



Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation

• Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office Group Monthly Activities

Summary

Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office June 2024 Monthly Activities

Purpose

To report on Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Activities in June 2024

Detailed Report

SRI Core Activities

This month, the SRI Office led the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) Task Force Meeting focused on integrating climate change considerations into Metropolitan’s planning process. The Task Force discussion focused on how we ensure that climate threats and resilience are built into operations and planning moving forward. The Chief SRI Officer presented on CAMP4W at the West Basin Caucus Meeting, at the Innovation Hub at ACE24, and at the Southern California Water Committee’s Webinar on Decarbonizing Water Utilities. In the Finance and Asset Management Committee, the Board approved entering into an option agreement for a long-term lease with AES Corporation to develop a solar and battery storage project on Metropolitan’s fee-owned Palo Verde Mesa property.

Sustainability and Resilience

Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Transition

- ZEV Info Table at Lake Mathews Safety Fair: SRI, WSO Fleet, and Safety, Regulatory, and Training staff attended the Lake Mathews Safety Fair on June 6 to provide information to employees and answer questions on the ZEV transition. Employees were able to test drive a Ford Lightning pick-up truck, and a Ford E-Cargo van and discuss electric Volvo equipment with the manufacturer. ZEV information sessions for field staff will be scheduled for the fall.



- **ZEV Executive Task Force**—The Task Force met on June 6 to continue planning Metropolitan’s transition from fossil-fueled vehicles and equipment to zero emission technology. WSO presented the

Board Report Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office Group Monthly Activities

proposed 5-year vehicle replacement strategy for light, medium, and heavy duty; this information will be presented to the August Board with a second presentation to follow in September. Additionally, staff updated the Task Force on current vehicle charger installation, the overall infrastructure buildout strategy, and plans to provide off-site charging for Fleet Vehicles.

- **Sustainable Procurement**—SRI and Administrative Services continued the development of a Sustainable Procurement Handbook, which will be attached to both the new Sustainable Procurement Operating Policy, G-06, and the updated Procurement of Goods and Services Operating Policy, G-05. Sustainable procurement training sessions for employees will be conducted in the fall.
- **Environmental Justice and Water Affordability**—This month SRI staff joined a panel focused on water affordability at the retail-level for the June meeting of the Riverside County Water Task Force Speaker Series. Fellow panelists included Prof. Greg Pierce Director, UCLA Human Right to Water Lab, and the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation as well as Angela Ebiner, Policy Advisor, and Senator Alex Padilla. Staff shared efforts through Metropolitan’s CAMP4W process and board discussions from the Equity, Inclusion, and Affordability Committee on statewide low-income rate assistance programs (LIRA) and federal legislation for a Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). The Riverside County Water Task Force is a collaborative effort between Eastern Municipal Water District, Western Municipal Water District, the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, and the Western Riverside Council of Governments. The Task Force holds quarterly Speaker Series events where we invite experts to discuss prominent topics in the water industry. The event was attended by members and staff from the California Legislature, the local government community, staff and board members from regional water agencies, and members of the public.

Centralized Grants Management Office

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/2024, Metropolitan’s Inaugural Centralized Grant Management Office worked on updating the Grants Processes and Procedure Manual, developing training and tools to assist staff in applying for and managing grants. FY 2023/2024 was a record-breaking year for Metropolitan, with the number of grant applications submitted and the dollar amounts awarded. The table below provides a final summary.

Total Applied in FY 2023/2024	\$213,425,080
Total Awarded	\$125,340,000
Not Awarded	\$3,500,000
Pending Notice	\$84,585,080

Innovation, Pilots, and Emerging Technologies

SRI continues its engagement with the Singapore Public Utilities Board (PUB) on water reuse, climate mitigation, and emerging energy efficiencies. The team hosted an on-line exchange with team members from Metropolitan, PUB, and LA County Sanitation Districts, and the General Manager presented at the World Water Summit in Singapore with PUB on Climate Action and Mitigation to continue the exchange of information and technology.

Environmental Planning Section

Core Business: Environmental Planning Section

EPS staff continued to prepare California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents for capital projects, including releasing the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the West Valley Feeder No. 1 Stage 3 Improvements Project for a 30-day public review on June 13. The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Garvey Reservoir Rehabilitation Project was released for a 45-day public review on June 12, and EPS staff supported a presentation to the City of Monterey Park City Council regarding the project on June 18. Staff also continued to prepare the draft Program EIR for Pure Water Southern California. Activities included preparing the groundwater quality technical memo and air quality/greenhouse gas/energy technical report, conducting biological surveys for backbone pipeline modifications, conducting tribal cultural resource

Board Report Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office Group Monthly Activities

consultation, evaluating Reach 2 geotechnical work, participating in the Reach 1 draft preliminary design report and preliminary drawings review workshop, and participating in the Reaches 1 and 2 value engineering exit briefing. Staff also continued preparing the architectural historical evaluation for the Weymouth Administration and Control Building Seismic Upgrades project, in compliance with the Program EIR Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for cultural resource requirements. Staff conducted construction monitoring for capital projects, including PCCP Second Lower Feeder Reach 3B Rehabilitation, Perris Valley Pipeline Interstate 215, Lake Mathews Valve Storage Building, La Verne Shops Upgrades, Weymouth Basins 5 to 8 Rehabilitation, and Weymouth Asphalt Rehabilitation projects, as well as the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) Structural Protection Program. EPS continued to support Bay Delta Resources staff and the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project by continuing to prepare environmental documentation in compliance with CEQA, including participation in a design workshop on June 4 and a pre-consultation meeting with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in support of the CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects on June 11.

Critical Water System Operations activities were supported by EPS staff, including providing CEQA and regulatory clearances, conducting pre-construction and nesting bird surveys, and construction monitoring support for operations and maintenance activities throughout the service area. EPS staff, in conjunction with WSO, completed the preparation of the first Annual Report for CRA borrow sites in compliance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) and submitted the report to the California Department of Conservation Division of Mine Reclamation. Staff continued to actively participate in coordination and planning meetings for the upcoming Foothill Feeder shutdown.



Double-Crested Cormorant Nest at DVL Attenuator Replacement Site



Forster's Tern Nest at DVL Attenuator Replacement Site

EPS staff provided subject matter expert reviews of several legislative bills, including AB 1581 (Kalra): The Restoration Management Permit Act; AB 2060 (Soria): Lake and streambed alteration agreements: exemptions; and AB 3238 (Garcia): Electrical infrastructure projects: endangered species: natural community conservation plans. Staff also completed environmental clearances for one real estate agreement, and staff reviewed and analyzed CEQA notices for ten 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 those projects that had the potential to affect Metropolitan, including a proposed rulemaking by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for new regulations on suspension and revocation of Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreements. EPS staff participated in the monthly meeting of the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (CCEEB) Natural Resources Task Force (NRTF).

EPS continued oversight of reserve management activities to protect valuable natural resources and meet Metropolitan's mitigation obligations. Comprehensive security patrols were conducted throughout both reserves to prevent trespassing, vandalism, poaching, and theft and to protect the reserves' natural and cultural resources, facilities, and equipment. Activities at the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Reserve included collecting baseline vegetation data using point-line-intercept transects and aerial imagery within areas prepared for burning operations. Activities at the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve included coordinating with researchers conducting coastal California gnatcatcher and grasshopper sparrow surveys, maintaining invasive brown-headed cowbird traps for the 2024 season with 60 birds captured thus far, and removing non-native plants within the Reserve and weeds along the roads for fire and habitat management. In addition, the Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center has been open on Saturdays, and a nature event was hosted that had approximately 150 visitors. Coordination with CalFire and site preparation was conducted for both reserves in support of the June 2024 prescribed burns. Annual work plans and operating budgets were approved by the Reserve Management Committees for both reserves for FY24/25 reserve management activities.



Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency Staff Conducting Vegetation Monitoring



Prescribed Burn at Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve



Rattlesnake at Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve

Land Management

An entry permit was issued to Eagle Mountain Elementary School for the use of the swimming pool at the Hinds Pumping Plant Village. The school hosted an end-of-year event on June 4, 2024.