



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# Board Report

## Water Resource Management Group

### • Water Resource Management April Activities

#### Summary

---

The Water Resource Management Group April 2025 Monthly Activities

#### Purpose

---

Informational

#### Detailed Report

---

##### **Collaborate with Member Agencies, Water Agencies and Associations, and Provide Leadership for Policy Development, Advocacy, Outreach and Education**

Water Resource Management (WRM) staff continued ongoing technical collaboration with member agencies with the launch of the 2025 Annual Local Production Survey. The 2025 survey was sent to member agencies on April 4 with a request for surveys to be returned by mid-June. The local supply survey data are crucial for Metropolitan's regional planning efforts, including estimating per capita water usage, tracking trends in local supply production, and developing the 2025 Urban Water Management Plan.

*Strategic Priority 5.1: Grow and deepen collaboration and relationships among member agencies, interested parties, and leaders on the issues most important to them and toward mutual and/or regional benefits.*

##### **Implement Regional Conservation Program**

WRM staff held a Water Efficient Landscape Dual Certification Program training at Chino Basin Water Conservation District for 40 landscape professionals.

WRM staff presented at the Irvine Company Landscape Operations Horticulture Symposium on Metropolitan programs, legislation, and drought outlook.

WRM staff held a class about healthy trees called "Trees, Growing the Urban Forest" for 100 landscape professionals in partnership with So Cal Gas.

*Strategic Priority 3.2.8 "Increase outdoor water use efficiency."*

## Board Report Water Resource Management April Activities



Photo: James Morgutia, Associate Resource Specialist of the WRM's Water Efficiency Team, speaking to Irvine Company Landscape Operations Horticulture Symposium attendees on April 10, 2025.

### **Ensure Reliable State Water Project (SWP)**

WRM staff participated in the SWP Subsidence Taskforce, discussing the status of near-term projects to address subsidence in the California Aqueduct. Staff submitted a public comment letter on the 2025 Amended Groundwater Sustainability Plan submitted by the Westlands Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). The letter focused on concerns regarding the California Aqueduct and associated infrastructure in the region of the GSA.

WRM staff coordinated discussions with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and several Metropolitan groups (Engineering, Conveyance and Distribution, and Integrated Operations Planning and Support Services) regarding the proposed installation of butterfly valves at the DWR's Santa Ana Valley Pipeline to provide isolation, when needed, of Metropolitan's Box Springs Feeder. This project aims to reduce costs and reduce outage time (no deliveries to the Mills treatment plant) when isolation of the northern or southern portion of the Santa Ana Valley Pipeline is needed.

*Strategic Priority 3.1.3 "Enhance long-term water supply reliability for the State Water Project Dependent Areas."*

Metropolitan's Agricultural liaison continued to work with Real Properties on Delta Island agricultural leases on Webb Tract and Bacon Island. This includes interviewing farmers to grow rice, which will aid in reducing the subsidence of land on the islands.

*Strategic Priority 3.2.2 "Implement and promote agricultural water-conservation best practices."*

### **Ensure Access to Sufficient Water Supplies to Operate a Full Colorado River Aqueduct in Times of Drought**

WRM staff chaired a three-day meeting of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum) Technical Work Group in Salt Lake City, Utah. Topics discussed included: (1) a report that ongoing operation of the Paradox Valley Unit at 2/3-capacity has yielded no unusual seismic or well pressure results; (2) preparations for the 2026 "Triennial Review," in which the Forum communicates to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency an assessment of the sufficiency of existing water quality criteria for salinity on the Lower Colorado River; and (3) updates from key federal agencies involved in the Program, including U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Geological Survey. The work of the Forum influences the salinity of Metropolitan's Colorado River water supply.

## Board Report Water Resource Management April Activities

Senior WRM staff participated in meetings and workshops with California and Lower Basin partners to continue developing a Basin States alternative for operating Lakes Mead and Powell after 2026, once the current operational guidelines (the 2007 Interim Guidelines) expire. Meetings included a meeting of technical modeling teams from Metropolitan, Southern Nevada Water Authority, and the Central Arizona Project in Las Vegas, NV, and meetings of Lower Basin States' principals in Las Vegas, Nevada, and Phoenix, Arizona. The post-2026 reservoir operation guidelines will significantly influence Metropolitan's future supply of Colorado River water.

WRM staff reviewed the first draft of USBR's 2024 Water Accounting Report and provided comments to USBR. When finalized, this annual report documents the consumptive use of Colorado River mainstem water, including all transfers, exchanges, system water creation, storage, and basin-wide progress toward meeting the Reservoir Protection Conservation goals set forth in the 2024 Record of Decision. By reviewing this document, Metropolitan ensures an accurate accounting of its Colorado River water supplies.

A California forbearance agreement covering Metropolitan's Bucket 2 System Conservation Implementation Agreements (SCIA) through 2026 was signed. Developing and signing this agreement was required for full implementation of the agreements, including the ability to invoice USBR under the agreements and to leave conserved water in Lake Mead to meet system water creation requirements. (Note: this is still in development but should be signed by the end of the month.)

*Strategic Priority 3.2.1 "Advance multiple strategies toward sustainable Colorado River supplies and toward broad agreement in long-term compact negotiations."*

An amendment for Metropolitan's Bucket 1 SCIA for the Bard Seasonal Fallowing Program was signed. The amendment gives authority for the Program to fallow up to 6,000 acres of land, an increase of 3,000 acres from the original SCIA. Staff completed the first inspection of the fallowing season the first week of April.

*Strategic Priority 3.2.2 "Implement and promote agricultural water-conservation best practices."*

### **Promote Metropolitan's Technical Capabilities and Innovation Efforts to Advance the Understanding of Water Resources Management**

WRM staff organized and hosted an in-person Landscape Area Measurement Roundtable, which was facilitated by the California Data Collaborative. Experts spoke on aerial and satellite imagery in the context of landscape area classification for water use budgets and detection of landscape change and trends over time. The roundtable allowed for conversation around the opportunities and limitations of aerial and satellite imagery in applications of Conservation as a California Way of Life implementation, turf and other land cover identification, irrigation behavior, and landscape area change. Staff from WRM and Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation attended and participated in the discussion.

*Strategic Priority 5.1 "Grow and deepen collaboration and relationships among member agencies, interested parties, and leaders on the issues most important to them and toward mutual and/or regional benefits."*