



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# Board Report

## External Affairs

- **Monthly Activity Report for April 2026**

### Summary

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This report provides a summary of External Affairs activities for March 17, 2026, through April 17, 2026.

### Purpose

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Informational

### Attachments

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**Detailed Report – External Affairs Group’s Monthly Activities for March 17, 2026, through April 17, 2026**

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Activities Supporting the General Manager's Business Plan Goals

#### Develop a Biennial Budget that Meets Metropolitan's Needs

- **Provide transparency and broad engagement to support informed policy making**

The Press Office issued a press release on the Board's adoption of a two-year budget, committing to addressing aging infrastructure and future reliability.

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

[mwdh2o.com/newsroom](http://mwdh2o.com/newsroom)

News for Immediate Release...

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Metropolitan board adopts two-year budget, commits to addressing aging infrastructure, future reliability

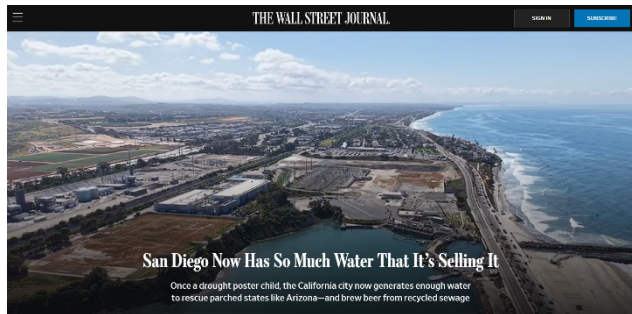
Budget includes 6.2% annual overall rate increases over next two years, funding for planning and design of Pure Water Southern California

April 14, 2026

#### Develop Post-2026 Guidelines and Negotiate Implementation Agreements

- **Educate legislators so they will champion the District's interests**

Federal Legislative staff provided updates to congressional staff on the status of discussions on post-2026 Colorado River operations and Metropolitan's priorities for future River operations.



The Press Office coordinated an interview between Wall Street Journal reporter Jim Carlton and GM Deshmukh on the MOU on interstate exchanges and cross-border investments in large local supply projects in the Lower Basin.

#### Decide on Sites Reservoir and Protect our Bay Delta Interests

- **Maintain and advocate for Metropolitan's interests in Regional Water Supply Reliability**

On April 18, Chair Ortega and Legislation and Communications Committee Chair Lewitt joined the State Water Contractors for an advocacy day that focused on AB 2215 (Calderon) which would extend the time for the State Water Project to maximize use of DWR's existing water right, and SB 872 (McNerney) which seeks to provide funding for repairs related to SWP subsidence and levee projects in the Delta. AB 2215 is on the Assembly floor waiting for a vote of the full house, and SB 872 is in the Senate Appropriations Committee, where its fate will be determined on May 14.

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

The Press Office provided background information and responded to questions regarding Delta Conveyance Project funding from CalMatters reporter Rachel Becker and SJV Water editor Lois Henry.

### Complete EIR and Planning, for Board to Consider Pure Water Southern California

- **Complete EIR analyses and public process**

Community Relations staff continued engagement and coordination efforts supporting the Pure Water Southern California program. Staff hosted several tours at the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center, including visits with the Tainan City Government Water Resources Bureau, Stantec, and Orange County Water District Public Affairs staff. A joint tour with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation also included the A.K. Warren Water Resource Facility, highlighting regional collaboration and interest in the program.

Staff conducted outreach at community events, including tabling at the Cherry Blossom Cultural Festival in Torrance and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts' annual Earth Day event in Whittier, to share information about the program and engage directly with community members in communities near proposed facilities.

In addition, staff continued efforts to explore the development of a program Community Working Group and community benefits.



# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Improve the Workplace and Promote START Values

- **Promote START values (Safety, Trust, Accountability, Respect, Teamwork)**

The Creative Design Team supported the Office of Safety, Security, and Protection with the design of the March Headquarters Safety Newsletter that was distributed to all staff at Headquarters.



The Media Services team produced and issued the second edition of Inside Met, our new internal news magazine. The focus of this edition is the vast coordination and work required organization-wide to produce a successful shutdown season. The goal of Inside Met is to build a sense of community and camaraderie amongst employees across the District by sharing the stories of staff. Inside Met is emailed out to all employees, and printed copies are sent to all sites. [The digital version can be accessed here.](#)

Graphic Services supported Human Resources by creating all graphics for the 2026 Spring Services Awards Luncheon.

### Provide Organizational Stability and Deliver Operational Excellence

- **Support a smooth and efficient transition to the next GM**

The Creative Design Team created an announcement for the first all-hands meeting with GM Deshmukh in June. The team also created the invitation for a reception with the GM following a special board meeting on May 11.

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Other Activities Supporting the General Manager's Strategic Priorities

#### Empower the workforce and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion

During Women's History Month, Media Services celebrated the women of Metropolitan, both past and present, on social media with two engaging posts. One highlighted three trailblazing women in history alongside a current engineer. The other offered a fun, personal look at several members of Women at Metropolitan by pairing childhood photos with their current roles.

Media Services celebrated diversity through a social media reel featuring Hedieh Esfahani, an engineer and secretary of Metropolitan's Persian American Employee Organization, with a beautifully arranged Haft-Seen display at Metropolitan Headquarters. The tradition symbolizes renewal and brings families and communities together.



#### Adapt to changing climate and water resources

Media Services supported Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation with the development of the Climate Action Plan annual progress report by helping to write the highlights section, curate photos, and editing. A feature story was added to the homepage of mwdh2o.com.

The Press Office issued a press release on the state's fourth snowpack survey of the season and coordinated an interview with Inside Climate News reporter Steven Rodas and GM Deshmukh about data centers and their water use.

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Protect public health, the regional economy, and Metropolitan's assets

The President's FY 2027 budget proposal included drastic cuts to water programs at the Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Reclamation, and Army Corps of Engineers. Congress is working through the FY 2027 appropriation process with over two dozen hearings on the proposed budget this month. Lawmakers from both parties appear to be pushing back against the proposed cuts; it remains to be seen what the FY 2027 funding levels will be for these agencies. Federal Legislative staff are closely monitoring the hearings.

The month of April has been full of state legislative activity as policy committees rush to move bills forward for consideration by the Appropriations Committee to assess their fiscal impact to the state. The deadline for moving fiscal bills out of the Policy Committee was April 24. The state's budget is also in a better position than expected, with the state receiving tax revenues of \$7.5 billion above projections so far this fiscal year. However, the Governor has conveyed that more cuts will be coming as he looks to leave office with a balanced budget, which could come with some aggressive measures to mitigate the state's structural deficit. As we move through the month of May, the Governor will release his May Revise budget proposal, which will further set the tone for ongoing budget negotiations.

Metropolitan advanced a number of new support positions, including for AB 2739 (Soria) and SB 1125 (Menjivar) which are complementary measures that would create a statewide fund and program for low-income water rate assistance, as well as SB 952 (Laird) which would provide DWR additional flexibility when procuring energy as part of the state's zero-emission energy mandate by 2035. Metropolitan staff are continuing our advocacy on these issues and more and will provide additional updates going forward.

Community Relations staff for the Palo Verde Valley coordinated Metropolitan's participation in a special event commemorating the completion of the Moab uranium tailings cleanup, one of the most significant environmental remediation projects in the West. Chair Ortega was joined by former Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, who championed federal funding for this work to protect the Colorado River. The Creative Design Team created a video with highlights of the event.



# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Partner with interested parties and the communities we serve

#### Legislative Services

Legislative Services staff maintained a high level of engagement across Southern California. The team completed more than 110 engagements, providing consistent coverage of key policy forums and stakeholder networks. Efforts included public agency meetings—including city councils, water district boards, and utility commissions—to track emerging issues and assess potential impacts on Metropolitan’s operations and policy priorities. They also participated in meetings with chambers of commerce, councils of governments, business alliances, and advocacy organizations, strengthening Metropolitan’s regional presence. Staff delivered more than 20 presentations and briefings, articulating Metropolitan’s positions on priority legislation, including AB 2215 and SB 872, across diverse policy and business forums.

Staff coordinated a meeting with Assemblymember Natasha Johnson, recently elected to represent the 63rd Assembly District, and Directors Dennstedt and Paule. Staff also met with legislative offices, including Assemblymember John Harabedian, Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón, and Assemblymember Laurie Davies. Discussions centered on ensuring affordable and reliable water supplies through strategic infrastructure investment and building support for legislation affecting the State Water Project and Delta system.

The team also attended key regional events, including the Association of Water Agencies Water Symposium, where GM Deshmukh provided the closing keynote address.

#### Media Services

Media Services prepared and sent out Metropolitan’s monthly e-newsletter featuring the latest highlights, including the SDCWA and Western Water exchange agreement, Metropolitan’s Silver Medal for best tasting tap water in the United States, Metropolitan’s support of subsidence and levee repair funding bill, and a student WaterReuse challenge.

Media Services produced a video carousel on Instagram to celebrate World Water Day and highlight Metropolitan’s people and systems that bring water reliability to the region.

An Instagram video reel was posted highlighting staff working on the South Coast Feeder shutdown, while also focusing on employees across the district doing the critical work to maintain Metropolitan’s infrastructure. Media Services also produced a video using the trend “What Were You Like in the 90s?” to pay homage to the work, projects and people during that era.



# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Creative Design Team

The Creative Design Team videographers prepared a video compilation of shutdown season activities highlighting eight different projects and the work of many teams to emphasize the collaboration across the district.

The team is supporting the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with the creation of a Workforce Development campaign based on input from member agencies and stakeholder audiences for presentation at Metropolitan’s Workforce Development Summit in June. Assets include a detailed style guide to assist member agencies in developing their own content, multiple designs targeted to both a veteran audience (those who served in the military), those just entering the workforce, or those considering a change of career. The creative includes trade show banners, social media templates and presentation materials.



**SEE YOURSELF IN WATER**

**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A CAREER WITH PURPOSE?**  
Join a workforce that preserves, protects and delivers our most precious natural resource.

**YOUR SKILLSET, YOUR FUTURE**  
Whether you have a background in science, trades or the arts, there is a place for your talent. We are looking for graduates with associate or bachelor's degrees for roles including:

- **STEM & Technical:** Engineers, Biologists, Geologists and Information Technology Specialists.
- **Business & Legal:** Accountants, Lawyers, and Human Resource and Real Estate Representatives.
- **Creative & Communications:** Videographers, Photographers, Graphic Designers, and Writers.

**WHY CHOOSE A CAREER IN WATER?**

- **Job Security:** The water industry offers stability and a good work-life balance.
- **Continued Growth:** There are tuition reimbursement programs that support your advanced education while you work and ongoing training opportunities.
- **Total Care:** Benefits from industry-leading health, dental and vision insurance, retirement and investment packages, and paid vacation and sick leave.

**Apply Today!**  
Join a varied team of professionals committed to a meaningful purpose. Join a nearly 100-year legacy of service to Southern California.



**SEE YOURSELF IN WATER**

**YOUR SERVICE CONTINUES HERE**  
You have dedicated yourself to serving our country. Now bring that dedication to your community. We value the discipline and competencies you bring, and we offer a stable environment where you can apply your transferable skills to essential services.

The water industry offers more than 200 career paths suited for all skill levels. Whether you have a background in field operations, technical engineering, or management, your military experience translates directly to roles including:

- **Management and Professional Services:** Apply your leadership, strategic planning, and specialized expertise in essential roles such as Engineering, Business Administration, Legal Affairs, or Communications.
- **Operations & Logistics:** Use your heavy equipment or transport experience as an Equipment Operator or Planner.
- **Skilled Trades:** We need technicians to install and maintain our infrastructure, Pump Mechanics, and Construction Inspection.

**STABILITY AND SUPPORT:**

- **Job Security:** The water industry offers job security and a good work-life balance.
- **Apprenticeships:** We offer apprenticeship programs and mentorships for hands-on experience and a smoother transition into the workforce.

**HOW TO JOIN THE TEAM:**

- **Explore Opportunities:** Scan our job listings to find a career that aligns with your skills.
- **Submit a Detailed Application:** Be specific about your experience—list your position titles, dates of employment, and detailed job duties to ensure your military experience is fully recognized.

Scan to learn more!

The Creative Design Team supported the Operations Groups with the creation of a flyer for an all-hands meeting in May. Masthead art was developed for use in future meetings, along with agendas and collateral materials.

### Member Services and Public Outreach

Staff participated in the Council for Watershed’s Health Redesigning LA Symposium, including speaking in a panel about agency and community organization partnerships.

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

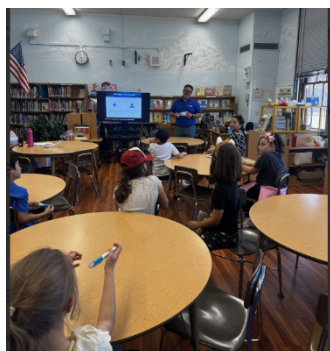
## Monthly Activity Report

### Education Program

The Education Team engaged with students, educators, and community members through DVL field trips, career awareness initiatives, teacher professional development, and regional partnerships, while strengthening collaboration with member agencies and community organizations.

The Education Team and the Engineering Substructures Team facilitated student workshops at the annual Orange County Children’s Water Festival. Staff also provided hands-on learning activities at the LA County Science and Engineering Fair and hosted resource tables at the Metro Girls Empowerment Day, the Hemet Unified School District career fair, and Dolores Middle School. In addition, staff spoke about water careers at a Black Women in Environmental Education event. The 2025/26 Water Engineering for Good program culminated with a successful student showcase and robotics workshop at Headquarters.

The team delivered STEM and professional development programming for teachers, including a Project WET workshop for teachers and water educators. The team participated in the quarterly California Regional Environmental Education Consortium meeting, Tree People’s “History in Bloom” event, the Generation Earth Youth Summit, and “Inside the Outdoors” at several Orange County schools.



# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Community Partnering Program

The Community Partnering Program sponsored six water education and conservation partnerships this month:

- The Samburu Project's "Walk for Water 2026" will host approximately 150 participants on a 4-mile educational walk to raise awareness about water scarcity. Funding supports water educational supplies for student water conservation activities and workshops.
- The Bob Baker Marionette Theater's "Bob Baker Day 2026" sponsorship supports an educational and creative space for water education reading sessions led by Metropolitan staff.
- Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden's "California Native Plant Festival" includes support for educational materials, crafts and workshops to promote the water-saving benefits of native plants.
- Gemini Moon Ranch Historical Preservation Foundation's "Waterwise Oak Grove Pathway & Pollinator Habitat" transforms a public pathway into an educational waterwise and pollinator habitat garden designed to inspire visitors to conserve water in their home and community gardens.
- Del Amo Action Committee's "10th Annual Environmental Justice Symposium" raised awareness of providing equal access to safe, clean and affordable water. The sponsorship supported outreach materials and supplies for the event.
- Water Replenishment District's "16th Annual Groundwater Festival" educates the community about groundwater resources. The sponsorship supports youth water education and conservation activities.



Del Amo Action Committee



The Samburu Project

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

### Inspection Trips Program

The Inspection Trips Team organized and led inspection trips to Hoover Dam and the Colorado River Aqueduct for Directors Denham and Jung, to the State Water Project for Directors Crane and Gold, and to Diamond Valley Lake and Robert A. Skinner Water Treatment Plant for Directors Miller and Garza. The team also led three employee inspection trips to the Colorado River Aqueduct.



At the Colorado River Aqueduct Intake with inspection trip guests from the San Diego County Water Authority and Fullerton



Employees leaving F.E. Weymouth Water Treatment Plant for a CRA Inspection Trip

### Construction Outreach

The Community Relations team continued proactive communications and coordination to support operational activities and system maintenance. Staff conducted outreach for the Irvine Cross Feeder shutdown, including mailing notifications and field outreach to inform nearby stakeholders of the work and anticipated impacts.

Staff also mailed safety notifications related to the San Diego Canal and conducted outreach for the Garvey Reservoir Rehabilitation Project, including advance notifications to surrounding communities and coordination with internal teams to support upcoming construction activities.

**STAY SAFE, STAY OUT**

**ABOUT THE CANAL**  
The San Diego Canal is a 18-mile aqueduct constructed to deliver water to San Diego County when the Canal was built in 1927, the surrounding area was home to hundreds of cattle. Some days, the area has seen the construction of hundreds of homes.

**HIDDEN DANGERS**  
While the Canal water may look calm, it's a 7-foot deep sea of water per second, making it very unsafe for swimming. Even one foot of fast-moving water can knock you off balance!

**NEVER enter the canal**

**NEVER climb the canal**

**NEVER drink canal water**

**FOR YOUR SAFETY**

**CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY IF SOMEONE FALLS IN**

**CANAL HAZARDS**  
**STAY SAFE, STAY OUT**

**DEEP WATER**  
The Canal is deep. Falling into the water can result in death.

**STEP AND SLIPPERY WALLS**  
The concrete walls of the Canal are steep and slippery. Climbing is dangerous.

**HAZARDOUS OBJECTS**  
The Canal has many pipes and structures. Some are old and may be falling or broken.

**FAST TURBULENT WATER**  
The water in the Canal is fast-moving and turbulent. It can knock you off your feet.

**PROHIBITED ACTIONS**  
Swimming, fishing, and other activities are prohibited in the Canal. No alcohol, drugs, or firearms are allowed. No pets are allowed. No vehicles are allowed.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
Email: [CommunityRelations@metwd.com](mailto:CommunityRelations@metwd.com)  
Phone: 714-854-7157  
Website: [www.metwd.com](http://www.metwd.com)

**ABOUT METROPOLITAN**  
The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a public utility that provides water to its member agencies in Southern California.

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
P.O. Box 54123  
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0123

**SAFETY NOTICE**  
**SAN DIEGO CANAL**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, St, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Monthly Activity Report

Staff facilitated an on-site meeting with internal teams and the Fontana Unified School District to address access concerns along the Lower Feeder, resulting in a coordinated resolution.

