



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation Group

• Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation Office Group Monthly Activities

Summary

Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office February 2024 Monthly Activities

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

SRI Core Activities

The Chief SRI Office delivered a presentation to the Los Angeles Business Council (LABC) Energy and Environmental Committee, delving into the essential elements and objectives of the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W). The focus was primarily on its implications for water conservation and its integration into broader environmental resilience strategies. Additionally, the Chief SRI Officer took part in the Advisory Council for Climate Adaptation Science (ACCAS) in Washington, D.C., aiming to ensure shared understanding among ACCAS members regarding its purpose, roles, responsibilities, and operations. During this engagement, the ACCAS work plan was outlined, shaping future discussions around topics prioritized by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Subsequently, on February 29, 2024, the CAMP4W Task Force convened to deliberate on Time-Bound Targets, designed to track progress on resource and policy goals for multiple categories. The initial ten Targets for inclusion in the CAMP4W Year One Report were published in Working Memo #6.

Staff is working on the Climate Action Plan Annual Progress Report (CAP APR), which will feature an overview of Metropolitan's progress to implement the actions outlined in the CAP, an updated greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory and the status of Metropolitan's carbon budget, which tracks how Metropolitan has advanced its GHG reduction goals. The APR highlights Metropolitan's achievements since the first annual APR was published on earth day of 2023, and also features the 2022 GHG inventory update. The CAP APR is scheduled for release earth day, 2024.

This month SRI staff also moderated a Sustainable Agriculture Roundtable for Sustain Southern California's *Sustainable Agriculture and Food* event held at the University of California Irvine's Beal Applied Innovation Center. Staff guided discussions on water management through a holistic approach to the economics of sustainable farming with a focus on soil health. SRI staff also coordinated with Metropolitan's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) to recognize Black Media Climate Justice Champions at station KBLA's annual Black History Month Luncheon.

Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Transition

In February, the SRI, the ZEV Project Team, and the ZEV Executive Task Force continued their cross-organizational activities to ensure a smooth transition to ZEVs. A ZEV First Directive is under review and provides direction on how to make purchases of ZEVs a priority when vehicles that meet operational and

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reliability needs are available. Also, SRI, Fleet, and Legal met to discuss the development of a new policy on charging needs for Fleet ZEVs. To continue communications with staff on the ZEV transition, SRI, External Affairs, and Operations are working together on an informational poster for display at all Metropolitan sites.

Sustainable Procurement Policy Development

SRI, Administrative Services, and its consultant, the Responsible Purchasing Network continued work on the revision of current Operating Policy G-05, Procurement of Goods and Services, to incorporate sustainable procurement practices. The Contracting Procedures Manual, an attachment to this policy, will subsequently be G-06 and will provide overall guidance and state Metropolitan's commitment to sustainable procurement. It will be issued after the revision of Operating Policy G-05.

Centralized Grants Management Office

CGMO is finalizing a MyLearning Grant Training program for Metropolitan staff to provide online time training to assist project managers throughout the district. We are also launching a Water Grant Network for member agencies and will be starting training in the spring. Staff continues to expand and promote the use of eCivis with group representatives. Most time is spent assisting the team and other groups throughout the district in researching grants, evaluating eligibility, preparing project proposals, reviewing draft agreements, and tracking and reporting project status. Staff is coordinating several new applications, including one for the workforce development project for submittal this spring. Staff is also reviewing State and Federal funding programs, appropriations, and legislation to assess future funding opportunities. The State budget is expected to limit new funding opportunities and/or funding amounts in FY 24/25. Delays in federal appropriations may also affect State Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund programs.

Innovation, Pilots, and Emerging Technologies Update

WaterStart shared the Results of the Phase 1 Global Workshops and Partnerships on the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Superbowl, Grand Prix, and other large events. WaterStart also presented the results of the Partner's request for a search for technologies that have Rapid Detection of Water Quality Anomalies in the Distribution System that was included in WaterStart's Global Request for Proposals (RFP) Round 24, which opened on October 16, 2023, and closed November 22, 2023. A total of 12 proposals were received from global solution providers from seven countries. The Group reviewed the proposals and discussed partnerships for pilots on the technologies responding to the RFP. Phase 2 of the Global Workshops and Partnership on Olympics, etc., will focus on Cyber Security, Water Security, AI, and Emergency Response for the Olympics and large events. SRI Innovation, Bay Delta, and WRM Groups also participated in WaterStart's facilitated peer-to-peer Workshops with Anglian Water on agriculture technologies and pilots. As a member of WaterStart, Metropolitan's member benefits include peer-to-peer global facilitated discussions and presentations between members and sharing new technologies or discoveries that benefit all members and the water industry; co-funded pilots; H2O TECHCONNECT/Channels for Innovation joint community; global partnerships; and many more benefits. The next RFP for water technologies will be sent out in April.

Environmental Planning Section

In February, EPS staff continued preparing CEQA documents for large capital projects including finalizing the F. E. Weymouth Water Treatment Plant and La Verne Site Improvements Program Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in anticipation of an upcoming board action to approve the program and certify the EIR. Staff also continued to prepare the administrative draft Program EIR and associated technical studies for the Pure Water Southern California Program. The 30-day public review period closed for the Garvey Reservoir Rehabilitation Project Notice of Preparation of a Draft EIR; preparation of the Draft EIR is ongoing. Staff conducted construction monitoring for several projects including PCCP Reach 3B Rehabilitation and Perris Valley Pipeline projects, and all final mitigation monitoring documentation was completed for the Etiwanda Pipeline Relining construction.

EPS staff also supported critical Water System Operations activities, including providing CEQA and regulatory clearances, as well as pre-construction surveys and construction monitoring support, for operations and

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maintenance activities throughout the service area. Activities included permitting support for emergency erosion repairs along the Foothill Feeder, environmental clearances for the San Jacinto Pipeline and Upper Feeder shutdowns, and preparations for the upcoming March 2024 Colorado River Aqueduct shutdown, for which EPS will dedicate a full-time staff person and consultant staff to provide biological surveys and monitoring for sensitive resources during the shutdown. Environmental Planning staff also supported the Allen McColloch Pipeline urgent relining to ensure that all environmental commitments and mitigation measures are addressed before the pipeline shutdown in April.

EPS staff provided subject matter expert reviews of several legislative bills including AB 1838 (Jackson) Wildlife Areas: San Jacinto Wildlife Area; AB 1284 (Ramos) Tribal Ancestral Lands and Waters: co-governance and co-management agreements; AB 1951 (Fong) California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: roadside wildfire prevention projects; and AB 2252 (Mathis). EPS staff completed environmental clearances for two real estate agreements, and staff reviewed and analyzed notices for 18 external projects to determine the potential impacts to 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.

Environmental Planning also continued oversight of reserve management activities to ensure that valuable natural resources are protected and to ensure that Metropolitan's mitigation obligations are met. Activities at the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Reserve included maintenance of fencing and removal of an adjacent property owner's fencing illegally encroaching into reserve property. Activities at the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve included removal of non-native plants along roads for fire and habitat management, coordination with researchers conducting Quino checkerspot butterfly, Stephens' kangaroo rat, coastal California gnatcatcher, and rare plants surveys. In addition, the Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center was open, and the Reserve Interpreter hosted birding events on Saturdays. The interpreter was also at the DVL Wildflower Trail on Saturday mornings following the trail's opening in late February. Comprehensive security patrols were conducted throughout both reserves to prevent trespassing, vandalism, poaching, and theft and to protect the Reserve's natural and cultural resources, facilities, and equipment.

Land Management

Nuevo Development Company, LLC was issued a five-year license agreement to operate egg distribution and conveyor equipment on Metropolitan's land near Lake Perris. Nuevo is replacing the prior tenant that had a lease agreement with Metropolitan.