



- **Board of Directors**

Finance, Affordability, Asset Management, and Efficiency (FAAME)

7/8/2025 Board Meeting

7-8

Subject

Authorize the General Manager to execute a license agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to allow the continuance of the Department's Nutria Eradication Program on Metropolitan's Bay Delta Islands located in Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

This action authorizes the General Manager to execute a new license agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the continued access, research and nutria removal activities on Metropolitan's land holdings of Webb Tract and Holland Tract in Contra Costa County and Bouldin Island and Bacon Island in San Joaquin County. An entry permit was issued to CDFW for such activities in 2018, and it is considered mutually beneficial to continue this arrangement with the execution of a new license agreement to replace the expired entry permit. All fees were waived in connection with the issuance of the entry permit pursuant to Metropolitan's mutual benefit guidelines, which identified benefits associated with nutria removal that exceeded the corresponding permit fees. Staff has determined that the benefits to Metropolitan from CDFW's licensed activities continue to exceed the fees normally collected for the processing of a license agreement and that the agreement should thus be subjected to a fee waiver on mutual benefit grounds. Board authorization to execute a new license agreement is required since CDFW's cumulative entry rights to real property will exceed five years.

Proposed Action/Recommendation and Options

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Authorize the General Manager to execute a license agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to allow the continuance of the Department's Nutria Eradication Program on Metropolitan's Bay Delta Islands located in Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties.

Fiscal Impact: This will be a mutual benefit agreement, whereby fees will be waived and no revenue will be received by Metropolitan.

Business Analysis: The benefits derived from nutria removal exceed the corresponding license fees. CDFW's removal of nutria protects critical levees from breaches that are known to occur from this invasive species.

Option #2

Do not authorize the General Manager to execute a license agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Fiscal Impact: May expose Metropolitan to significant future costs to remove nutria to protect critical levees from this invasive species through alternative means.

Business Analysis: Increases the risk of future levee breaches due to uncontrolled nutria activity.

Alternatives Considered

None considered.

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8201: Authorization to General Manager

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8230: Grants of Real Property Interests

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8231: Appraisals of Real Property Interests

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8232: Terms and Conditions of Management Documents

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

Related Board Action/Future Action

None required.

Summary of Outreach Completed

None completed.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action to execute a License Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to continue Nutria Eradication Program activities is exempt from CEQA because it consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies as authorized by state law to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement of a natural resource, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15307 and 15308.)

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

In 2016, Metropolitan acquired approximately 20,404 gross acres on five islands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region. The properties consisted of Bacon Island, Bouldin Island, Webb Tract, portions of Holland Tract, and Chipps Island, which Metropolitan later sold to the California Department of Water Resources in 2020 (243 gross acres). Metropolitan's remaining islands encompass 20,161 gross acres (**Attachment 1** – Delta Island Maps)

In 2017, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) confirmed the presence of invasive nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) in the San Joaquin Valley, a discovery that necessitated immediate action. In response, CDFW established the Nutria Eradication Program to eliminate the species before they cause irreversible ecological and infrastructural damage to the state's waterways, levees, and agricultural lands. Since the program's inception, over 5,300 nutria have been removed from more than 1,100 confirmed sites, including locations within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

To support the statewide nutria eradication effort, CDFW requested an entry permit to access Metropolitan's Bay Delta Islands. The islands contain wetland and riparian habitats that are conducive to nutria habitation and reproduction. The permit issued in 2018 allowed CDFW biologists to perform surveys, trapping, and removal

activities in accordance with established eradication protocols, which do not include the use of poisons or pesticides. The trapping and removal activities entail body-gripping traps, detection dogs, cage and suitcase traps, and shooting the nutria.

To support the long-term success of the eradication program, staff recommends a new license agreement with CDFW to replace the expired entry permit with a new five-year base term along with an option to extend the term an additional five years. CDFW will continue to share relevant data collected on Metropolitan properties, which can be useful to stabilizing the levees and protecting the islands. Continued support of the Nutria Eradication Program provides long-term benefits to Metropolitan by reducing the risks of levee degradation, crop destruction, and habitat displacement caused by nutria infestations.

The main proposed license terms are:

- Access to 20,161 acres comprising all four of Metropolitan's Bay Delta island holdings
- Base term of five years with an option to extend for an additional five years
- Waiver of license normally associated with license agreements
- Right to early termination by either party with 30 days' notice
- CDFW to share all findings, reports and geological studies

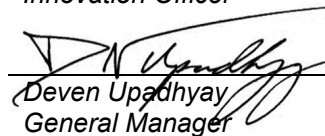
Authorization of the proposed license agreement aligns with Metropolitan's commitment to protecting water conveyance infrastructure and supporting ecological resilience throughout the Delta.



7/2/2025

Elizabeth Crosson
Chief Sustainability, Resilience and
Innovation Officer

Date



7/2/2025

Deven Upadhyay
General Manager

Date

Attachment 1 – Delta Island Maps

Ref# sri12706278

EXHIBIT B

TRACT TWO (BACON ISLAND)
T1N, R4E, & T2N, R4E, M.D.B.&M.
COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

M.W.D. PARCEL
NO. BD4315330
AREA = 5,603 ACRES

RL4174
(Area = 5,603 Acres)

APN

129-050-09
129-050-13
129-050-14
129-050-15
129-050-16
129-050-24
129-050-28
129-050-52
129-050-54
129-050-55
129-050-56
129-050-60
129-050-01
129-050-02
129-050-03
129-050-04
129-050-05
129-050-06
129-050-07
129-050-08
129-050-11
129-050-12
129-050-17
129-050-18
129-050-19
129-050-25
129-050-26
129-050-27



RL4174



MWD - BACON ISLAND



Feet

0 1,000 2,000 4,000

THIS EXHIBIT IS TO BE USED FOR APPROXIMATE POSITIONING ONLY. IT IS NOT TO BE USED, NOR IS IT INTENDED TO BE USED FOR ENGINEERING, RECORDING OR LITIGATION PURPOSES. NO WARRANTY OF ACCURACY IS IMPLIED OR GUARANTEED.



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Engineering Services Group

BAY DELTA - BACON ISLAND

Entry Permit
RL 4174

MWD
to

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

MWD ROW: BD4315330

EXHIBIT B

PARCEL ONE (WEBB TRACT)

COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RL4174
(Area = 5,497 Acres)

M.W.D. PARCEL
NO. BD5000180
AREA = 5,497 ACRES

- APN**
- 026-060-003
 - 026-060-007
 - 026-060-008
 - 026-060-015
 - 026-060-016
 - 026-060-017
 - 026-060-018
 - 026-060-019
 - 026-070-001
 - 026-070-006
 - 026-070-010
 - 026-070-011
 - 026-070-012
 - 026-070-013
 - 026-080-004
 - 026-080-005
 - 026-080-006
 - 026-080-007
 - 026-080-008
 - 026-080-009



RL4174



MWD - Webb Tract



Feet
0 1,000 2,000 4,000

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Engineering Services Group

BAY DELTA - WEBB TRACT

Entry Permit
RL 4174

MWD
to

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

MWD ROW: BD5000180

EXHIBIT B



TRACT ONE (BOULDIN TRACT)
COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RL4174
(Area = 6,053 Acres)

**Assessor's Parcel No.
(APN)**

069 030-08
069-030-09
069 030-10
069-030-11
069 030-19
069-030-20
069-030-21
069-030-22
069-030-23
069-030-24
069 030-26
069-030 27
069-030-28
069-030-29
069-030-30
069-030-31
069-030-32
069-030-33
069-030-34
069-030-35
069-030-36
069-030-37
069-030-38
069-030-39
069-030-42
069-030-44
069-100-01
069-100-02
069-100-03
069-100-04
069-100-05
069-100-08
069-100-09
069-100-10
069-100-11

M.W.D. PARCEL
NO. BD4005660
AREA = 6,053 ACRES

 **RL 4174**
 **MWD - Bouldin Island**



Feet

0 1,000 2,000 4,000

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BAY DELTA - BOULDIN ISLAND

**Entry Permit
RL 4174**

**MWD
to**

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

MWD ROW: BD4005660



*The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Engineering Services Group*

EXHIBIT B

PORTION OF PARCEL TWO (HOLLAND TRACT)
COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RL4174
(Area = 3,007 Acres)

M.W.D. PARCEL
NO. BD5085450
AREA = 3,007 ACRES

APN

023-040-026
023-040-027
023-050-001
023-050-002
023-070-011
023-070-012
023-080-010
023-080-011
023-090-001
023-090-003
023-090-004
023-100-001
023-100-002
023-100-004
023-100-007
023-100-008



RL4174



MWD - Holland Tract



Feet

0 1,000 2,000 4,000

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BE USED, NOR IS IT INTENDED TO BE USED FOR
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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Engineering Services Group

BAY DELTA - HOLLAND TRACT

Entry Permit
RL 4174

MWD
to

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

MWD ROW: BD5085450