



- **Board of Directors**
Ad Hoc Committee on Facilities Naming

11/19/2024 Board Meeting

8-5

Subject

Approve the nomination and naming of the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel N. Gregory Taylor; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

Metropolitan's Facilities Naming Policy Principle establishes approved standard criteria and procedures to submit a naming request for consideration by Metropolitan's Board. The Board has received a nomination from former General Managers Ronald Gastelum and Jeffrey Kightlinger and General Counsel Marcia Scully to recommend naming the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel N. Gregory Taylor in recognition of his legacy of service to Metropolitan.

Proposed Action(s)/Recommendation(s) and Options

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Approve the nomination and naming of the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel N. Gregory Taylor in recognition of his legacy of service to Metropolitan.

Fiscal Impact: Costs consisting of the estimated cost to design and install signage for the facility and changes to facility records and documents are an estimated \$6,000-\$10,000. Costs for the dedication event range from \$12,000-\$40,000 with an estimated additional 230-400 hours of staff time for planning, logistics, outreach and staffing event.

Business Analysis: Approval of nomination and naming of Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel N. Gregory Taylor would recognize his substantial importance and positive impact to Metropolitan.

Option #2

Take no action.

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: If the nomination and naming are not approved, Metropolitan would forgo the opportunity to acknowledge the important and positive impact of N. Gregory Taylor.

Alternatives Considered

Not applicable

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

By Minute Item 51324, dated September 11, 2018, the Board adopted the proposed Metropolitan Facilities Naming Policy Principle as a Board-Adopted Policy Principle.

By Minute Item 51004, dated November 14, 2017, the Board established the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Facilities Naming.

Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

Not applicable

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action involves a facility name nomination and as such is not defined as a project under CEQA (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378) because the proposed action involves organizational and administrative activities that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment (Section 15378(b)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines). Also, the proposed action is not subject to CEQA because it can be seen with certainty that designating a name for a facility will not cause a significant effect on the physical environment (Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) is responsible for its facilities, including construction of new facilities, and operations and maintenance of existing facilities. A Metropolitan facility may be named or renamed after an individual, group of individuals, or an organization. The primary criteria for naming or renaming a Metropolitan facility is to honor an individual, group of individuals, or organization that has or have had a substantial, important, and positive impact upon Metropolitan as a member of its Board or as an employee, and/or demonstrated personal achievements of the highest distinction in a public service role while maintaining close ties with and providing significant support to Metropolitan.

N. Gregory Taylor Nomination

N. Gregory Taylor joined Metropolitan in 1990 as a Special Assistant to General Manager Carl Boronkay. When General Counsel Fred Vendig retired in 1993, the Board of Directors appointed Taylor as General Counsel, where he served until his retirement in 2000.

During his tenure as General Counsel, Taylor led Metropolitan's successful negotiations with federal and state agencies on environmental mitigation for Diamond Valley Lake, then known as the Eastside Reservoir Project, including the purchase of 3,700 acres that were added to the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve. Metropolitan was a major contributor in the precedent-setting acquisition and preservation of the plateau's natural values, which was widely viewed as some of the most sensitive and productive natural habitat remaining in Southern California. That investment became the cornerstone of Metropolitan's obligation to replace property removed from a natural setting for Diamond Valley Lake and marked the first time a large land acquisition was made and used to relieve the impacts of water supply projects to be built by Metropolitan after the completion of necessary environmental reviews.

Under Taylor's guidance, Metropolitan also helped to create California's first agreement for multiple species habitat protection with the creation of the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve. The original reserve included 9,000 acres that surround and connect Diamond Valley Lake with nearby Lake Skinner through the 2,500-acre Dr. Roy Shipley Reserve, which Metropolitan purchased as partial mitigation for construction of

Diamond Valley Lake. Today, the Shipley Reserve contains indigenous peoples' artifacts and is home to numerous native oak trees and species. As part of his legacy, Taylor took it upon himself to take virtually every Metropolitan director on tours of the Shipley Reserve, repeatedly bottoming out his car on the dirt roads of the reserve. By the time he retired in 2000, Taylor was instrumental in helping establish four multiple-species habitat conservation plans.

Taylor's influence also can be found in Diamond Valley Lake's development and construction. Metropolitan's extensive and thoughtful project mitigation ensured there was widespread support for the project from environmental groups. Not a single lawsuit was filed to halt the project, which is a rarity for a major water construction project of this scope and size. Taylor's permitting strategy also eliminated the need for federal permits for the project. Diamond Valley Lake today stands as a major success for Metropolitan and a master class on how to deliver major projects on time and on budget.

Along with Taylor's Diamond Valley Lake contributions, he was heavily involved in securing support from Metropolitan's Board for the Inland Feeder project. He helped negotiate land acquisitions and exchanges with the U.S. Forest Service and the then-California Department of Fish and Game, which became key components of Metropolitan's environmental mitigation program aimed at compensating for impacts to biological resources along the Inland Feeder alignment in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. He also played a key role in the construction of the Metropolitan's headquarters building adjacent to Union Station in downtown Los Angeles.

Taylor was born in Arizona and moved to Culver City in 1941. After graduating from South Gate High School, he attended the University of Southern California, where he was active in university life and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as well as other honorary academic societies. Following graduation from the University of Southern California, Taylor went to New York University Law School, entering as a prestigious Root-Tilden Scholar and earning honors as National Moot Court champion. Upon completion of his law degree, he began his public service in the U.S. Army Reserves.

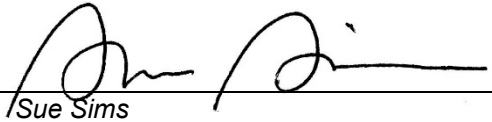
After passing the California Bar Exam in 1961, Taylor began a long career with the State of California and spent nearly 30 years in the Attorney General's office. He worked on many cases for the natural resources and environmental divisions, including those involving Mono Lake, Big Sur and the San Francisco Bay Estuary. For many years, Taylor served as Chief Counsel for the States Lands Commission and was involved in major land acquisitions for the Lake Tahoe Conservancy and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Taylor was a lifelong environmentalist and a lover of nature who enjoyed camping and hiking in the Sierras so much that he summited Mt. Whitney multiple times. He was a dedicated father and was always there for his children. Greg was also a leader and active member of his church and community.

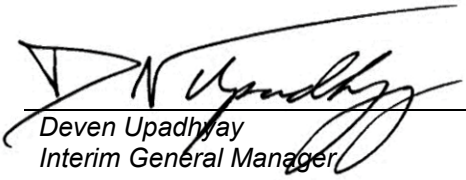
Taylor passed away in 2023. For his enormous contributions to California in environmental stewardship and protecting tidelands and state lands, and for his invaluable role in the construction of Diamond Valley Lake and the Inland Feeder, and his leadership on many other Metropolitan initiatives, Taylor is a worthy candidate for the naming of a Metropolitan facility. Specifically, naming in his honor the Inlet/Outlet Tower that controls the flow of water into and out of Diamond Valley Lake and plays a critical role in ensuring water resiliency for Southern California would be a fitting tribute.

The Board received a nomination by former General Managers Ronald Gastelum and Jeffrey Kightlinger and General Counsel Marcia Scully to recommend naming the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel N. Gregory Taylor in recognition of his legacy of service to Metropolitan. **(Attachment 1)**

On October 28, 2024, the Ad Hoc Committee on Facilities Naming considered the nomination and recommended naming the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake in honor of former Metropolitan General Counsel N. Gregory Taylor. Letters of support for this honor have been submitted by former General Managers Ronald Gastelum and Jeffrey Kightlinger and General Counsel Marcia Scully. (**Attachment 2**)



Sue Sims 11/1/2024
Group Manager – External Affairs Date



Deven Upadhyay 11/5/2024
Interim General Manager Date

Attachment 1 – Nomination from former General Managers Ronald Gastelum and Jeffrey Kightlinger and General Counsel Marcia Scully

Attachment 2 – Support letters from former General Managers Ronald Gastelum and Jeffrey Kightlinger and General Counsel Marcia Scully

Ref# ea12700571



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Metropolitan Facilities Naming Request Form

It is the policy of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California ("Metropolitan") acting through its Board of Directors to name and rename facilities. The naming and renaming criteria and procedures are available in the **Metropolitan Facilities Naming Policy Principle**. This form shall be used by an individual, groups of individuals or organization proposing names for new Metropolitan facilities or the renaming of existing Metropolitan facilities.

- 1. Name for consideration: GREG TAYLOR
 - Board to select appropriate Metropolitan facility
 - Facility proposed for naming or renaming: DVL I/O TOWER

- 2. The criteria which the proposed name meets or satisfies: (check all that apply)
 - Substantial, important and positive impact upon Metropolitan as a member of its Board or staff
 - Personal achievements of highest distinction in a public service role, while maintaining close ties with and providing significant support to Metropolitan
 - Names that have historical or regional significance to the facility or location, ordinarily not for living persons
 - Other: _____

- 3. Provide supporting documentation, as available:
 - a. A memorandum giving the particulars of the naming request that includes the rationale for the naming, referring to relevant criteria;
 - b. Background and information about the individual, group of individuals, or organization for which the facility is to be named or renamed;
 - c. Letters of support for this request;
 - d. Other information that may be relevant to the potential implementation of the request such as historical photographs and articles;
 - e. A list of other facilities named, or being proposed to be named or renamed after the same individual, group of individuals or organizations, including location and date.

You may be contacted by Metropolitan staff for additional information, if needed.

Name of Requestor: JEFFREY KIGHTLINGER, R. GASTELUM, M. SCULLY

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: 213/219-2327 Email: JEFFREY.KIGHTLINGER@CMMNL.COM

Signature: [Handwritten Signature] Date: 9/30/2024

Please mail this application and supporting documents to: Metropolitan Board of Directors, P.O. 54153, Los Angeles, CA 90054-053 or ssims@mwdh2o.com

To: Facilities Naming Committee

From: Ronald Gastelum, Former General Manager
Jeffrey Kightlinger, Former General Manager
Marcia Scully, General Counsel

Date: September 30, 2024

Re: N. Gregory Taylor – Inlet/Outlet Tower

Jeffrey Kightlinger and Ron Gastelum, the past two General Managers at Metropolitan, joined by Marcia Scully, current General Counsel, propose naming the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake for Norman Gregory “Greg” Taylor, former General Counsel of Metropolitan.

The three of us all worked closely with Greg Taylor during his time at Metropolitan. Greg was one of the driving forces behind the permitting and construction of Diamond Valley Lake. DVL was a great success for Metropolitan and today it remains the region’s best insurance policy against drought. And without the tireless efforts of Greg Taylor, it might never have been completed.

Greg came to Metropolitan in 1990 after a long and distinguished career in the California Attorney General’s Office. Greg was hired by then General Manager Carl Boronkay as a Special Assistant to the GM. When General Counsel Fred Vendig retired in 1993, the Board of Directors appointed Greg as General Counsel. Greg served as General Counsel until his retirement in 2000.

During his tenure as General Counsel, Greg was the lead on permitting and developing the mitigation for construction of DVL. Greg pushed for the purchase of the land that became the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve as project mitigation. Metropolitan spent nearly \$50 million to acquire the land that was, at the time, permitted for development as a golf course and housing. The plateau contains rare vernal pools which are home to endangered Riverside fairy shrimp. The property’s Engelmann oak woodlands are also habitat for endangered coastal gnatcatcher, along with numerous other species. In partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Metropolitan purchased the land and set it aside in a permanent conservation easement.

In addition to the Santa Rosa Plateau, Greg also had Metropolitan acquire the land for the Shipley Reserve, strategically located between DVL and Lake Skinner. The Shipley Reserve contains indigenous peoples’ artifacts and is home to numerous native oak trees and species. Greg took it on himself to take virtually every Metropolitan director on tours of the Shipley Reserve, repeatedly bottoming out his car on the dirt roads of the reserve.

Metropolitan approved the Final Environmental Impact Report in October 1991 and construction was complete by 2000. In California, that is record breaking speed for a major project. The project's location and Greg's permitting strategy eliminated the need for federal permits, and the extensive and thoughtful project mitigation ensured there was widespread support for the project from environmental groups. Not a single lawsuit was filed to try and halt the project, which is a rarity for a major water construction project of this scope and size. DVL today stands as a major success for Metropolitan and a master class on how to deliver major projects on time and on budget.

In addition, to Greg's efforts on DVL, Greg was heavily involved in getting the Metropolitan Board to approve the Inland Feeder project, among other projects. Not satisfied with merely providing legal advice, Greg took it upon himself to push Metropolitan on multiple projects and policy positions. General Manager "Woody" Wodraska took to referring to Greg as "Slash" because he seemingly played so many roles at Metropolitan, half-jokingly referring to Greg as a "lawyer-slash-engineer-slash-PR man-slash-manager".

Prior to coming to Metropolitan, Greg spent nearly thirty years in the California Attorney General's office. Greg worked on many cases for the natural resources and environmental divisions in the AG's office working on natural resources cases involving Mono Lake, Big Sur and the San Francisco Bay Estuary. For many years, Greg acted as Chief Counsel for the States Lands Commission and was involved in many major land acquisitions for the Lake Tahoe Conservancy and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Greg passed away in 2023. For his enormous contributions to California in environmental stewardship and protecting tidelands and state lands, and particularly for his invaluable role in the construction of Diamond Valley Lake, Greg Taylor is a worthy candidate for the naming of a Metropolitan facility. Specifically, naming the I/O Tower that controls the flow of water into and out of Diamond Valley Lake for Greg Taylor would be a fitting tribute.

To: Adán Ortega, Chairman of the Board
Sue Sims, Group Manager-External Affairs

From: Ronald Gastelum, Former General Manager
Jeffrey Kightlinger, Former General Manager
Marcia Scully, General Counsel

Date: November 4, 2024

Subject: N. Gregory Taylor – Diamond Valley Lake

We are writing to support the Naming Committee’s recommendation to the Board to name the Inlet/Outlet Tower at Diamond Valley Lake for Norman Gregory “Greg” Taylor, former General Counsel of Metropolitan.

The three of us all worked closely with Greg Taylor during his time at Metropolitan. Greg was one of the driving forces behind the permitting and construction of Diamond Valley Lake. DVL was a great success for Metropolitan and today it remains the region’s best insurance policy against drought. Without the tireless efforts of Greg Taylor, it might never have been completed.

Greg came to Metropolitan in 1991 after a long and distinguished career in the California Attorney General’s Office. Greg was hired by then General Manager Carl Boronkay as a Special Assistant to the GM. When General Counsel Fred Vendig retired in 1993, the Board of Directors appointed Greg as General Counsel. Greg served as General Counsel until his retirement in 2000.

During his tenure as General Counsel, Greg was the lead on permitting and developing the mitigation for construction of DVL. Greg pushed for the purchase of the land that became the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve as project mitigation. Metropolitan spent nearly \$50 million to acquire the land that was, at the time, permitted for development as a golf course and housing. The plateau contains rare vernal pools and is habitat for coastal gnatcatcher and numerous other species. In partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Metropolitan purchased the land and set it aside in a permanent conservation easement. In addition to the Santa Rosa Plateau, Greg was instrumental in Metropolitan’s acquisition of the land for the Shipley Reserve, strategically located between DVL and Lake Skinner. The Shipley Reserve contains indigenous peoples’ artifacts and is home to numerous native oak trees and species. Greg took virtually every Metropolitan director on tours of the Shipley Reserve, repeatedly bottoming out his car on the dirt roads of the reserve.

Metropolitan began planning for DVL in 1992 and construction was complete by 2000. In California, that is record breaking speed for a major project. The project location and Greg’s permitting strategy eliminated the need for federal permits and, the extensive and thoughtful project mitigation ensured there was widespread support for the project from environmental groups. Not a single lawsuit was filed to try and halt the project, a rarity for a major water construction project of this scope and size. DVL today stands as a major success for Metropolitan and a master class on how to deliver major projects on time and on budget.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Ron Gastelum

Jeffrey Kightlinger

Marcia Scully

cc: Rickita Hudson, Board Executive Secretary