



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation

• Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office Group Monthly Activities

Summary

Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office March 2024 Monthly Activities

Purpose

To report on Sustainability, Resilience, and Innovation Office March 2024 Monthly Activities

Detailed Report

SRI Core Activities

On March 18, 2024, the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) Task Force convened to conduct a board training workshop with the following climate experts: Dr. Alex Hall (University of California, Los Angeles), Dr. Robert Lempert (RAND Corporation), and Dr. Juliette Finzi Hall (Pathways Climate Institute). The board training workshop aimed to enhance understanding, confidence, and clarity in climate adaptation planning, incorporating scenario planning, and adaptive management to optimize preparedness for Metropolitan.



CAMP4W Task Force Board Training Workshop

The SRI Office hosted the Lunch and Learn on March 21, 2024. The topic discussed with the Metropolitan staff was Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED focuses on improving the design of the built environment to reduce criminal opportunities and promote positive interaction by legitimate users. The SRI Office also hosted the General Manager Listening Session on March 25, 2024, delving into updates from CAMP4W and Time-Bound Targets for equity with all participants.

The Task Force convened on March 27, 2024, to review the draft CAMP4W Year One Report. The Draft Report documents progress since February 2023. It sets up the next steps for 2024, including discussing Metropolitan's business model and funding strategies, proposed Go Projects, policy recommendations, partnership opportunities, and an adaptive management framework. Progress to date includes work to establish the values and priorities of

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the Board and member agencies, components of a Climate Decision-Making Framework, Time-Bound Targets, and the process for identifying projects and programs for evaluation. The first installment of the Draft Report includes the Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and the first two sections.

Sustainability and Resilience

Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Transition

SRI is leading Metropolitan's Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Transition by coordinating activities associated with electric vehicle infrastructure, fleet operations, ridesharing, Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), employee communications, vehicle purchases, and deployment across the district and with consultants. The purchase of future ZEVs depends on the Board's approval of the proposed biennial budget in April.

Sustainable Procurement

SRI is leading the effort with the Administrative Services Section to revise the current Procurement of Goods and Services Operating policy, G-05, to incorporate sustainable procurement policies and a revised contracting procedures manual that will include a new Sustainable Purchasing Guide. SRI and Administrative Services are also developing a new operating policy, Sustainable Procurement, G-06, that demonstrates Metropolitan's commitment to procurement in support of the Metropolitan's Climate Action Plan and facilitates compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

Environmental Justice

This month SRI staff was featured on KBLA talk radio's *Areva Martin in Real Time* to discuss environmental justice and Metropolitan's Equity in Infrastructure Project pledge. Topics included Pure Water Southern California's engagement with communities through tours and education; lifting up underserved communities through Metropolitan's Project Labor Agreement; and opportunities to serve communities most affected by climate change through Metropolitan's Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water, which creates a more resilient water system in the face of climate challenges.

Centralized Grants Management Office

During the month of March, the Centralized Grants Management Office led the application preparation efforts for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program: Implementation Grants General Competition. Awards are expected to range between \$2 million and \$500 million.

Environmental Planning Section

Core Business: Environmental Planning and Regulatory Compliance Support

In March, EPS staff continued preparing CEQA documents for capital projects, including completing the F.E. Weymouth Water Treatment Plant and La Verne Site Improvements Program Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in anticipation of a board action for EIR certification. Staff also continued to prepare the administrative draft Program EIR for Pure Water Southern California, including circulating draft sections of the EIR for internal review, preparing associated technical studies, and identifying mitigation for potential impacts. Preparation of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Inland Feeder/San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Foothill Pump Station Intertie Project also continued. Staff conducted construction monitoring for capital projects, including PCCP Second Lower Feeder Reach 3B Rehabilitation, Perris Valley Pipeline, Lake Mathews Valve Storage Building, LaVerne Shops Upgrades, Weymouth Basins 5 to 8 Rehabilitation, and Weymouth Asphalt Rehabilitation projects, as well as the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) Structural Protection Program. EPS staff supported critical Water System Operations activities, including providing CEQA and regulatory clearances, pre-construction surveys, and construction monitoring support for operations and maintenance activities throughout the service area. In support of the March 2024 CRA shutdown, EPS dedicated a full-time staff person and consultant staff to provide biological surveys and monitoring for sensitive resources during shutdown activities (see photographs below). Staff conducted environmental, biological, and desert tortoise clearance surveys of work sites and staging areas and provided environmental training for staff and contractors participating in the shutdown. EPS staff also continued to support the Allen McCulloch Pipeline shutdown and

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urgent relining, completing a review of design drawings and specifications and ensuring that all environmental commitments were addressed before the pipeline shutdown and repairs in April.

EPS staff provided subject matter expert reviews of several legislative bills, including the following:

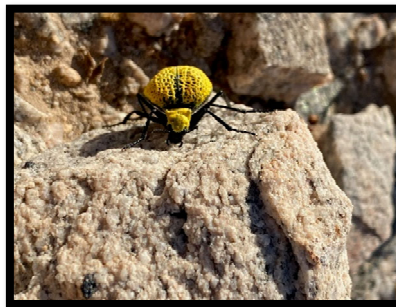
- AB 1798 (Papan): Department of Transportation: contaminated stormwater runoff: salmon and steelhead trout bearing surface waters
- AB 1838 (Jackson): Wildlife areas: San Jacinto Wildlife Area; AB 2252 (Mathis): Department of Fish and Wildlife: beaver translocation
- AB 2320 (Irwin): Wildlife Connectivity and Climate Adaptation Act of 2024: wildlife corridors; AB 2323 (Pacheco): Native American tribes: ethnohistory: report
- AB 2875 (Friedman): Wetlands: state policy
- SB 1159 (Dodd): California Environmental Quality Act: roadside wildfire risk reduction projects

EPS staff completed environmental clearances for three real estate agreements, and staff reviewed and analyzed notices for 19 external projects to determine the potential impacts on 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. Finally, EPS staff assisted with preparing the Second Annual Climate Action Plan Progress Report and attended the kickoff meeting for the Webb Tract Rice Conversion Project and the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project.

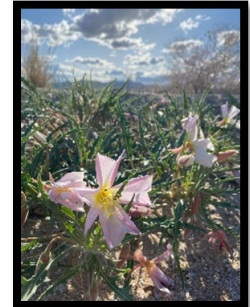
March 2024 CRA shutdown



Tunnel Cleaning Machine along CRA



Inflated Blister Beetle



Pale Evening Primrose



Bighorn Sheep at Hinds Pump Plant



Desert Tortoise



Cholla Cactus

EPS also continued oversight of reserve management activities to protect valuable natural resources and meet Metropolitan's mitigation obligations. Activities at the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Reserve included establishing habitat enhancement sites for the rare plant species long-spined spineflower (*Chorizanthe polygonoides* var. *longispina*) and Parry's spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *parryi*) and for identifying high-density populations of invasive plants for treatment. Activities at the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve included removal of non-native plants from within the Reserve for habitat and fire management,

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planting of mulefat at a Tualat Creek restoration site and collecting cuttings to propagate for future planting, and coordinating with researchers conducting burrowing owl, Stephens' kangaroo rat, and insect studies on the Reserve. In addition, the Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center has been open on Saturdays, and the Reserve interpreter has been at the DVL Wildflower Trail on Saturday mornings following the trail's opening. 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.

Innovation, Pilots, and Emerging Technologies

On March 26–27, 2024, Metropolitan's SRI Innovation, WRM, Engineering, IT, and Operations Teams participated in a **Hybrid Water TAG 36 Technology Approval Group (TAG) and Weymouth Plant Tour** held at Metropolitan and the Weymouth Plant with over 60 attendees. Metropolitan's Ric Johnston, Terry Slifka, and the Weymouth Team gave presentations and highlighted innovations implemented by the Weymouth Team. Warren Teitz, WRM, welcomed the group at Metropolitan. Attendees included Metropolitan staff, Isle Technologies, technology presenters, Northern California Water Agencies, Metropolitan member agencies and subagencies, Denver Water, LADWP, Albuquerque Water, Tucson Water, City of Santa Barbara, and Southern Nevada Water Authority, etc. The group shared technology implementation successes and failures and evaluated technology presentations on an *AI platform that analyzes multi-source data to automate structural inspection and assessment of infrastructure assets; IoT monitoring device for water networks powered by innovative energy harvester; LIVE DIG RADAR® (LDR): Real-time, on-site detection of underground infrastructure during excavation; Real-time leak detection and localization software for water utilities, including optimal sensor placement software; NETWORK LEAK DETECTION: Vibration-based sensor fully integrated into a smart meter for distribution network leak detection.* Technology Approval Group (TAG) is an innovation forum of the world's leading end-users. The TAG model was launched in the UK in 2005 and is led by Isle US. TAG accelerates the market uptake of "step-change" technologies by engaging the industry during the pre-commercial stages of development and leveraging external investment from venture capital investors. Isle US currently operates in eight regions across the country.

Land Management

Staff issued an entry permit to the San Diego Natural History Museum. This permit allows biological monitoring to identify suitable burrowing owl translocation sites within the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Reserve. The collected data will contribute to regional wildlife conservation and habitat management.

Staff also issued an entry permit to the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority to the Lake Mathews Reserve for conducting biological monitoring. This initiative supports the implementation of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and contributes to regional habitat conservation efforts.



Staff engaged a contractor to clean up an encampment site on Metropolitan's land near Diamond Valley Lake north of Domenigoni Parkway and Searl Parkway.