



## Sustainability, Resilience, Innovation Group

### • Sustainability, Resilience, Innovation GM Monthly Report

#### Summary

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December 2024 Monthly Report

#### Purpose

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Informational

#### Detailed Report

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#### Sri Core Activities

SRI and the Core Planning Team for the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) continued work on the 2024 Annual Report, Working Memorandum #7 on integrating climate adaptation in Metropolitan's planning processes and Working Memorandum #10 on the Climate Adaptation Policy Framework. Drafts will be provided for review in January. On December 4, 2024, Metropolitan hosted the ReDesign LA cohort of community-based organizations for a tour of the Weymouth Water Treatment plant, Water Quality Lab, and a discussion of CAMP4W. For many, it was their first tour of a water treatment plant and lab, and staff was able to answer questions on water quality and provide tips on how to read a Consumer Confidence Report. On December 17, 2024, Metropolitan hosted the LA County Water Plan Blue Ribbon Panel on Nature-based Solutions. The panel is working to increase the use of nature-based water management solutions to improve the health of communities and ecosystems. Nature-based solutions support CAMP4W's priorities for community equity and projects with environmental co-benefits. This month, the Chief SRI Officer presented on innovative revenue generating solutions at ACWA in Palm Desert and joined the Engineering All-Staff Annual Meeting to share SRI priorities.

#### Sustainability and Resilience

**Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Transition:** The ZEV Executive Task Force met on December 12, 2024, to review discussion from the December board meeting that resulted in a \$35 million approval for new vehicle purchases over the next two fiscal years to support the ZEV transition. SRI will continue to work with Fleet, Finance, Engineering, and other Metropolitan departments to ensure that the transition continues smoothly while adhering to regulations, making fiscally prudent vehicle purchases, and continuing to monitor evolving ZEV technology that mitigates risk while meeting Metropolitan operational and reliability needs.

#### Centralized Grants Management Office

Nothing to report.

#### Innovation, Pilots, and Emerging Technologies

**Peer-2-Peer Engagements:** Innovation staff hosted staff training on the Knowledge to Implementation (K2i) peer-2-peer exchange. K2i facilitates the exchange of actionable information between global leading utilities by matching agencies sharing common strengths and needs through structured conversations. Around 20 staff members participated in the training and offered feedback on both the K2i platform and Innovation at Metropolitan. One interesting feedback comment was "I've used the K2i platform quite a lot. The water resource management topics are most relevant to my day-to-day activities (Source of Supply, Ops, Water Quality)."

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The Innovation team also brought in a new pilot for using weather forecasting to inform operations and short-term planning. Through a new partnership with Planette AI, the team will evaluate the usefulness of near-term precipitation and temperature forecasting data. Planette uses the latest physics and machine learning to deliver environmental forecasts from 2 weeks to 5 years into the future.

### Environmental Planning Services

Environmental Planning Section staff continued to prepare California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation for capital projects, including finishing preparation and internal review of the first screencheck Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and starting the second screencheck draft EIR for the Pure Water Southern California program. Consultation with state and federal wildlife agencies and development of the mitigation strategy continued for Endangered Species Act permitting for the Inland Feeder/Foothill Pump Station Intertie Project. Following the board action to enter into an agreement with the Department of Water Resources to fund additional preconstruction activities for the Delta Conveyance Project, staff prepared and filed CEQA Notices of Determination with the State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research and seven counties. In addition, staff held a meeting with California of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and Delta Conservancy staff to discuss project updates to the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project and regulatory permitting under Assembly Bill 1582, as well as continued preparation of the CDFW Statutory Exemption Restoration Program application, Good Neighbor Policy Checklist from the Delta Plan, and Long-Term Monitoring and Management Plan. Environmental monitoring of construction activities continued for the Rialto Pipeline Rehabilitation, Perris Valley Pipeline, Prestressed Concrete Cylinder Pipe Second Lower Feeder Reach 3B, Weymouth Basins 5 to 8 Rehabilitation, Weymouth Asphalt Rehabilitation, and La Verne Shops Upgrades projects.

Critical operations and maintenance activities were supported by the Environmental Planning Section. Staff provided CEQA and regulatory clearances and conducted pre-construction biological resource surveys and construction monitoring for maintenance activities throughout the service area, including upcoming shutdowns. Staff reviewed 14 external project CEQA notices and prepared comment letters for proposed projects or actions that may affect Metropolitan facilities and/or operations, including the proposed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service General Conservation Plan (GCP) for the Desert Tortoise and the California Fish and Game Commission emergency listing of the golden mussel as a species that is prohibited from being transported.

Environmental Planning Section continued oversight of reserve management activities to protect valuable natural resources and meet Metropolitan's mitigation obligations. Security patrols were conducted throughout the Lake Mathews Multiple Species Reserve and the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve (MSR) to prevent trespassing, vandalism, poaching, and theft and to protect the reserves' natural and cultural resources, facilities, and equipment. Specific activities at the Lake Mathews Reserve included removal of invasive vegetation and targeted mowing to remove dense populations of invasive stinket (*Oncosiphon pilulifer*) and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), application of pre-emergent herbicide to mowed areas to prevent regrowth of noxious weeds, installation of wildlife cameras at artificial burrowing owl mounds north of Lake Mathews to document burrowing owl/wildlife activity in the area, and repairs to patrol roads and fencing. Activities at the MSR included planning and hosting the annual Reserve Christmas Bird Count at Diamond Valley Lake, maintaining trees and removing fallen limbs along roads, assessing Engelmann oaks in the Lopez Canyon and Rawson Rift sections of the Reserve and determining that the trees looked the healthiest in years, and installing perimeter fencing to prevent trespassing. Finally, the Alamos Schoolhouse interpretive center at the MSR was open on Saturdays and hosted over 76 visitors in December.

### Land Management

Two entry permits have been issued to Brookfield and Masters University for potholing purposes along the San Diego Pipeline 4 and Foothill Feeder right of way in Temecula and Santa Clarita, respectively. The permits will help facilitate two distinct private development projects adjacent to Metropolitan's land and minimize potential impacts to Metropolitan's facilities.