



## Office of Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation

### • SRI GM Monthly Activities Report

#### Summary

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This report provides a summary of Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation activities for the month of January 2026.

#### Purpose

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Informational

#### Attachments

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None.

#### Detailed Report – Activities in Support of GM Business Plan

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##### **Goal: Execute the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) Implementation Strategy to Integrate Climate Adaptation District-wide**

The CAMP4W Assessment Team initiated assessments of two portfolios and shared preliminary results with the member agencies. The objectives of this first exercise include:

1. **Proof of Concept** – To allow staff and member agencies sufficient time to apply and refine the assessment tool as it transitions from evaluating individual projects to evaluating portfolios of projects.
2. **Tool and Process Improvement** – To identify opportunities to improve both the assessment tool and the overall evaluation process, in support of a more robust adaptive pathways framework.

Following the January 26 discussion with member agencies, staff is refining the assessments for presentation to the CAMP4W Task Force in March.

Other CAMP4W activities this month include further development of our fire management planning for Metropolitan critical facilities and landscaping. SRI staff is working with operations and emergency management to comprehensively address fire risk.

##### **Goal: Decide on Sites Reservoir and Protect Bay-Delta Interests**

1. **Implement risk reduction strategies to protect Delta assets and minimize supply disruption**

For the Webb Tract Wetland Restoration Project, Environmental Planning Section staff coordinated with regulatory agencies regarding the permit application packages that have been submitted for authorization of impacts to jurisdictional waters and species regulated under the California Fish and Game Code, Clean Water Act, and state and federal endangered species acts. The proposed project qualifies for permits and authorizations specifically intended for restoration projects, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Restoration Management Permit (RMP), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regional General Permit 16 (Sacramento District), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Statewide Restoration General Order, and U.S. Fish

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and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Restoration Programmatic Biological Opinion. Staff met with CDFW Cutting the Green Tape staff on January 15 to discuss comments and questions on the RMP. The RWQCB Statewide Restoration General Order has been issued; other authorizations are expected in February.

### **Goal: Complete Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Planning for Board to Consider Pure Water Southern California**

#### **1. Complete EIR analysis and public process**

Environmental Planning Section staff completed the Final EIR, including the responses to public comments on the Draft EIR, Findings of Fact, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Pure Water Southern California Program and supported the distribution of environmental documents to the Board of Directors and member agency managers in advance of a February Board action to certify the EIR. The Governor and State Legislature authorized expedited judicial review under Senate Bill (SB) 149 for the Program.

#### **Additional SRI Activities**

##### **Climate Action Plan (CAP)**

Metropolitan's 2024 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory was published on The Climate Registry's website on December 23<sup>rd</sup> after completing third-party verification. This inventory and report will be used to track GHG reduction efforts as part of Metropolitan's CAP measures.

Staff also convened the Climate Action Plan Implementation Working Group to provide critical updates on CAP implementation efforts, review progress and challenges across strategies, and continue collaborative work to develop, refine, and finalize content for the 2025 CAP Annual Progress Report.

##### **Innovation, Pilots, and Emerging Technologies**

In January, the Innovation team advanced several priority efforts in support of enterprise coordination, operational efficiency, and external knowledge exchange.

The team supported the Enterprise Data Group initiative through active participation in the steering committee, helping align governance, sequencing, and use-case prioritization across departments to strengthen Metropolitan's enterprise data foundation. In parallel, the Innovation team convened the Metropolitan Data Group, providing a forum for cross-functional coordination, surfacing shared challenges, and reinforcing consistent data practices across the organization.

The Innovation team facilitated a peer-to-peer knowledge exchange with Israel's national water company, enabling staff-level dialogue on water management practices, digital tools, and operational approaches, and strengthening Metropolitan's exposure to international best practices.

During the month, the Innovation team initiated Metropolitan's technology needs assessment. This effort began with a virtual preview session for senior managers that provided an overview of innovation trends in the water sector, highlighted emerging technologies, and created an initial forum for managers to share top-of-mind technology needs and priorities. The assessment is designed to gather structured input on near-term and longer-term capability gaps, projects on the 12 to 36-month horizon, and strategic areas of interest, and will inform future technology scouting, peer utility collaboration, and the identification of potential pilots and demonstrations.

##### **Centralized Grants Management Office**

CGMO staff hosted a quarterly meeting of the So Cal Grants Network on January 28, which included staff from across Metropolitan, our member agencies, non-member water utilities from across the state, and other interested parties. Attendees received an update on Prop 4 funding from DWR's Financial Assistance Branch and an introduction to CSU WATER, an educational foundation that connects CSU faculty and student researchers with the water industry to advance water research, education and advocacy.

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CGMO staff also attended training on the management of federal awards sponsored by the National Grants Management Association, as well as the monthly meeting of the California Water Efficiency Partnership Grants & Funding Task Force.

This month, the General Manager and executive managers initiated efforts to consolidate grant management activities within the Finance and Administration Group. The full transition will take several months, and SRI, Finance and HR are working together to implement.

### **Environmental Planning Section**

Environmental Planning staff finalized the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) addendum to the Weymouth Improvements Program EIR for the Weymouth Wheeler Gate Security Improvements Project. Staff also continued preparation of supplemental CEQA documentation for the PCCP Rehabilitation Sepulveda Feeder Reach 9 Project, as well as continued to support the progressive design-build process for the Sepulveda Feeder Pump Stations Project and the Lake Mathews New Pressure Control Structure and Electrical Upgrades Project. For the Inland Feeder/Foothill Pump Station Intertie Project, staff continued coordination with the USFWS and CDFW on the Incidental Take Permit (ITP) applications under the federal and state endangered species acts. For the Copper Basin Discharge Valve Replacement and Access Road Improvements Project, the ITP application pursuant to California Fish and Game Code Section 2081(b) and SB 147 for potential incidental take of the Fully Protected Species, desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*), was deemed complete by CDFW; coordination with CDFW continues for the permit. Environmental monitoring of construction activities continued for the La Verne Shops Upgrades Project, and staff attended the construction phase kickoff meeting with the construction contractor for the Garvey Reservoir Rehabilitation Project. Finally, staff started review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Post-2026 Operational Guidelines and Strategies for Lake Mead and Lake Powell, which was released for public review by the Bureau of Reclamation on January 9. Environmental Planning staff will review and provide comments on the Draft EIS, coordinate review and consolidate comments from internal reviewers, and prepare and submit a comment letter on the Draft EIS; the comment period closes March 2.

Critical operations and maintenance activities were supported by the Environmental Planning Section. Staff provided CEQA and regulatory clearances and conducted preconstruction biological surveys for operations and maintenance activities throughout the service area. Staff participated in pre-shutdown meetings and conducted coordination and planning activities in preparation for the upcoming February Colorado River Aqueduct shutdown for which Environmental Planning will provide full-time monitoring and environmental support. Staff provided subject matter expert review and analysis of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule for the updated definition for Waters of the United States and coordinated with an internal working group to prepare and submit a comment letter on the proposed rule. In addition, staff reviewed and analyzed CEQA notices for seven 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 projects that had the potential for impacts. Staff continued to provide CEQA review and analysis for Local Resource Program projects and real property actions, as well as supported fire management planning and landscape maintenance activities.

The Environmental Planning Section continued oversight of reserve management activities to protect valuable natural resources and meet Metropolitan's mitigation obligations. Security patrols and fence repairs 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 mowing of grassland habitat, invasive species, and flashy fuels to reduce the risk of wildfires and decrease density of vegetation; applying herbicide to reduce population densities of invasives, decrease flashy fuel accumulations, and promote growth/development of native flowers and shrubs; and monitoring artificial burrow sites to track occupation activity of burrowing owls. Activities at the MSR included coordinating with researchers, including the Riverside Conservation Agency, to conduct surveys on Quino checkerspot butterfly, white-tailed kite, Englemann oak, and vernal pools; removing tamarisk trees and seeding native riparian vegetation

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in Tualota Creek; and applying herbicide on invasive Sahara mustard along the south shore of Lake Skinner and in the Shipley Reserve units. The Alamos Schoolhouse environmental education center was open to visitors on Saturdays, with 39 visitors reported for the month.