



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

External Affairs

- External Affairs Monthly Activities Report for March 2025

Summary

This report provides a summary of External Affairs' group activities for March 2025.

Purpose

Informational

Detailed Report

Highlights

Metropolitan named the San Jacinto Tunnel in honor of former board chair and director Randy Record in tribute to his longtime service and leadership. In attendance were Chair Ortega, former Chairwoman Gray, Vice Chair Camacho, Directors Armstrong, Dennstedt, Erdman, Faessel, Fellow, Kurtz and McMillan, GM Upadhyay, Chief Counsel Scully, Ethics Officer Salinas, AGMs Bednarski, Chapman and Zinke and many other local officials, water industry leaders and Metropolitan staff. The event garnered press coverage, including KABC-TV and the Los Angeles Times. (March 13)

Metropolitan sponsored, and GM Upadhyay served as the keynote for the Municipal Water District of Orange County's Water Policy Forum. Directors Ackerman, Alvarez, Camacho, Dennstedt, Dick, Erdman, Garza, Kurtz, McCoy, McMillan and Miller attended, as did General Counsel Scully and AGM Zinke. (March 20).



Former Board Chair Randy Record at the naming of the San Jacinto tunnel in his honor.



Chair Ortega, GM Upadhyay and SRI Officer Crosson at the Anaheim Public Utilities Commission meeting.

Chair Ortega, GM Upadhyay, and Chief SRI Officer Crosson attended the Anaheim Public Utilities Commission meeting to discuss regional and local community priorities, including water supply conditions, the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water, and financial planning.

AGM Zinke attended the Public Policy Institute of California's Water Policy Center council meeting. (March 26)

Metropolitan sponsored and Directors Luna and Sutley, and SRI Officer Liz Crosson attended Climate Resolve's Coolest in LA event honoring LADWP CEO & Chief Engineer Janise Quiñonez- (March 27)

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Federal

A continuing resolution funding the government for the remainder of FY25 was enacted into law (March 14).

Josh Cook, a veteran California GOP staffer and consultant, was appointed by President Trump to head EPA's Region 9 office.

State

AB 580 (Wallis) to extend Metropolitan's alternate authority under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act successfully passed out of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee.

Metropolitan advanced nine new legislative positions, including support for SB 394 (Allen) increasing penalties for fire hydrant water theft, SB 72 (Caballero) to improve future planning of California water supplies, and AB 532 (Ransom) for local water agencies to establish low-income rate assistance programs. Metropolitan adopted an oppose position on SB 601 (Allen), increasing the State Water Board authority to regulate wastewater discharges, and an oppose unless amended position on AB 794 (Gabriel), which would allow for an emergency regulatory process for the State Water Board's PFAS regulations on drinking water standards.

Local

This month, staff presented, monitored and/or participated in 59 webinars, meetings, and events with community organizations and trade associations on Metropolitan activities, issues, and other topics.

Metropolitan staff met with district office staff for the following elected officials: Assemblymember Caloza (D-Los Angeles), Assemblymember Gipson (D-Carson), Assemblymember Lowenthal (D-Long Beach), Assemblymember Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine), Assemblymember Rubio (D-Baldwin Park), Assemblymember Sanchez (R-Rancho Santa Margarita), Sen. Allen (D-Santa Monica), Sen. Umberg (D-Santa Ana), Rep. Cisneros (D-CA-31), Rep. Friedman (D-CA-30), Rep. Lieu (D-CA-36), and Rep. Torres (D-CA-36).

Media and Communications

Press Releases and Statements

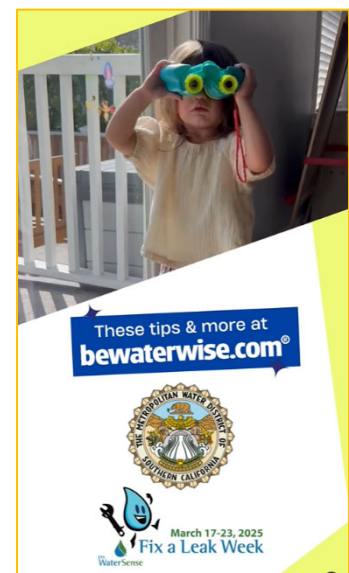
- Award of funding for State College Stormwater Tank Project in Anaheim as part of Metropolitan's Stormwater Pilot Program.
- Naming San Jacinto Tunnel after former Chair Randy Record.
- Opening of the Wildflower Trail at Diamond Valley Lake.
- State Water Project allocation increasing to 35 percent.

Coordinated interview between Politico reporter Annie Snider and Colorado Resources Manager Hasencamp regarding Metropolitan's role in providing "emergency water" supplies to Tijuana, Mexico.

Supported podcast interview of Chair Ortega on Watershed Moments podcast with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District GM Heather Dyer.

Coordinated interview with Associated Press reporter Amy Taxin regarding Metropolitan's efforts during the Palisades Fire to support the needs of LADWP and other member agencies.

Highlighted Fix a Leak Week and provided water-saving tips.



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Began posting Goodbye, Grass, a water conservation campaign series on LinkedIn, targeting those in the commercial, industrial and institutional sectors, generating more than 21,000 impressions to date.

Highlighted cultural events, including a video of Engineer Arman Motavvef wishing everyone a Happy Nowruz on behalf of the Persian American Employees Organization and recognizing Women's History Month with collaborative posts created in coordination with Women at Metropolitan and the Society of Women Engineers.

The Water Champions employee social media series continues to receive strong engagement. This month, employees in Business Management Gale Arnold-Long and the Board Support Team Rosalind Atkins were among those featured.



Community Outreach

Supported five Member Agency meetings.

Met with six Member Agencies to introduce Member Services and Public Outreach services and section: Three Valleys, city of Santa Ana, city of Glendale, Long Beach Utilities, Upper San Gabriel MWD and Calleguas MWD (March 6-26).

Led State Water Project inspection trips with Directors Ackerman and Douglas (March 7-8) and Directors Quinn and Phan. (March 20-22)

DVL Inspection Trip with Directors Fellow and DeJesus (March 20) and Pure Water Southern California Inspection Trip with Directors Dennstedt and Armstrong (March 28).



Bewaterwise exhibit table at Tarzana Native Plant Fair

Tour of Diamond Valley Lake for Elsinore Valley Water District's Fostering Leadership Program (March 14)

Palos Verdes Reservoir Site Visit with LA County Fire, Cal Water, and West Basin MWD (March 17)

Tour of Diemer Plant for Orange County Health Agency staff (March 26)

Sponsored Events

- Tarzana Community Center Native Plant Fair
- San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering Expo
- Los Angeles County Science and Engineering Fair
- Westwood Greenway Native Plant Habitat
- Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden Native Plant Festival
- Monte Vista Water District Splash into Waterwise Spring

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Pure Water Southern California

Tours: UCLA Nursing Students (March 5); City of Irwindale (March 19); Central Basin (March 20); State Water Resources Control Board (March 28).

Meetings: Three Valleys Municipal Water District Board of Directors (March 5); LACSD Citizens Advisory Council (March 11), East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (March 17); Irwindale City Council (March 26)

Outreach material provided to the State of California in support of the SB 149 application (March 12)

Staff attended the opening of the Harbor-Gateway Worksource & Youthsources Center (March 17)

Hosted exhibit booth at South Bay Council of Governments Assembly (March 27)

Education

Interacted with 3,900 teachers, students and adults through field trips, community events and meetings.

Organized or participated in meetings with the CSU Dominguez Hills Youth Summit, Cal Poly Pomona Career Day, SEI Virtual Earth Day Contest, Hemet Unified School District's Career Technical Education Advisory Committee, Member Agency Education Coordinators, Menifee's Wildlife Appreciation Day, Morris Elementary for Read Across America Day and Gates Elementary School.

Career & Conservation Outreach

Provided information on water industry careers and conservation for 10 schools at the Inland Empire Construction Careers and Apprenticeships Resource Fair.

Water Engineering 4 Good (WE4G) teams made their final presentations.

Showcased student art at Rowland Water District.



Social Media post featured Gates Elementary students taking a water conservation pledge.