THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Report

• Chair of the Board Adán Ortega Jr.'s Monthly Activity Report – August 2025

Summary

This report highlights my activities as Chair of the Board, as well as Board Member highlights during the month of August 2025 on matters relating to The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's business.

Monthly Activities

Key Activities

- Participated in the annual joint meeting of the Central Basin Municipal Water District, San Gabriel Valley, and West Basin Water Associations, serving on a panel alongside Jennifer Pierre from the State Water Contractors. Our discussion focused on Governor Gavin Newsom's proposal to streamline remaining engineering studies and financing authority for the proposed Delta Conveyance Project. We addressed how the bills seek to remove obstacles that are part of a 50-year tactic by wealthy Delta property owners interested in protecting their own water rights, by stopping proposals to avert a land, water, and statewide economic cataclysm if the levees fail due to a natural event such as an earthquake or significant storm event. Vice Chair Garza and Director Crawford were in attendance.

- Attended the Central Basin Board meeting with Chief Sustainability, Resiliency, and Innovation Officer Liz Crosson, providing updates on policy initiatives, including the Governor's Delta Conveyance Project Trailer Bills; advancements in the Pure Water Southern California project; and progress on the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4Water). I also highlighted Metropolitan's conservation programs, rebates, and educational resources for residential and commercial users.

Date of Report: September 9, 2025

- Chief Sustainability, Resiliency, and Innovation Officer Liz Crosson and I attended the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District Board and Central Basin Municipal Water District's Board meeting to discuss the connections between CAMP4Water, the Biennial Budget process, Bay-Delta issues, and the Colorado River. We emphasized the need for forward-looking solutions to climate impacts and system vulnerabilities, highlighting strategies that promote a more equitable and resilient water future. The Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water embodies this proactive approach, addressing the complex challenges posed by a changing climate. Also in attendance was Metropolitan Director Anthony Fellow.

- I traveled to Sacramento on two occasions to advocate for Metropolitan's priorities in water infrastructure and climate resilience. The first trip, organized by External Affairs, included a series of meetings with key state leaders, such as Assemblymember Quirk-Silva, Senator Laird, and Senator Gonzalez, among others. The second trip, coordinated by the State Water Contractors Association, focused on stakeholder discussions regarding the Governor's Trailer Bills regarding the proposed Delta Conveyance project. This visit also included meetings with legislative leaders such as Senators Blakespear, Calderon, Richardson, Stern, and Allen.

- Attended the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (CHCC) Annual Statewide Convention in Pomona, where I served as a panelist alongside San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board President Celeste Cantú and State Water Resources Control Board Chair Joaquin Esquivel for the segment titled *"Latinos Driving California's Water Future."* The discussion aimed to educate Latino business owners and community leaders on the complexities of California's water issues, their economic impact, and the importance of engaging in policy, building relationships with decision-makers, and fostering collaborative solutions.

- I joined Nick Serrano, Board Chair of the San Diego County Water Authority, at the Urban Water Institute (UWI) Conference in San Diego, where we participated in a panel discussion moderated by UWI Board Chair Andree Lee. The discussion focused on the historic settlement agreement between the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the San Diego County Water Authority, which brought an end to a 15-year-long dispute. I shared how increasing climate volatility—and its ripple effects on resource management, rates, and financial stability—prompted both agencies to find common ground through CAMP4W, a collaborative approach that also benefits the entire region.

Delegation of Activities:

- Director Camacho attended Metropolitan's press event announcing the increased turf rebate for Southern California businesses, schools, HOAs, and other institutions that replace their grass with sustainable landscaping. The rebate is increasing to $7 per square foot of grass removed - the highest amount ever offered regionwide. The increased rebate is part of Metropolitan's ongoing effort to boost water efficiency in homes and businesses across Southern California, helping ensure the region has the water it needs as the climate changes. It will also help businesses and institutions comply with a new state law prohibiting the use of potable water on grass that is not used for recreation or other purposes – also known as nonfunctional turf – on most non-residential properties beginning in 2027.

Regularly Scheduled/Ongoing Meetings

I continue to meet regularly to review the Board's organizational issues and coordinate activities with the Board Vice Chairs, the General Manager, and his executive team.

Activities and Reports by Board Representatives Appointed by the Chair:

Colorado River Resources Representative Gloria Cordero

At the August 26, 2025, Metropolitan Subcommittee on Imported Water, Director Gloria Cordero reported on the meetings of the Colorado River Board (CRB) and Six Agency Committee on August 20, held at the headquarters of San Diego County Water Authority.

The Six Agency Committee voted to approve payment to the CRB, the second installment of the CRB's annual budget. The Committee also approved a payment to the Salinity Control Forum to cover California's share of the fiscal year budget for the Forum's administrative costs.

At the Colorado River Board meeting, there were reports on the latest activities from the Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Basin Region Office, and the International Boundary and Water Commission.

Genevieve Johnson, acting regional director, presented an overview of the Bureau of Reclamation's Lower Colorado Basin Regional Office. She described three area offices and their work on facilitating local water supply projects, other operations, and management of the regional office.

Sally Spener with the International Boundary and Water Commission provided an overview of Mexico's actions to assist in addressing the low reservoir conditions on the Colorado River. Through negotiated agreements, Mexico has shared in the shortages and drought response actions of the Lower Basin States.

The Board went into closed session to discuss the negotiations among the Basin States and the Department of the Interior regarding the development of operating guidelines for the river for the post-2026 period. At the conclusion of the closed session, Chairman John Hamby announced that no action had been taken.