THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Committee Item
INFORMATION

Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

8/17/2026 Committee Meeting

6b

Subject

Reservoir Management Update

Executive Summary

This board informational item provides an update on Metropolitan's reservoir management program led by the Reservoir Management Team within the Water Quality Section. While the water quality of Metropolitan's lakes is good the majority of the time, water quality issues occasionally occur that can reduce operational flexibility in using water from the lakes. These issues can include cyanobacterial blooms, anoxia in deeper waters, and invasive mussels. This update will provide an overview of Metropolitan's comprehensive reservoir monitoring and management program used to address these water quality challenges and maximize operational flexibility.

Fiscal Impact

None

Applicable Policy

None

Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

August 2023 – Reservoir Management Update to the Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

June 2025 – State Water Project Invasive Mussel Mitigation and Control Update to the Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

Details and Background

This update provides examples of water quality issues that occur periodically at Metropolitan's reservoirs and the use of comprehensive and advanced monitoring and management tools to address them. The following topics will be covered.

- **Cyanobacterial blooms (also known as harmful algal blooms)**
    - Cyanobacterial blooms can lead to taste and odor aesthetic issues, and occasionally produce cyanotoxins.
- **Anoxia (low dissolved oxygen)**
    - Anoxia may occur in the deeper waters of Metropolitan's lakes, especially during the summer months.

- **Invasive mussels**
    - While Metropolitan has effectively managed quagga mussels in the Colorado River Aqueduct system for almost 20 years, golden mussels have recently spread through the State Water Project and have placed some restrictions on raw water deliveries.
- **Reservoir monitoring and management tools**
    - Routine field sampling and laboratory analysis
    - Metropolitan's recently developed Lake Explorer Advanced Portal for past, current, and predictive water quality assessments
    - Operational changes and treatment options for cyanobacterial blooms
    - Aeration and oxygenation systems to address anoxia
    - Management of invasive mussels using chemical and physical methods under approved permits and control plans

6/25/2026

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6/25/2026

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Ref# wso12710186