THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Board Action

- **Board of Directors**
  Organization, Personnel and Effectiveness Committee

10/13/2026 Board Meeting

8-10

Subject

Approve resolution to hire retired annuitant and waive 180-day waiting period; the General Manager has determined the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

A resolution is before the Board of Directors (**Attachment 1**) to authorize the temporary employment of former Program Manager Russell Ryan as a retired annuitant and to waive the standard 180-day waiting period. California law permits a waiver of the 180-day waiting period when a retired annuitant is needed to perform work of a limited duration that exceeds the capacity of regular staff.

Mr. Ryan retired on September 23, 2026, on short notice due to an unforeseen and urgent family matter. As a result, the normal transition period was substantially compressed, and there was insufficient time before his retirement to fully cross-train designated staff and transfer the specialized Delta operational knowledge, emergency-response responsibilities, procedures, and interagency relationships he had developed over many years. The proposed temporary appointment would allow Metropolitan to complete that transition in an orderly manner while maintaining operational continuity during the upcoming high-water season.

The proposed appointment is temporary and transitional in nature. Mr. Ryan would serve on a part-time, as-needed/on-call basis rather than as a full-time employee, and only for a defined period necessary to support emergency preparedness and complete the transfer of his specialized responsibilities and institutional knowledge to existing Metropolitan staff. His work would be limited to specific assignments and hours necessary to support these objectives.

The immediate need for Mr. Ryan's services is heightened by the Governor's State of Emergency Declaration and the anticipated 2026-27 super El Niño climate event. Mr. Ryan possesses extensive field experience and specialized state and county emergency operations and response training related to Metropolitan's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta properties. His experience is particularly important to maintaining the safety and reliability of Metropolitan's Delta Island levees and other property assets during the upcoming high-water season.

Equally important, the appointment provides Metropolitan with a structured transition period to cross-train existing employees and transfer Mr. Ryan's specialized knowledge, responsibilities, emergency-response procedures, and external agency relationships to other staff. Metropolitan's long-term staffing plan is not to refill Mr. Ryan's former role through an indefinite retired-annuitant appointment. Instead, his former responsibilities will be distributed among appropriately qualified existing staff, who will be trained and mentored by Mr. Ryan during the limited appointment period.

Metropolitan has determined that no other internal or external candidate currently possesses the combination of Delta-specific operational experience, emergency-response credentials, institutional knowledge, and established interagency relationships necessary to immediately perform these functions without significant operational disruption. The proposed temporary appointment therefore provides continuity during the upcoming emergency-

preparedness period while establishing a clear path for the orderly transfer of these responsibilities to Metropolitan's existing workforce.

Proposed Action(s)/Recommendation(s) and Options

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Approve Resolution to hire retired annuitant and waive 180-day waiting period.

Fiscal Impact: The cost shall not exceed $116,583, which is equivalent to 960 hours at Mr. Ryan's hourly rate.

Business Analysis: If approved, this board action assists in complying with the September 2026 Governor's State of Emergency Declaration. The Declaration directs local and state agencies to take appropriate preparedness actions to support emergency planning, resource procurement, staffing readiness, and related efforts to prevent or mitigate potential impacts associated with the El Niño climate event in 2026-27

Option #2

Do not approve the Resolution for 180-day waiting period exception

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: If not approved, Metropolitan will have to wait 180 days after Mr. Ryan's retirement to offer him an annuitant position to perform work that, because of his prior work assignment, he is uniquely qualified to provide.

Alternatives Considered

Not applicable

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 6207: Positions Authorized

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 6208: Pay Rate Administration

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 6500: Hourly Pay Rate Schedule

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

Government Code Sections 7522.56 and 21224

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

Not applicable

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves organizational, maintenance, or administrative activities; personnel-related actions; and/or general policy and procedure making that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (Public Resources Code Section 21065; State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(2) and (5).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Background and Details

Background

A CalPERS retiree who returns to employment with a CalPERS agency, such as Metropolitan, is considered a retired annuitant. CalPERS regulations generally require a 180-day waiting period before a retiree may return to work as an annuitant and limit such employment to 960 hours in a fiscal year. Government Code

Sections 7522.56 and 21224 permit an agency to waive the 180-day waiting period through an approved Resolution (**Attachment 1**) and by submission of an Authority to Hire form **(Attachment 2**) to CalPERS.

In September 2026, the Governor declared a State of Emergency in anticipation of the impending 2026-27 super El Niño climate event (**Attachment 3**). The declaration directs local and state agencies to undertake appropriate preparedness activities, including emergency planning, resource procurement, staffing readiness, coordination, and other measures intended to prevent or mitigate potential impacts associated with the anticipated climate event.

In response, Metropolitan is implementing preparedness measures to ensure appropriately trained and experienced personnel are available to monitor, maintain, and respond to emergencies affecting Metropolitan properties, including its Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta islands. These activities require personnel familiar with Metropolitan's Delta facilities, levee systems, emergency procedures, local conditions, and the state and county emergency-response framework.

Safeguarding Metropolitan's Delta properties also supports the broader reliability and quality of freshwater supplies conveyed through the Delta to the State Water Project. Significant levee failures and island flooding can affect Delta hydrodynamics and, under certain conditions, increase the potential for salinity intrusion from San Francisco Bay, which could adversely affect water quality and water-supply operations in the Delta.

Mr. Ryan has specialized emergency-response training and extensive hands-on experience involving Metropolitan's Delta properties. He was Metropolitan's only staff member currently possessing the applicable first-responder certification through the Office of Emergency Services for Metropolitan's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta activities. His experience includes emergency operations, incident response, levee and property monitoring, and coordination with local, state, and federal agencies during previous El Niño and high-water periods, including 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2022-23.

Mr. Ryan played an integral role in these important functions. Moreover, Mr. Ryan also represented Metropolitan in emergency-preparedness coordination with the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services and participates in meetings and planning activities involving state and federal emergency-management agencies. These established relationships, combined with his knowledge of Metropolitan's Delta properties and emergency procedures, cannot be immediately replicated by another employee.

Temporary Appointment and Knowledge Transfer

The proposed retired-annuitant appointment is intended to address two specific and time-limited needs: maintaining emergency-response capability during the upcoming high-water season and completing an orderly transfer of Mr. Ryan's responsibilities to existing Metropolitan employees.

Mr. Ryan would therefore be utilized only on a part-time and on-call basis as operational needs require. The appointment is not intended to restore his former full-time position or continue for an indefinite duration. His assignments would focus on emergency preparedness and response, technical support involving Metropolitan's Delta properties, and the training and development of employees who will assume these responsibilities on a permanent basis.

During the appointment period, Mr. Ryan will work with management to identify, and cross-train designated employees in the principal functions previously performed as part of his position. This knowledge-transfer effort will include, as appropriate:

- Delta levee and property inspection, monitoring, and emergency-response procedures.
- Emergency activation protocols and incident-management responsibilities.
- Coordination requirements with San Joaquin County and other local emergency-management agencies.
- State and federal emergency-response procedures and contacts.
- Institutional knowledge regarding Metropolitan's Delta properties, historical conditions, vulnerabilities, and operational practices.
- Documentation of procedures, agency contacts, decision-making protocols, and other information necessary for trained Metropolitan staff to independently perform these functions.

As employees become trained and capable of independently assuming these duties, Mr. Ryan's involvement can be progressively reduced. At the conclusion of the designated appointment period, Metropolitan intends for his former responsibilities to be allocated among trained existing staff rather than continuing the retired-annuitant arrangement.

This approach provides Metropolitan with immediate continuity during a period of heightened emergency preparedness while simultaneously establishing a defined succession and knowledge-transfer plan. The temporary appointment therefore addresses the near-term operational need without creating an expectation of full-time or open-ended reemployment.

Details

The time limitations and compensation parameters of the annuitant assignment are described in the attached Resolution. In summary, Mr. Ryan will be limited to 960 hours in a fiscal year. He will continue to be paid his previous hourly rate of $121.44 and will be eligible to begin work immediately. Pursuant to Government Code 7522.56, Metropolitan's Board of Directors is required to approve the Resolution in a public meeting as an action item rather than a consent calendar item.

10/7/2026
Nina Hawk *Date*
Chief, Bay-Delta Initiatives Group

10/7/2026
Shivaji Deshmukh *Date*
General Manager

Attachment 1 – Resolution for 180-Day Wait Period Exception

Attachment 2 – Employment Offer Documents for Russell E. Ryan

Attachment 3 – Governor Newsom Emergency Declaration

Ref# eo12718720

Resolution Number Date of Resolution
RESOLUTION FOR 180-DAY WAIT PERIOD EXCEPTION
Government Code Sections 7522.56 & 21224

WHEREAS, in compliance with Government Code Section 7522.56 the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California must provide CalPERS this certification resolution when hiring a retiree before 180 days has passed since his or her retirement date; and

WHEREAS, Russell E. Ryan, CalPERS Identification (CID) 6083832581 retired from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California in the position of Program Manager, effective September 23, 2026; and

WHEREAS, section 7522.56 requires that post-retirement employment commence no earlier than 180 days after the retirement date, which is March 24, 2027 without this certification resolution; and

WHEREAS, section 7522.56 provides that this exception to the 180-day wait period shall not apply if the retiree accepts any retirement-related incentive; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, and Russell E. Ryan certify that Russell E. Ryan has not and will not receive a Golden Handshake or any other retirement-related incentive; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California hereby appoints Russell E. Ryan as an extra help retired annuitant to perform the duties of an Program Manager for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California under Government Code section 21224, effective November 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the entire employment agreement, contract or appointment document between Russell E. Ryan and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California has been reviewed by this body and is attached herein; and

WHEREAS, no matters, issues, terms or conditions related to this employment and appointment have been or will be placed on a consent calendar; and

WHEREAS, the employment shall be limited to 960 hours per fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the compensation paid to retirees cannot be less than the minimum nor exceed the maximum monthly base salary paid to other employees performing comparable duties, divided by 173.333 to equal the hourly rate; and

WHEREAS, the maximum monthly base salary for this position is $21,050 and the hourly equivalent is $121.44, and the minimum monthly base salary for this position is $16,127 and the hourly equivalent is $93.04; and

1 For California State University (CSU) academic retirees
2 For California State University (CSU) classified retirees

WHEREAS, the hourly rate paid to Russell E. Ryan will be $121.44; and

WHEREAS, Russell E. Ryan has not and will not receive any other benefit, incentive, compensation in lieu of benefit or other form of compensation in addition to this hourly pay rate; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California hereby certifies the nature of the employment of Russell E. Ryan as described herein and detailed in the attached employment agreement / contract / appointment document and that this appointment is necessary to fill the critically needed position of Program Manager for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California by October 13, 2026.

Adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California at Los Angeles, this 13 day of October 2026 with an effective date of _____with a vote count of _____.

Signed: _____

Adán Ortega Jr.
Chairman of the Board

Attest: _____

Jon D. Rubin
Executive Advisor & Board Executive Officer

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

October 13, 2026

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Human Resources Group
700 N. Alameda St., 2nd Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012

Russell E. Ryan
2020 Fifth St., Unit #2353
Davis, CA 95617

Employment Offer: Program Manager – Bay-Delta Initiatives (Annuitant)

Dear Mr. Ryan,

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is pleased to offer you the temporary position Program Manager, Bay-Delta Initiatives at Metropolitan's Sacramento office location. You will be reporting to Randall D. Neudeck.

This letter confirms the general terms and conditions which apply to your temporary employment in this position. Please review the contents of this letter carefully.

Attached is the CalPERS employment-after-retirement brochure. On your start date, you will be provided a New Hire Packet. This packet contains important information, your right to work in the United States, and general information regarding your first day of work. Your estimated end date for this position is October 13, 2026.

Any questions regarding this offer or any other part of the employment process may be directed to me, _____ at (213) 217-XXXX.

Congratulations and welcome back to The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

Sincerely,

_____
Principal Recruitment Specialist

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

EMPLOYMENT OFFER ACCEPTANCE

Program Manager – Bay-Delta Initiatives (Annuitant)

Pursuant to all terms and conditions specified in the Metropolitan Water District's Employment Offer Letter dated October 13, 2026, and incorporated herein by reference, I, Russell E. Ryan accept temporary employment as a Program Manager, Bay-Delta Initiatives - Annuitant under the following terms:

1. My salary will be Grade 66 (MAPA) which is an hourly rate of $121.44 (less applicable taxes and withholdings).

2. Employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis; payday falls on bi-weekly Wednesdays.

3. My start date is October 13, 2026. My estimated end date for this position is October 12, 2028. I am aware that this is an estimated end date and that my employment may end prior to or following, provided my work does not exceed 960 hours per year.

4. The District requires that I directly deposit my net salary to a bank of my choice via direct electronic paycheck deposit. My direct deposit will be effective on my second payroll check. I understand that Metropolitan Water District pays in arrears.

5. I understand that my position requires me to maintain a valid California Class C Driver License or equivalent that allows me drive in the course of my employment.

6. I have reviewed the CalPERS employment-after-retirement brochure. 960-hour per fiscal year limit: A retired annuitant may be employed up to a maximum of 960 hours per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) for all CalPERS employers, without exception. There is no provision in the law to allow a retired annuitant to “volunteer” hours while employed. Retired annuitants who work more than the 960-hour maximum per fiscal year under any circumstances are out of compliance with statute and subject to mandatory reinstatement.

_____ _____

Date Signature

_____

Name (Printed)

Annuitant Name: Russell E. Ryan **Employee ID: 5847**

- You cannot be employed as a retired annuitant for a period of 180 days after your retirement date without reinstating from retirement. The 180-day wait period begins on the retirement date.
- California law prohibits appointment of a retired annuitant by a CalPERS employer if, during the 12-month period before an appointment, you received unemployment insurance compensation for prior retired annuitant employment with any CalPERS employer. Upon accepting employment, you must certify in writing to the employer that you comply with this requirement.
- If you are working as a retired annuitant and it is discovered that during the previous 12 months you were paid unemployment insurance compensation based on prior retired annuitant employment with any CalPERS employer, your employment must be terminated on the last day of the current pay period. You will not be eligible for appointment as a retired annuitant with any CalPERS employer for 12 months following the termination date of the current employment. Violation of this unemployment insurance compensation restriction does not result in mandatory reinstatement from retirement.
- Once hired, you and the employer share equal responsibility to ensure your employment complies with the retirement law during the entire course of your employment.
- As a retired annuitant, you do not accrue service credit or otherwise acquire any additional retirement benefits from the employment.
- If you intend to remain retired and work for a CalPERS employer, you should apply for and accept a retired annuitant position only. Appointment to any permanent position, part time or full time, requires reinstatement from retirement unless the employment is otherwise authorized by the retirement law.
- 960-Hour per Fiscal Year Limit: A retired annuitant may be employed up to a maximum of 960 hours per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) for all CalPERS employers, without exception. There is no provision in the law to allow a retired annuitant to “volunteer” hours while employed. Retired annuitants who work more than the 960-hour maximum per fiscal year under any circumstances are out of compliance with statute and subject to mandatory reinstatement.
- Retirees cannot receive any benefit, incentive, compensation in lieu of benefits, or other form of compensation in addition to the hourly pay rate.
- Limited Duration Appointment: Retirees cannot be hired into vacant permanent or regular staff. A retiree can be hired to perform work of limited duration, meaning extra help work such as the elimination of a backlog, to perform special project work, or to perform work in excess of that which regular staff can do. Limited duration work does not mean an indefinite appointment to a permanent part-time position.
- You must inform MWD should you accept a retiree annuitant position with another public agency.

I have read and understand the Information.

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____

Name (Printed)

Attachment 3 – Governor Newsom Emergency Declaration

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS in the past several years, California has experienced increasingly severe and destructive storms, including atmospheric river events that have caused widespread flooding, mud and debris flows, landslides, high winds, power outages, road and highway closures, evacuation orders, damage to homes and critical infrastructure, and disruption of essential services; and

WHEREAS climate change is intensifying these weather and hydrologic extremes in California, contributing to increasingly severe swings between drought and flooding, and heightening the risks that extreme storms pose to communities, infrastructure, natural resources, and the economy; and

WHEREAS California is entering the 2026–2027 wet season amid the ongoing development of a strong and likely historic El Niño event in the Pacific Ocean; and

WHEREAS the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center, in its August 13, 2026, diagnostic report, found that the El Niño event is strengthening, with a greater than 90 percent chance of a very strong event during Northern Hemisphere fall and winter of 2026–2027; and

WHEREAS the Climate Prediction Center projected a 69 percent chance that the event will reach historic strength during the October through December 2026 season, defined as a three-month Relative Oceanic Niño Index, and exceeding the strength of all prior El Niño events in the historical record beginning in 1950; and

WHEREAS the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center has found that atmospheric conditions over the tropical Pacific are consistent with a strengthening El Niño, including changes in equatorial winds and an eastward shift in enhanced convection and rainfall toward the central and eastern Pacific, making it more likely that at least some parts of California will experience stronger storms in coming months; and

WHEREAS elevated baseline coastal water levels, combined with high tides, large waves, high surf, and coastal storms, can increase risks of coastal flooding, beach erosion, bluff erosion, transportation disruption, and damage to public and private infrastructure; and

WHEREAS California has already begun to experience effects attributed to this El Niño event, including unusual precipitation and significant coastal flooding; and

WHEREAS historical experience demonstrates that very strong El Niño events do not produce uniform statewide outcomes, but can be associated with exceptionally wet and destructive winter conditions in California; and

WHEREAS California's recent experience with atmospheric rivers, debris flows following wildfires, flash flooding, coastal erosion, inundation, and damage to transportation and flood-control infrastructure demonstrates the importance of procuring and positioning resources, clearing waterways, and taking additional actions to prepare before severe storms arrive; and

WHEREAS areas affected by recent wildfires are particularly susceptible to flash flooding, mud and debris flows, erosion, sediment transport, and road closures during high-intensity rainfall; and

WHEREAS in light of that experience, local governments, local water agencies, and local flood control authorities have requested action now to enable them to move quickly to begin preparations for preventing and responding to the impacts of potential flooding; and

WHEREAS low-income communities, farmworker families, rural residents, seniors, persons with disabilities, residents with limited transportation access, people experiencing homelessness, and communities in flood-prone, coastal, or post-fire areas may face disproportionate risks; and

WHEREAS the demonstrated potential for a very strong or historic-strength El Niño event to cause elevated coastal water levels and high-impact storms in California warrants early, coordinated, and targeted preparedness actions to protect Californians, critical infrastructure, agricultural lands, natural resources, and the State's economy; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist due to the developing El Niño event; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that the developing El Niño event is likely to cause conditions that, by reason of their magnitude, are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to appropriately respond; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8625(c), I find that local authority is inadequate to cope with the magnitude of the extreme peril posed by the developing El Niño event; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this Proclamation would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the developing El Niño event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, Government Code section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist statewide due to the developing 2026–2027 El Niño event.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All agencies of the state government are to utilize and employ state personnel, equipment, and facilities for the performance of any and all activities consistent with the direction of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the State Emergency Plan. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services shall coordinate statewide preparedness activities for potential severe weather, flooding, coastal flooding, erosion, mud and debris flows, and related impacts associated with conditions resulting from the El Niño event, including atmospheric rivers and other severe storm systems. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services shall work with local and tribal governments to support emergency planning, resource coordination, and requests for state assistance. To protect their safety, all residents are to obey the direction of emergency officials with regard to this emergency.

2. As necessary to assist local governments and for the protection of public safety and the environment, state agencies shall enter into contracts to arrange for the procurement of materials, goods, and services necessary to quickly assist with the response to and recovery from the impacts of this emergency. Applicable provisions of the Government Code and the Public Contract Code, including but not limited to travel, advertising, and competitive bidding requirements, are suspended to the extent necessary to address the effects of this emergency.

3. The California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Natural Resources Agency, including boards, departments, and offices within those agencies, are directed to prioritize work to help local agencies prepare for anticipated impacts from the El Niño event. In particular, those state agencies are directed to prioritize permitting, consultation, and technical assistance to support local efforts to prevent or mitigate impacts from anticipated or potential flooding, landslides, and mud and debris flows, including local efforts to expedite levee and other flood management infrastructure repairs, vegetation management, debris removal, sediment management, bridge scour protection, and channel-capacity improvements. State agencies are directed to work with local agencies to issue any necessary permits or other approvals for such efforts as quickly as possible, including by identifying and invoking existing emergency authorities or other pathways for streamlined review. On or before October 16, 2026, the Secretary for Environmental Protection and the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency shall submit a joint recommendation to my office as to whether further action or emergency suspensions are necessary to support and expedite this work.

4. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services shall coordinate the State's preparation for and response to the developing El Niño event, including by working with the Department of Water Resources and other appropriate government agencies to prepare to pre-position personnel, equipment, supplies, commodities, and other resources based on forecast conditions, local needs, and identified risks. In particular, this work shall draw on the Department of Water Resources' guidance regarding flood-risk-reduction activities.

5. The Department of Water Resources shall take appropriate action to procure, maintain, stage, pre-position, distribute, and replenish flood-fight supplies, equipment (including, but not limited to, sandbags, riprap and other rock materials, plastic sheeting, and pumps), and other materials necessary to support statewide flood preparedness, response, and protective actions in connection with the El Niño event. The Department of Water Resources shall coordinate with appropriate government agencies to identify priority areas for flood-fight material staging and plans to make these materials available where they are needed, when they are needed.

6. The Department of Water Resources, through its Division of Safety of Dams, shall conduct outreach to owners of jurisdictional dams regarding potential severe conditions during the El Niño event and shall reiterate to dam owners their responsibilities to inspect, operate, maintain, repair, and safely manage their dams and appurtenant structures in accordance

with applicable law, permit conditions, emergency action plans, and directives of the Division of Safety of Dams.

7. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services, in coordination with the Department of Water Resources, shall conduct outreach to counties, cities, and relevant local agencies that are responsible for levees, flood-control facilities, and associated structures that may be vulnerable to impacts of the El Niño event to take appropriate actions to procure, maintain, stage, pre-position, distribute, and replenish flood-fight supplies, commodities, equipment, and materials necessary to support flood preparedness, response, and protective actions.

8. The Department of Water Resources, in coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board, shall conduct outreach and education to advance groundwater recharge projects and to use flood flows to recharge groundwater aquifers under existing law with the goal of reducing flood impacts and strengthening local water supplies.

9. Consistent with Paragraph 3 of this Proclamation, the Coastal Commission is directed to expedite review and action on proposed development by coastal communities to prepare for the impacts of this El Niño event. Coastal communities are encouraged to submit permit applications, as appropriate, to facilitate timely Coastal Commission review, technical assistance, and other support for El Niño preparations. After an application is received, the Commission shall respond with notification of any incomplete items within five days. After an application is complete, it shall be scheduled for hearing at the next Commission meeting. For emergency permit requests, the Commission shall accept both written and oral requests to its district offices. When necessary to address an urgent need related to this emergency, the Commission shall take action on emergency permit requests as quickly as possible and within twenty-four hours of receipt.

10. The California Department of Transportation and California State Transportation Agency shall identify those state highways, bridges, culverts, drainage facilities, slopes, and other transportation infrastructure most at risk of flooding, erosion, debris flows, rockslides, mudslides, or other significant impacts from severe storms caused by the El Niño event, and transmit to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services a prioritized list of projects to address such risks within 30 days of this Proclamation.

11. The California Department of Transportation shall develop plans to pre-position personnel and materials (including directional signage, traffic-control devices, road-closure devices, warning signs, delineators, emergency communications equipment, and other resources) at or near locations that may be identified as at risk of severe impacts from the El Niño event. This shall include plans to prepare and pre-position snow-removal, snow-control, and ice-control equipment as appropriate, including snowplows, snow blowers, graders, loaders, chain-control equipment, salt, sand, and other materials necessary to maintain safe travel and restore access on state highways during the El Niño event.

12. The Adjutant General and the California Military Department shall, in coordination with the Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency

Services, identify California National Guard personnel, equipment, and capabilities that may be available to support state and local emergency operations, if activated or tasked, in relation to this El Niño event. Such planning shall include readiness for high-water vehicle operations; aviation operations, including reconnaissance, search and rescue, transport, and heavy-lift support, as appropriate; engineering support; emergency communications; transportation and logistics; evacuation support; flood-fight activities; debris removal and route clearance; commodity distribution; shelter support; and other life-safety and emergency-support missions.

13. California Volunteers, in coordination with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and other appropriate agencies, shall prepare to mobilize volunteers and trained service members, consistent with their training, mission, safety requirements, and applicable law, to support state and local preparedness, response, and recovery activities in connection with the El Niño event.

14. The California Conservation Corps shall prepare to deploy Corpsmembers, consistent with its statutory mission, training, available resources, safety requirements, and applicable law, to support severe weather preparedness and response activities in connection with the El Niño event.

15. The California Energy Commission, the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety, and the State Water Resources Control Board and regional water quality control boards are directed, and the California Public Utilities Commission is requested, to coordinate, consistent with their respective authorities, with electrical, natural-gas, water, wastewater, telecommunications, transportation, and other critical-service providers to enhance readiness and support timely restoration of essential services following storm impacts.

16. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services, in consultation with relevant state agencies, shall expand accessible, multilingual public preparedness communications related to severe weather, flooding, emergency alerts, evacuation readiness, power outages, safe travel, disaster assistance, and household emergency planning.

17. Agencies under my direct authority shall cooperate in their response to this emergency. Other agencies are requested to assist in responding to this emergency, as appropriate.

18. The restrictions set forth in Penal Code section 396, which are automatically triggered upon proclamation of a state of emergency, are suspended, and no such restrictions are imposed, with respect to this El Niño event, at this time.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Proclamation.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 21st day of September 2026.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

SHIRLEY WEBER, PH. D
Secretary of State