ACWA NEWS
VOL. 52 | 01 Jan. 19, 2024



Department of Water Resources staff conduct the first manual snow survey of the year Jan. 2. While state reservoirs were still above average for that date, and strong El Niño conditions are present in the Pacific Ocean, the outlook for the rest of the winter remains highly uncertain. *Photo courtesy of DWR*

LAO Report Outlines Concerns Over Water Use Efficiency Requirements

A recent report by the Legislative Analyst's Office finds that the State Water Resource Control Board's proposed regulations on Making Conservation a California Way of Life go beyond what Legislation requires or the Department of Water Resources recommends.

Released Jan. 4 to the Legislature and titled, "Assessing Early Implementation of Urban Water Use Efficiency Requirements," the report evaluates the state's current implementation of the Making Water Conservation a Way of Life framework and specifically the State Water Board's draft regulation.

The report finds the proposed regulations will "create challenges for water suppliers in several key ways, in many cases without compelling justifications" and makes recommendations to the Legislature that it says would "ease suppliers' administrative burden and potentially reduce costs."

Many of the report's findings and recommendations are similar to the issues and solutions that have been raised by ACWA and member agencies to the State Water Board in a coalition comment letter and public workshop last October, as well as during ongoing discussions with State Water Board staff and environmental justice organizations to identify solutions with consensus to address key concerns.

The specific findings listed are:

- Impacts to individual water suppliers will vary significantly.

LAO continued on page 3

ACWA Hires New Director of Federal Relations



ACWA has hired Ian Lyle as its new Director of Federal Relations to lead its advocacy team in Washington D.C., including advocating on behalf of member agencies before Congress and at federal executive branch agencies.

He replaces David Reynolds, who retired in December after 30 years at ACWA.

Lyle has two decades of experience working collaboratively with federal, state and local partners. He worked for 10 years in Congress, including for the Water and Power Subcommittee. Subsequently he worked for nearly a decade in advocacy and management in the nonprofit association sector.

His nonprofit association experience includes serving from 2014 through 2022 at the National Water Resources Association (NWRA) first as Director of Federal Affairs and then as its Executive Vice President. ACWA is a member of NWRA. Most recently, he worked at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, an organization that provides at-cost power to 42 million people across 48 states.

FEDERAL RELATIONS continued on page 8

2 ED Column: Tap Into QuenchCA Potential at Local Level
5 ACWA Staff Named to State Advisory Groups
6 Historic Collaboration on Habitat Planned on Tuolumne

ACWA Association of California Water Agencies

ACWA News is a publication of the Association of California Water Agencies

Periodicals postage paid at Sacramento, CA.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes and subscription requests to ACWA News,
980 9th Street, Suite 1000
Sacramento, CA
95814-3514

916.441.4545
www.acwa.com

Executive Director
Dave Eggerton

Director of Communications
Heather Engel

Editor
Will Holbert

Staff Writers
Caroline Meade
Ellen Martin

Graphic Design
Katherine Causland

Copyright 2024. All Rights Reserved. Call ACWA for Permission to Reprint.

USPS 334030

Access *ACWA News* Online

ACWA members, associates and affiliates can access *ACWA News* online even if they currently do not receive the *ACWA News* subscription. Current and past issues are available at **www.acwa.com/newsroom**. Member login required.

Connect with us online:

facebook.com/acwawater
twitter.com/acwawater
linkedin.com/company/acwa
instagram.com/acwawater

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COLUMN
DAVE EGGERTON

Quench California Makes the Case for Infrastructure Investment Locally and Statewide



Water agencies adopting new rate schedules must overcome a challenge familiar to most in the ACWA community. How do you reach customers and explain what makes their water possible? How can you make clear the tremendous financial investment required to maintain the infrastructure behind what so many take for granted?

For any agency, this is where successful education and outreach to customers can make all the difference, because when they understand how water infrastructure functions and what that means in terms of cost and their quality of life, they understand the nature of what's required to keep their water supply safe, secure and reliable. There are very real consequences to how well people understand water infrastructure, and that makes the work of any water agency more effective regardless of the circumstances.

Fortunately, ACWA members have a powerful educational resource devoted to creating that understanding — Quench California, our award-winning public education campaign at **www.QuenchCA.com**.

Through the vision of ACWA Immediate Past President Pamela Tobin, the association launched QuenchCA two years ago as a public education campaign to build awareness for the need and benefits of expanding water infrastructure investment. While it's a statewide campaign, it also has extraordinary potential in providing benefits at the local level.

A significant investment by ACWA made QuenchCA possible, and a new partnership opportunity provides member agencies with customized ads targeted to their customers. The agency pays for the ad placement while a public relations firm, hired by ACWA to help lead the campaign, develops digital ads and strategy that will help meet the agency's individual outreach goals.

For example, ACWA member City of Roseville used its partnership to have digital ads developed that highlight the agency's groundwater banking project. The ads were targeted to zip codes within the city's service area and ran for two weeks in October, generating approximately 848,559 impressions, or views, and resulting in 286 clicks to a QuenchCA.com website page that highlighted details of the project.

More members joining this effort can multiply the campaign's impact on an exponential scale. When we educate people about local water infrastructure and the vital role it plays in their communities, we help lay the foundational support we need from the public on the critical importance of caring for our infrastructure. On a statewide level, that understanding will be essential to the success of any significant public investment in infrastructure, such as through a water bond.

The QuenchCA campaign can also connect you with online toolkit items that allow your agency to customize its message online or through social media. You can learn more about these advanced partnerships, or simply access the campaign's resources, by contacting your ACWA regional affairs representative or ACWA Director of Communications Heather Engel at heathere@acwa.com.

Whether local or statewide, QuenchCA gives the water community an effective way to leverage public awareness of infrastructure within the bigger picture of strengthening the climate resilience of water supplies across California. We know how to build it, but it's public support for infrastructure investment that will actually put that know-how to work.

Be a part of the momentum behind this potential and consider supporting the QuenchCA campaign through an advanced partnership, or by utilizing its many outreach tools.

State Water Board Adopts Direct Potable Reuse Regulations

The State Water Resources Control Board on Dec. 19 adopted regulations on direct potable reuse regulations, a major milestone in diversifying California's water supply while maintaining its safety, quality, and reliability.

The regulations establish criteria for the introduction of recycled water either directly into a public water system or into a raw water supply immediately upstream of a water treatment plan. As adopted, it addresses a number of issues identified in a recent comment letter from a coalition led by WaterReuse that included ACWA.

"Recycled water has been an important tool in California's water supply tool kit for decades," said ACWA Executive Director Dave Eggerton. "These criteria will allow the expanded use of advanced recycled water, in a manner that undergoes extensive treatment and monitoring, to be protective of health and safety. This will provide greater water supply reliability and environmental benefits."

For ACWA member agencies, the regulations will facilitate the ability to expand their water recycling capabilities, a vital part of strengthening water resilience against climate change impacts. This will provide a consistent framework for water suppliers to plan ahead, know expectations, and build projects to be more drought resilient, creating certainty for water agencies to make essential local investments.

ACWA recognizes water reuse as an important source of water supply for long-term water resilience and supports Gov. Gavin Newsom's Water Supply Strategy goal of recycling and reusing 800,000 acre-feet of water per year by 2030.

LAO continued from page 1

- Proposed regulations are overly complicated and lack clarity.
- Achieving the water use objective is likely to be challenging and costly.
- Framework could create disproportional impacts on lower-income Californians.
- Water savings due to the conservation framework are likely to be modest.
- It's unclear how any water savings would be used.
- It's unclear if the framework's benefits will outweigh the costs.

An analysis by the Public Policy Institute of California last November reached similar conclusions about the proposed regulations.

In 2018, the Legislature enacted two key policy bills — SB 606 (Hertzberg) and AB 1668 (Friedman) — to implement a new framework for long-term water conservation and drought planning for water suppliers. The two bills provide new and expanded authorities and requirements that affect water conservation and drought planning for water suppliers, agricultural water suppliers, and small water suppliers and rural communities. SB 606 also required the Legislative Analyst's Office to assess implementation of urban water use efficiency standards and urban water supplier reporting, and submit a report by Jan. 10, 2024 to the Legislature and the public.

Scan with your phone to download the report



2024 SPRING ACWA CONFERENCE & EXPO

May 7 - 9, 2024

SAFE Credit Union Convention Center

Registration Opening Soon

CAPITOL CORNER

State Legislature Back in Session, Newsom Releases Proposed State Budget

The California Legislature convened earlier this month, launching into the second year of the 2023-'24 legislative session and reviving discussion of issues important to the water industry, including water rights bills and the possibility of a water/climate resilience bond on the November statewide ballot.

ACWA's advocates continued meeting with legislators during the winter recess to advance the association's goals. ACWA encourages member agencies to make similar contacts and use ACWA's "Outreach Handbook" as a helpful guide for such engagement.

Members can login at **www.acwa.com** to access the "Outreach Handbook" and other resources, including ACWA's bill tracker and to sign up for ACWA Outreach Alerts and Advisories.

Governor's Proposed Budget

Gov. Gavin Newsom on Jan. 10 unveiled his $291.4 billion proposed state budget for the 2024-'25 fiscal year. While it would rescind funding for several important water issues, it would also include new funding for flood protection and the Salton Sea.

Members can access an ACWA Advisory at **www.acwa.com** to learn more about specific funding changes affecting water issues.

While the governor did not mention a climate resilience/water bond when he unveiled his proposed budget, ACWA will continue to advocate in support of legislation that would place a bond on the November ballot. That advocacy focuses on additional investments in the areas of recycled water, desalination, groundwater recharge, water storage, conveyance, dam safety, safe drinking water, PFAS remediation, water conservation, and several other critical water infrastructure categories.

THANK YOU
ACWA 2023 Sponsors!

Exclusive Partner

ACWA JPIA

Diamond $15,000+

CalDesal
Eastern Municipal Water District
Jacobs

Platinum $10,000 – $14,999

Black & Veach Corporation
Cadiz
California CLASS
Contra Costa Water District
HDR
Mesa Water District
Orange County Water District
Stantec
Yuba Water Agency

Gold $6,500 – $9,999

Best Best & Krieger LLP
CDM Smith
Kennedy Jenks
Kronik
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Nossaman LLP
Santa Clarita Valley Water District
waterTalent
Water Replenishment District
West Yost

Silver $3,000 – $6,499

Bartle Wells Associates
Carollo Engineers
CIPO Construction Software
Coachella Valley Water District
Fitch Ratings
Gannett Fleming
Michael Baker International
Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
MWH Constructors
Rancho Water
Todd Groundwater
Veolia
Weather Tools, Inc
West Basin Municipal Water District
Western Municipal Water District
Woodard & Curran

Bronze $1,000 – $2,999

Alameda County Water District
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck
Ibank
Cucomonga Valley Water District
DN Tanks
Dublin/San Ramon Services District
El Dorado Irrigation District
Elsinore Valley MWD
Imperial Irrigation District
INTERA
Lagerlof LLP
Las Virgenes MWD
McCarthy Building Companies
Ohlund Management & Technical Services
San Juan Water District
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
Vista Irrigation District

If you are interested in becoming an ACWA sponsor, contact Joseph Ramos at josephr@acwa.com and learn more at www.acwa.com/about/sponsorships.

ACWA Representatives Named to State Advisory Groups

Two ACWA staff members were recently named to state advisory groups, giving them additional opportunities to represent ACWA member agencies in important regulatory issues.



The State Water Resources Control Board on Dec. 20 announced nine new appointments to its Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) Advisory Group, including ACWA State Relations Advocate Soren Nelson. The group meets quarterly to provide feedback on key SAFER plans and proposals.

ACWA strongly supported the creation of SAFER in 2019. Established through SB 200 (Monning), funding through SAFER strengthens access to safe and affordable drinking water throughout the state, especially in disadvantaged communities. The State Water Board allocates $130 million annually toward accomplishing this goal and identifies funding priorities in consultation with advisory group members.



In addition, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) recently selected ACWA State Relations Advocate Nick Blair as a member of the newly formed Truck Regulation Implementation Group (TRIG). That group meets quarterly to help CARB work through Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) Regulation implementation issues.

The new ACF Regulation requires vehicle fleet owners and operators, including all public agencies, to start purchasing zero-emission vehicles starting Jan. 1.

ACWA has been actively engaged in the development of the regulation for several years and last year advocated in the Legislature on behalf of member agencies for a bill that provides flexibility in regulatory compliance.

Blair is also one of 26 representatives selected to the TRIG's Rule Provisions Workgroup, which will address key rule implementation issues critical to successful ACF implementation.

LIKE, SHARE & FOLLOW

EXPLORING THE WATER WORLD ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow Us @ACWAwater

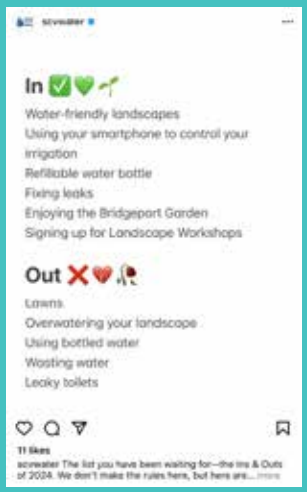
The new year is an ideal time for reflection and goal setting. That can apply to your social media as well. It's a great time to take a look at how your agency has been performing on social media and decide what is working and what isn't. It is also the perfect time to look at current and upcoming trends in social media and decide how your agency can capitalize on them.

This New Year on social media "New Year, New Me" or "New Year, Same Me" content is popping up, along with tried-and-true resolutions and "In & Out" lists for 2024. Below are some fun examples of how ACWA member agencies are using these trends to engage with their customers and followers on Instagram.

In 2024, ACWA plans to highlight even more creative social media posts from ACWA members and share more short-form video content. Be sure to follow along on Facebook, X, LinkedIn and Instagram @ ACWAWater.



Alameda County Water District suggests a New Year's Water Saving Resolution to its followers.



SCV Water shares its list of Ins & Outs for 2024 focusing on saving water.



La Puente Valley County Water District promises to remain dedicated to its community with a "New Year, Same Mission" message.

SPOTLIGHT

ACWA Member Agencies Collaborate on Historic Salmon Habitat Restoration on Tuolumne River



The Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts (MID and TID) and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) are teaming up with a nonprofit organization to design and implement a collaborative, holistic habitat restoration program along the lower Tuolumne River to improve the health and long-term recovery of the fishery and local communities it serves, according to an MID news release.

The joint effort demonstrates the power of public-private partnerships in making critical, lasting improvements to ecosystem and community health along California waterways like the Tuolumne River. The agencies are self-funding the $80 million multi-year program and recently chose the leading California riverway restoration organization, River Partners, to lead planning and restoration efforts.

Over the next 12 months, River Partners will design a series of restoration projects along the lower Tuolumne River and its floodplain from Don Pedro Reservoir downstream to the San Joaquin River that will improve conditions for salmon and other native aquatic species. By 2030, project partners aim to develop 77 acres of suitable salmon rearing and floodplain habitat and add approximately 100,000 tons of gravel in specific river reaches for optimal salmon spawning and rearing.

River Partners will lead a multi-disciplinary team of biologists, ecologists and other technical experts, including Applied River Sciences (formerly McBain Associates), in the restoration planning and design needed to implement the comprehensive program.

MID, TID and the SFPUC chose River Partners for its long track record of innovative and effective river and floodplain restoration throughout the Central Valley and across the state, which has earned the organization numerous honors for its on-the-ground impact. Since its founding in 1998, River Partners has restored nearly 20,000 riverside acres across the Central Valley and beyond in over 20 watersheds. Its portfolio of successful projects includes creating interconnected, thriving floodplains that sustain wildlife and habitat, support Valley agriculture, preserve and replenish freshwater resources and enhance surrounding communities.





Opposite page: A section of the Lower Tuolumne River, where a historic collaboration between ACWA members plans to develop 77 acres of suitable salmon rearing and floodplain habitat. *Photo courtesy of Modesto Irrigation District*

Above: Workers with River Partners plant vegetation as part of projects that restored riverine habitat along the Feather River (left) and the Willow Bend Preserve (right) along the Sacramento River. The nonprofit has restored nearly 20,000 riverside acres across the Central Valley and beyond in over 20 watersheds. *Photos courtesy of River Partners*

"MID is proud of our continued stewardship and commitment to the Tuolumne River and our communities that rely on it," stated MID General Manager Jimi Netniss in the news release. "We're eager to begin this partnership with River Partners given their rich knowledge of our watershed and impressive track record of success in procuring, designing, permitting, constructing and monitoring habitat improvement projects across California. Building upon decades of collective stewardship and Tuolumne River-specific science, together we can deliver a robust and impactful program."

"We're making significant investments and partnering with renowned experts to put years of discussions, scientific-based planning and river studies into action and accelerate momentum in implementing our unwavering commitment to a successful habitat restoration program," stated TID General Manager Michelle Reimers in the news release. "We're excited to continue the ongoing stewardship of the Tuolumne River – improvements that our community will see the benefits of for generations to come."

"We're proud to collaborate with River Partners, the irrigation districts, and others on the Tuolumne River to restore habitat and make improvements that will benefit salmon and other native species," stated SFPUC General Manager Dennis Herrera in the news release. "We've always been willing to do our part to further protect natural habitats, including in times of drought. We and the districts have committed to self-fund millions of dollars in habitat improvement projects, as well as ensure more water for the Tuolumne, even in dry years."

"River Partners believes creating a thriving future for California's natural resources, ecosystems and people requires deep commitment with diverse public and private partners," stated River Partners President Julie Rentner in the news release. "That's why we're excited to partner with the unique alliance of MID, TID and the SFPUC who are working proactively to restore the lower Tuolumne River and achieve real, lasting benefits for species on the brink and vulnerable communities. Our hope is that this partnership and its impact will serve as a model for effective collaboration and results along other California rivers and communities." ♦

"River Partners believes creating a thriving future for California's natural resources, ecosystems and people requires deep commitment with diverse public and private partners." – River Partners President Julie Rentner

Eight ACWA Employees Recognized for 2023 Service Milestones

ACWA recently recognized eight employees for achieving service milestones during 2023.

15 Years



Communications Specialist II Katherine Causland joined ACWA as a Graphic Designer. She has since played a key role in developing and protecting ACWA's brand and creating a beautiful and consistent visual look for ACWA programs and products. Causland's list of accomplishments include designing ACWA's Centennial book, creating the current logo and taking over in-house video efforts.

10 Years



Region & Member Engagement Specialist II Ana Javaid started at ACWA in 2013, providing support to all 10 ACWA regions. In 2015, her responsibilities expanded to serving as the staff liaison to regions and facilitating ACWA's committee appointment process. Javaid has developed strong relationships with the members and has become a trusted source of information for them.

Steven Carr was hired as an Accounting Technician and was recently promoted to Accountant I. In his current role, he is responsible for accounts receivable,



payroll, CalPERS reporting, deposits for all revenues and all aspects relating to the dues process. He is also heavily involved with ACWA's annual financial audit.

Five Years



Richard Filgas joined ACWA as a State Relations Assistant and is now a State Relations Analyst II. In this role, Filgas analyzes bills, drafts letters and works closely with advocates to influence state policy outcomes. He has become a subject matter expert on a number of important water issues and is a critical asset to the State Relations team.



Kris Anderson was hired as a Legislative Advocate and promoted to a Senior State Relations Advocate in 2023, when he led ACWA's successful efforts to oppose water rights legislation. Anderson leads advocacy efforts supporting ACWA's positions and policies with the state Legislature, state agencies and the Administration. He is also the staff liaison for the Legal Affairs Committee.

Dave Eggerton was named Executive Director of ACWA after having been a General



Manager and Deputy General Counsel at separate member agencies. Since joining ACWA, he has ensured the association has remained consistent in achieving its mission, financial objectives, operations and functions, including overall strategic planning, financial management, organizational development, staff management, and its many programs and activities.



Jay Tanner joined ACWA as a Federal Relations Coordinator and is currently a Federal Relations Representative I. Over the years, Tanner has taken on increasing responsibilities with her duties, including analysis and advocacy regarding new and ongoing federal-level issues that impact member agencies, including headwaters policies.



Soren Nelson was hired as a State Relations Analyst II and is currently a State Relations Advocate II. In this role, he is responsible for reaching out to and maintaining state agency contacts, analyzing regulatory proposals, testifying on behalf of the association at state agency hearings, writing formal comment letters and serving as staff liaison to ACWA's Groundwater Committee.

FEDERAL RELATIONS continued from page 1

"We are incredibly fortunate in being able to bring Ian into ACWA," said ACWA Executive Director Dave Eggerton. "He has an exceptional combination of relevant experience, the utmost professionalism, and the personality and demeanor to excel in this position. He knows California water policy and many of our member agencies."

Lyle has experience testifying before Congress, engaging news media, speaking at numerous congressional roundtables, and planning and executing dozens of conferences.

"I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to become part of the exceptional ACWA team," Lyle said. "ACWA and its members are on the leading edge of efforts to address the many challenges facing public water agencies. I am excited to join this critically important effort."

He will be attending ACWA's 2024 Spring Conference & Expo in Sacramento and looks forward to getting to know more of ACWA's members.

THIS MONTH IN ACWA HISTORY

10 years ago

The ACWA Board of Directors voted to establish a statewide Drought Action Group as Gov. Jerry Brown declared an official drought state of emergency, launching a statewide water conservation campaign that urged Californians to conserve water by at least 20%. The Department of Water Resources also announced it expected a zero percent allocation for the first time in the State Water Project's history.

20 years ago

ACWA expressed disappointment in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposal to take $1.3 billion in property tax revenue away from local governments to offset state obligations to schools and address a $15 billion deficit. "We understand that all forms of government will have to absorb some of the impact of the budget crisis, but this proposal resurrects a plan that was used in the early 1990s to bail out the state. It didn't make sense then and it doesn't make sense now," stated ACWA Executive Director Steve Hall in reaction.

30 years ago

Numerous ACWA member agencies assisted in the restoration of water service throughout Southern California following the 6.6 Northridge earthquake, which left tens of thousands of people without water and power. Offers to assist affected water suppliers and their customers poured into the ACWA office where staffers compiled the offers and forwarded them to the Office of Emergency Services, as well as to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

40 years ago

ACWA News summarized a UC Davis report that examined lobbying in Sacramento between 1972 and 1983. It found that the profession has a public image that oversimplifies the complexity of the activity as well as understates vast differences among its practitioners. It went on to state that informal comments by lobbyists indicated that "the era of fraternization" with elected officials may be replaced by an era where legislative staffers have more to do with the fate of bills.

50 years ago

As the 1970s energy crisis unfolded, the state Department of Food and Agriculture and UC Davis released a joint study on energy demands from California's agriculture industry. The study estimated that farm operations and transportation and processing of agricultural products accounted for 5.07% of energy consumed in the state during 1972. It also concluded that restrictions of energy flow during certain portions of the year "would be likely to cause major reductions in food production, with only minor savings of energy in the state economy."



A photo shows the severity of the 1994 Northridge earthquake, which also severed water lines throughout the area.

PEOPLE NEWS



Loralee McGaughey

OBITUARY

SEWD Mourns McGaughey

The Stockton East Water District (SEWD) is mourning the loss of longtime Board of Directors member **Loralee McGaughey**, who passed away on Dec. 31.

McGaughey represented a portion of the City of Stockton and presided on the Board of Directors since her appointment in 2002. She helped lead SEWD to some of its greatest achievements and through some of its greatest challenges.

"I am truly saddened by the loss of our valued Director, Loralee McGaughey, and her passing is mourned by the Board of Directors and staff," SEWD General Manager **Justin Hopkins** stated in a news release.



Karl Stock

Bureau Names Stock California-Great Basin Regional Director

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner **Camille Calimlim Touton** in December announced the selection of **Karl Stock** as the new Regional Director for the California-Great Basin Region. Stock will succeed **Ernest Conant**, who will assume the role of Senior Advisor to the Deputy Commissioner for Operations.

Stock joined the Bureau in 2001 and has served in a variety of leadership positions, most recently as Manager of the Bureau's Reclamation Law Administration Division. In this capacity, he has been instrumental in developing proactive strategies for investing the historic funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act to address the unprecedented challenges facing Western states.

Stock earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from Brigham Young University and a Master of Science in Public Administration from the University of Colorado Denver.



Chance Edmondson

EVMWD Selects Edmondson President

Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (EVMWD) in December announced the unanimous selection of **Chance Edmondson** as Board President. This marks Edmondson's first time serving as Board President, having previously served as Treasurer in 2022 and Vice President the following year.

Edmondson joined the EVMWD Board of Directors in 2021. A resident of Wildomar, he owns a business and is a licensed general engineering contractor in the City of Lake Elsinore.

Additional announcements from the meeting include **Harvey Ryan** being appointed Vice President and **Jack Ferguson** being appointed Treasurer.



Robert McVicker

MWDOC Announces Board Leadership

The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) Board of Directors in December appointed **Robert "Bob" McVicker** as President and **Jeffery M. Thomas** as Vice President.

McVicker, who previously served as Vice President, was appointed to the Board in 2019 and elected in 2020. He has over 40 years of industry experience as an engineer, manager and consultant, having also served as a Fountain Valley planning commissioner and on Orange County's Well Standards Advisory Board. He graduated from Humboldt State University and received his master's degree from Utah State.

Thomas is an investment management professional and has served on the MWDOC Board since 2009. He has also served as Mayor and Councilman for the city of Tustin. He holds a law degree from Western State University, College of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from California State University, Fullerton.



Eric Oppenheimer

SWB Names Oppenheimer Executive Director

The State Water Resources Control Board in December announced **Eric Oppenheimer** as its new Executive Director to lead the Board's managerial, programmatic and administrative functions.

He succeeds **Eileen Sobeck**, who is retiring after seven years with the State Water Board and nearly 45 years of public service in a variety of federal and state government roles.

Oppenheimer previously served as one of the State Water Board's chief deputy directors. His primary areas of responsibility have encompassed planning solutions for the Bay-Delta, implementing the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, advancing racial equity, promoting water conservation and administering water rights.

An environmental scientist, his career began with the Lahontan and Central Valley regional water boards, interspersed with positions at the Department of Water Resources and the California Coastal Commission.



Jon Messick



Gary Bradford

Yuba Water Names Chair and Vice Chair

During its first meeting of the year, Yuba Water's Board of Directors named **Jon Messick** as Chair and **Gary Bradford** as Vice Chair for 2024.

Yuba Water's seven-member governing board is comprised of all five members of Yuba County's Board of Supervisors, plus two at-large, elected positions. Messick joined the Yuba Water's board in 2023 following his election to the Yuba County Board of Supervisors.

Bradford was named Vice Chair after serving as Chair for the past two years. He has served on the Board since 2017 through his role as a Yuba County Supervisor.



Gail Morton



Jan Shriner

Marina Coast WD Selects Officers

The Marina Coast Water District recently named **Gail Morton** as President and **Jan Shriner** as Vice President for 2024.

Both women were elected unanimously to lead the Board of Directors. Morton is an attorney in private practice and has been a community leader, previously serving as Marina's Mayor pro Tempore and Councilmember. Shriner is a trained biologist with a lengthy career in outdoor education that has included both private and public sector roles.

MEMBER NEWS

Collaborative Approach Ensures Sustainability for Groundwater Supplies

For the past decade, the Hemet-San Jacinto Watermaster has been a critical administrator of a regional effort to create long-term groundwater sustainability throughout the San Jacinto Valley.

The Watermaster is comprised of representatives from the four public agencies that rely on the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin – Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD), Lake Hemet Municipal Water District (Lake Hemet), and the cities of Hemet and San Jacinto. Private groundwater producers are also represented on its Board of Directors.

In April 2013, a stipulated judgment was entered with the Riverside County Superior Court, adopting the management plan and creating the Watermaster. Its role is to protect the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians' water rights that were established by the Soboba Settlement Act. The act was signed into law by President George W. Bush in July 2008 to remediate the loss of water by the Soboba due to a variety of factors.

Since its formation in 2013, the Watermaster has worked closely with its member agencies to bring the basin into a path of sustainability.

As part of its partnership with the Watermaster, EMWD plays an important role by operating the regional facilities that deliver high-quality water imported from the State Water Project to groundwater replenishment ponds located within the San Jacinto Riverbed.

A 10-year rolling annual average of 7,500 acre-feet of water is replenished into the basin through those facilities, which are maintained by EMWD. Due to California's historic rainfall last winter, the agencies have completed their 2024 replenishment obligations ahead of schedule.

In the past decade, the Watermaster's area has seen population growth of 52%, yet reduced groundwater pumping by 18%.

"Our region, including the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, has a better water supply future because of the work we have put forward in the past decade," stated EMWD Board President Phil Paule, who serves as EMWD's representative to the Watermaster's Board of Directors. "We are incredibly proud of the work we have accomplished in the past year and look forward to the future opportunities to successfully and collaboratively manage our region's valuable groundwater resources."

Association of California Water Agencies
980 9th Street, Suite 1000
Sacramento, CA 95814-3577

Periodicals Postage
PAID
Sacramento, CA

Time Valued Material

ACWA LEGISLATIVE SYMPOSIUM '24

April 10, 2024
SAFE Credit Union Convention Center

REGISTRATION OPENING SOON



MOST CLICKED

Subscribe to ACWA's eNews to receive the latest association news by email each week. Visit **www.acwa.com/newsletters/ACWA-eNews** for more information. Here are a few of the most clicked stories on ACWA's website during the past month.

- SEWD Mourns Loss of Longtime Board Member – Jan. 5
- Gloria Dizmang Resigns from PWD Board Due to Health Issues – Jan. 3
- Collaborative Approach Ensures Sustainability for Groundwater Supplies – Dec. 19
- State Water Board Adopts Direct Potable Reuse Regulations – Dec. 19
- State Water Board Appoints ACWA Representative to SAFER Advisory Group – Dec. 22

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit **www.acwa.com/events** for complete listing and registration

JAN 2024
31

MWDOC WATER POLICY FORUM & DINNER
MWDOC | Costa Mesa

Join MWDOC's Water Policy Forum & Dinner at the Westin South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa. The event will showcase insights, perspectives, strategies, and visions of several new water general managers in Southern California.

FEB 2024
27 – 29

ACWA DC2024 – ANNUAL WASHINGTON, D.C. CONFERENCE
ACWA | Washington D.C.

Save the date for ACWA DC2024. This annual conference gives members a special opportunity to connect with fellow water agencies and show the importance of California water in the nation's capital.

APRIL 2024
4

2024 WATER CONSERVATION SHOWCASE
East Bay MUD | San Ramon

Save the date for the 2024 Water Conservation Showcase. The WCS is seeking submissions for presentations and invites you to submit an abstract on a presentation topic related to water efficiency.

APRIL 2024
10

ACWA 2024 LEGISLATIVE SYMPOSIUM
ACWA | Sacramento

ACWA's Legislative Symposium has been an annual event engaging water district directors, general managers, attorneys, and staff from across California with up-to-date information on critical water policy issues.

MAY 2024
7 – 9

2024 SPRING ACWA CONFERENCE & EXPO
ACWA | Sacramento

Save the date for ACWA's 2024 Spring Conference & Expo.

SHARE YOUR EVENT

WITH OTHERS IN THE WATER INDUSTRY BY POSTING ON ACWA'S ONLINE EVENT CALENDAR

1. Go to **www.acwa.com/events**
2. Click the "**Submit Event**" button on the upper left
3. Complete the event form and click "**Submit**"