



2025

Year in Review

“ Engagement throughout the association reinforced the relationships that allow us to respond effectively to both immediate needs and long-term priorities.

By Cathy Green, ACWA President



ACWA at its Best During an Eventful 2025

ACWA members should feel a strong sense of pride reflecting on what we accomplished together in 2025. It was a year defined by resilience, collaboration and meaningful progress in support of our member agencies and the communities they serve.

A powerful example of ACWA at its best came in response to the catastrophic wildfires in Los Angeles. As member agencies faced unprecedented challenges, others who had experienced similar disasters stepped in to help — sharing lessons learned, offering practical guidance and providing support when it was needed most. This collective response demonstrated the strength of our network and the value of shared experience.

That same spirit carried through ACWA's committees, regional leadership, and statewide events, where we connected, exchanged ideas and worked together to address complex water challenges. Engagement throughout the association reinforced the relationships

that allow us to respond effectively to both immediate needs and long-term priorities.

During 2025, our members' unified voice in Sacramento proved effective in shaping policy across a wide range of issues, from preventing water theft to restoring funding for habitat restoration and securing infrastructure investment. In Washington D.C., our federal advocacy helped advance federal legislation to improve forest management.

Behind the scenes, we also focused on strengthening the association itself, including leading a nationwide search for a new Executive Director to position ACWA for continued success. I am confident that the continued search will lead us to the right person during the new year.

As my term as ACWA President comes to a close, I am proud of the progress we made in 2025, and I look forward to continuing to work alongside our members to support California's water future.

ACWA BY THE NUMBERS 2025

ACWA staff continued to engage with members, policymakers, media and other stakeholders to deliver impactful results on behalf of member agencies.

Advocacy



138

Members and Organizations Participated in ACWA-led Coalitions



562*

Member Interactions on Key Bills

**Only interactions submitted to ACWA*



196

Water-related Bills Tracked



116

Bill Positions Taken



48

Position & Comment Letters Submitted

Top
4

Advocacy Issues

Infrastructure Funding

Wildfire Prevention/Headwater Management

Clean Fleets

Healthy Rivers and Landscapes

Social Media Presence



23,621 Social Media Followers

Total Engagement

18,933

Engagements include likes, comments and shares on posts.

Total Impressions

331,135

This is how many times our content was displayed across all social media channels.

Media Presence



22

News Media Interviews

174

Mentions in News Media



15

News Releases

Who We Are



468

Public Agency Members

204

Associates

20

Affiliates

2

New Public Member Agencies

City of Lincoln

June Lake Public Utility District

Education and Networking



5

Signature Events

Spring Conference & Expo

Fall Conference & Expo

D.C. Conference

Legislative Symposium

CLE Workshop



4

Webinars



6

In-Person Region Events

Member Communication and Engagement



6

Toolkits Developed



52

Alerts & Advisories Distributed



132

Member Meetings

Advocacy Wins

ACWA staff advocated on a number of legislative and regulatory issues in collaboration with member agencies and other industry association partners. The following are a few highlights of work accomplished during 2025 in **Sacramento** and **Washington, D.C.** on key issues of importance for ACWA member agencies.

Infrastructure Funding

Advocacy: The Legislature was delaying approving a spending plan for Proposition 4, the \$10 billion climate resilience bond approved by voters in 2024 that included \$3.8 billion in funding for water-related categories. This delay threatened to impact a number of shovel-ready projects by at least another year. ACWA mobilized a large number of member agencies, urged them to contact legislators and worked within a coalition to make passage of a spending plan a top priority in Sacramento.

Result: The spending plan was approved by the Legislature and signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Zero-Emission Vehicles

Advocacy: ACWA staff continued engaging California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff to encourage flexibility in public agencies' compliance with the Advanced Clean Fleets regulation while keeping essential public services intact. Advocacy included ACWA and member agencies providing oral and written comments at Board meetings, as well as ACWA's organizing on-site tours for CARB staff throughout the state where member agency staff described compliance challenges.

Result: CARB adopted a resolution that included regulatory changes that extended requirements to purchase 50% Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) and directed CARB staff to continue improving exemption pathways available to public fleets, including mutual aid, ZEV purchases and daily usage exemptions.

Tougher Penalties for Water Theft

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed SB 394 into law in October, giving local water agencies the ability to enhance penalties for water theft from fire hydrants.

Co-sponsored by ACWA and member agency Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, the law removes the one-year reset on existing penalties for the third and additional violations for water theft committed via meter tampering and other methods. It would also help agencies recover damages by authorizing utilities to pursue civil remedies against any person who tampers with or diverts water from a fire hydrant without authorization.

ACWA worked extensively to highlight the importance of deterring water theft from fire hydrants, specifically theft by commercial operators that illegally divert water from hydrants for profit. ACWA staff developed a fact sheet that included data from member agencies supporting the need for this statutory change while leading a broad coalition of more than 60 members consisting of ACWA member agencies and partner organizations, in addition to providing coalition letters and lead testimony during policy committee hearings.

Water Quality

Advocacy: SB 601 sought to safeguard California's water quality protection regime from federal rollbacks; however, its approach would have gone far beyond simply maintaining the status quo. The bill would complicate the state's wastewater discharge permitting system, potentially lead to frivolous litigation and likely result in higher water bills for Californians. ACWA helped stop the bill in 2025 by working through a large coalition that included many association member agencies.

Result: The bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Headwaters Health

Advocacy: ACWA continued advocating for sound forest and watershed management and helped build support for the Fix Our Forests Act (H.R. 471). This legislation would improve forest management activities and increase wildfire resiliency by improving federal agency collaboration, authorizing targeted environmental streamlining authorities, providing litigation reform, expanding good neighbor authorities and investing in research and technology aimed at improving forest health.

Result: The Fix our Forests Act passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2025, with 20 California members of congress cosponsoring the bill and a majority of the California congressional delegation voting in favor of it. The Senate version passed out of the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee in October, with bipartisan support and U.S. Senator Alex Padilla as an original co-sponsor. The bill is now awaiting a vote by the full Senate.

Pollution Prevention

Advocacy: ACWA supported advancement of the federal Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety Act that would require wipe manufacturers to clearly label their products as non-flushable to protect wastewater systems from pollution and structural damage, which can cost millions of dollars to repair critical infrastructure nationwide.

Result: The bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives on a bipartisan vote and is headed to the U.S. Senate.

Invasive Species

Advocacy: A coalition of water agencies led by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and East Bay Municipal Utility District began working on a potential trailer bill policy solution to address water management challenges related to golden mussels. ACWA worked within this member-driven coalition to support that effort.

Result: The bill passed the Legislature and was signed by the governor, providing a \$20 million allocation from an invasive species account for golden mussel issues.

Funding Restored for Bay-Delta Habitat Work

ACWA staff, in coordination with other associations and individual ACWA members, successfully advocated for legislators to restore \$351 million in funding for the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program.

The funding makes possible projects, such as habitat restoration, that improve environmental conditions and promote recovery of native fish species. It also funds water supply projects that are already providing drought resiliency for the environment, farms and people.

Member agency engagement with legislators had a significant impact on restoring the funding, representing progress toward restoring the health of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta.





ACWA & Region Events

Throughout 2025, ACWA hosted events across the state that fostered member connection and engagement, anchored by two major conferences and numerous regional events.

The **ACWA Spring Conference & Expo** in Monterey and the **ACWA Fall Conference & Expo** in San Diego hosted over 1600 attendees each. Presentations and panels at both conferences covered timely water issues including disaster response, watershed health, recharging groundwater basins, artificial intelligence in water management and the future of the Colorado River.

ACWA opened the year with annual events such as its **ACWA D.C. Conference**, where over 150 people gathered to discuss and advocate for California water priorities in the nation's capital. Meanwhile, ACWA's **Legislative Symposium** attracted about 125 people to Sacramento to hear updates on PFAS, a challenging state budget and how Southern California wildfires are driving policy discussions.

Some additional highlights included:

- Two webinars in partnership with CAPIO on **Combating Misinformation in Public Communications and Beyond Translation: Crafting Culturally Authentic Messaging that Resonates with Spanish-Speaking Communities**
- A live ACWA President and Vice President **Candidates' Town Hall** webinar
- The first of a three-part **CLE Virtual Workshop Series** that offered continuing legal education credit on contract drafting for water lawyers
- A live "**ACWA 101**" webinar providing an overview of how the association partners and shares resources with members



Foundation Opens Pathways Leading to Water Careers

Over the past year, the ACWA Foundation launched initiatives to expand pathways into water careers, including a partnership with Ventura College's Water Science Program to engage students directly and explore opportunities for program expansion.

The Foundation also received grant funding with Palo Verde College and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to research strategies for attracting students to water industry trades, where workforce demand is growing statewide. In Northern California, the Foundation built relationships with community colleges to support recruitment of experienced water professionals as faculty.

Additional efforts include hosting career-focused webinars, engaging students at ACWA's Fall Conference & Expo, developing an interactive statewide map of water-related coursework, curating internship and scholarship listings, and beginning work on a high school internship toolkit.

The nonprofit 501(c)3 was formed by the ACWA Board of Directors in 2022. The Foundation and its Board operate separately and independently from ACWA and its Board of Directors.

➤ For more information about the foundation, visit acwa-foundation.org

ACWA experienced a phenomenal year with seven in-person region events.

- Region 1 hosted a program and tour that highlighted **innovation in the North Bay**.
- Region 2 hosted an interactive tour of the **Feather River Fish Hatchery, Oroville Dam & Spillway and Oroville Dam Visitors Center**.
- Region 3 hosted a webinar titled **"Big Impact on a Small Budget: Grant Strategies for Resource-Strapped Agencies."**
- Region 4 hosted a program in partnership with FISHBIO on the **impacts of non-native fish on salmon recovery**.
- Region 5 hosted a program and tour to learn about **SFPUC's water infrastructure and fire resilience**.
- Region 6 and 7 hosted a farming tour in the Bakersfield area that included stops at **Kern County Water Agency, Grimmway Farms and Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District**.
- Regions 8, 9 & 10 hosted the **Southern California Water Forum** where participants heard from industry experts about challenges and strategic action on the Colorado River, federal issues and securing future water supplies.

➤ For ACWA events, visit acwa.com/events

Tools and Resources

ACWA creates several resources each year to support member agencies as they engage with customers, media, legislators and other stakeholders. Below are a few of the resources released in 2025 to assist member agencies in educating their communities about local water resiliency investments, the importance of funding to improve aging water infrastructure, state regulations and more.

Toolkits

ACWA provides members with customizable resources including social media posts and graphics, talking points, FAQs and more.

➤ Download these toolkits for free at acwa.com/resources

Scholarship



**PAYING FOR COLLEGE
JUST GOT EASIER
LET US HELP!**

#CAScholarships

APPLY NOW
acwa.com/scholarships

Deadline: March 1

ACWA

Cross-Connection Control in partnership with CUWA



CUWA
CALIFORNIA URBAN
WATER AGENCIES

**Cross-Connection
Control Training**

2025



Happy
#WaterAwarenessMonth!
Join us this month in
making sure every drop
counts!

Water
AWARENESS
MONTH

Water Awareness Month



**THE TIME TO ACT
IS NOW**

F.I.R.E. Fix Videos



Clean Reliable Water
made possible by water professionals
Learn more about the work and the opportunity.

- Engineering
- Water Treatment
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Customer Relations
- Operations and Maintenance
- Law
- Public Information / Communications

OCT. 4 - 12, 2025 #CAWaterWeek

Water Professionals Appreciation Week

Download
F.I.R.E. Fix
Videos



ACWA developed F.I.R.E. Fix, a suite of videos to help member agencies educate the public and lawmakers about the critical need to protect California's headwaters and take steps to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. The videos use striking visuals and expert interviews to highlight the challenges, impacts and solutions in a fast-paced and engaging way. The videos were developed in coordination with ACWA's Headwaters Workgroup.

Fact Sheets & Policy Documents

These resources highlight issues that will impact, or may be of interest to, ACWA member agencies.

Wildfires and Water

The Role of California Public Water Agencies

January 2023

California faces catastrophic climate-driven wildfires, exacerbated by periods of heavy rainfall followed by periods of extreme drought. Decades of fire suppression, and historically forested areas on forest health and vegetation management projects. These adverse wildfires have devastating impacts on communities that require institutionalized local, statewide, and federal response. Public water agencies serve a critical local government role during these events.

Fire Hydrants and Water Distribution Systems

Public water agencies are responsible for providing critical retail water service to properties across the state, including water to aid in fire suppression. Retail water systems were designed to provide the public with safe and reliable drinking water and to provide an immediately available water service to aid in extinguishing structural fires. These water systems were not designed to combat wildfires, especially the climate-driven wildfires that California experiences today.

Water systems use water pressure created by pump stations and water storage tanks to move water from lower elevations to higher elevations. These water systems can become overwhelmed when too many fire hydrants are used within the same pressure zone. For a structural fire, there might be three to five fire engines responding to the fire. For a wildfire, there can be hundreds of fire engines hooked up to the same system. The significant drawback on the system during a wildfire can cause the water pressure to drop, which can affect fire hydrants, particularly those at higher elevations.

Firefighters anticipate this drop in pressure and will adjust their operations as needed. Firefighters can fill large water trucks from hydrants at lower elevations, where there is higher water pressure, and drive the water to higher elevations for use. In addition, fire hydrants are but one tool firefighters use when responding to wildfires. Water agencies also coordinate with firefighters to provide water sources for firefighting helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. Firefighters also utilize other strategies such as creating fuel breaks to contain the fire.

Wildfires and Water Fact Sheet

SB 394 (Allen): Enhanced Penalties for Water Theft from Fire Hydrants

Background

Public water agencies are responsible for delivering safe, clean, and affordable drinking water throughout California. However, in recent years, water theft has posed a serious threat to water agencies' ability to fulfill that responsibility.

Water theft takes many forms, the most egregious being water theft from fire hydrants. Illegal actors have been documented connecting to and filling water trucks from fire hydrants without the proper use of hydrant meters to avoid paying for the water. These water trucks can hold up to 4,000 gallons of water, resulting in significant loss for water agencies. The stolen water is typically used or sold for profit for commercial purposes. Examples include construction companies for use at construction sites (e.g., for dust mitigation), landscaping companies, and water trucks selling the water for profit to some cases, stolen water is even transported outside of the water agency's service area. These activities are premeditated as a special tool is needed to connect to the fire hydrant. And, this type of water theft can also cause costly damage to the fire hydrant and system infrastructure. Current fine amounts are not strong enough to deter this and may instead be seen as the cost of doing business for some bad actors.

Existing Law

SB 427 (Chapter 137, 2021) by Senator Eggman enacted a new statute that authorized public water agencies to adopt an ordinance that prohibits water theft and makes a violation of that ordinance subject to an administrative fine or penalty. The existing authority breaks theft into two categories: meter tampering and all other water theft; theft from a fire hydrant is subject to the latter.

Fines for water theft committed as meter tampering are not to exceed:

- \$130 for a first violation
- \$700 for a second violation within one year of the first violation
- \$1,300 for each additional violation within one year of the first violation

Fines for all other forms of water theft are not to exceed:

- \$1,000 for a first violation
- \$2,000 for a second violation within one year of the first violation
- \$3,000 for each additional violation within one year of the first violation

SB 394 Fact Sheet

Public Health Goals Report Guidelines

Ensuring Compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 116470(b)

April 2023

ACWA

Public Health Goals Report Guidance

PAVING STANDARDS

Best Practices for Busted Officials and Agency Staff

April 2025

The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) recognizes that all local governments would benefit from greater coordination on planned paving maintenance and restoration projects, including the associated paving standards, to more efficiently manage local services. Some local governments have begun to develop these mutually beneficial relationships as strategic planning and coordination can reduce the costs of new-onset and restoration work while equitably spreading them across multiple service providers.

Municipal streets include features both seen and unseen, but the health or condition of a street is typically judged on what can be seen – the surface pavement condition. As a result, a desire for enhanced street surface appearance can lead to disproportionate restoration requirements being sought after underground utility infrastructure is initially constructed or maintained.

What are Street Paving Standards?

City and county governments develop, adopt, and administer standards for repaving streets and curbs following excavation work within their jurisdictions. These paving standards are incorporated in permit requirements for installing or maintaining underground infrastructure. Special districts providing water and sewer services must maintain associated infrastructure and facilities to ensure reliability. Special districts have statutory rights of way or rights to use public

streets or highways for infrastructure projects so long as they coordinate with the city or county and other utilities with infrastructure in the street. Special districts are required to restore a street's condition to what it was prior to initiating work. However, cities and counties cannot unreasonably burden the use of public streets with permit conditions that are inconsistent with state law.

Overlapping Responsibilities and Priorities Between Local Governments

Cities, counties, and special districts have different responsibilities, oversight, and revenue streams, but serve the same communities. Street maintenance and paving require significant funding from local government budgets. Therefore, inefficiencies in road and underground utility maintenance lead to greater overall costs for the communities that special districts, cities, and counties mutually serve.

Paving Standards Best Practices

ACWA UPDATE ON PRIORITY ISSUES

A high-level look at recent ACWA activity and initiatives.

OCTOBER 2025

ACWA-Sponsored SB 394 - Water Theft

SB 394 (Allen, D. Santa Monica), co-sponsored by ACWA and Los Angeles Municipal Water District, passed the Legislature and is now on Gov. Gavin Newsom's desk. The bill would allow local agencies providing water services to adopt an ordinance with enhanced penalties for water theft from a fire hydrant. It would also remove the one-year limit on existing penalties for repeat violations involving meter tampering and other methods. It would also authorize agencies to pursue civil remedies against individuals who tamper with or divert water without authorization.

ACWA-Sponsored SB 454 - PFAS Cleanup

SB 454 (McNerney, D. Stockton), co-sponsored by ACWA and the League of California Cities, would have created a statewide PFAS Cleanup Fund to help local agencies provide safe drinking water and treated wastewater for their communities. The bill was vetoed by the governor earlier this month. More information is available at gov.ca.gov.

SB 601 - Wastewater Discharge

SB 601 (Allen, D. Santa Monica), which ACWA strongly opposed, was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee and will not advance this session. ACWA had a coalition of local government groups and coordinated closely with a CalChamber-led coalition this year to oppose the bill, which would needlessly complicate the state's wastewater discharge permitting system, potentially lead to frivolous litigation and likely result in higher water bills for Californians.

Proposition 4 Spending Plan

The spending plan for Proposition 4, the \$10 billion climate resilience bond approved by voters last year, was signed by the governor. ACWA submitted a coalition letter to legislative leadership in August urging them to implement a spending plan this year for Proposition 4. Proposition 4 includes \$3.8 billion in funding for water-related categories and there are shovel-ready projects ready to move forward in nearly every category.

STAFF CONTACT

Jillie Hall
Director of State Legislative Relations
jhall@acwa.com

STAFF CONTACT

Chelsea Holmes
Director of State Regulatory Relations
cholmes@acwa.com

STAFF CONTACT

Sarah Nelson
Senior State Relations Advocate
snelson@acwa.com

STAFF CONTACT

Allie Hall
Director of State Legislative Relations
jhall@acwa.com

Priority Issues Update

MONTHLY REGULATORY ROUNDUP

NOVEMBER 2025

UPCOMING ACWA EVENTS

ACWA STATE WATER BOARD LIVE WEBINAR

ACWA, in partnership with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), will host a webinar on November 6 at 11:00 AM to provide agencies with a walkthrough of the California Water Accounting, Tracking, and Reporting System (CalWATRS), the State Water Board's new water rights data system. Register here.

ACWA REGIONAL EVENTS

- ACWA Regions 8, 9, and 10 / Reception and Forum / November 13-14 / Register here

ACWA FALL 2025 CONFERENCE

ACWA will host its Fall 2025 Conference and Exhibition in San Diego from December 2-4. ACWA Policy Committee meetings will be held in person on Tuesday, December 2 (preliminary schedule below). Register here to attend Fall Conference, including the Policy Committee meetings.

POLICY UPDATES

FEDERAL

ACWA's Federal Regulatory Issues chart is accessible here.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Bay Delta Plan Update - Sacramento/ Delta Update

- On September 16, the State Water Board announced a Revisited Notice of the Second Revised Notice of Public Comment and Hearing on Revised Draft Sacramento/Delta Update, to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Watershed (Bay Delta Plan). The State Water Board is anticipating a limited reconstruction of the draft Staff Report, originally released in July 2023, and an updated draft Bay Delta Plan in December 2025. New dates for a public hearing and comment period will be announced upon release.

Bay Delta Plan Update

- On September 19, the State Water Board released a Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment and Notice of Public Workshop on the Draft Scientific Basis Report Supplemental Draft SRB, for Consideration of Potential Updates to the Bay Delta Plan to Incorporate a Proposed

Staff Contact
Stephen Ping
sping@acwa.com

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Stephen Ping
sping@acwa.com

Regulatory Roundup

2025 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION

NOVEMBER 2025

ACWA

2025 Summary of Legislation

SUMMARY OF APPELLATE CASES

DECIDED BY THE COURTS IN 2024 - 2025

NOVEMBER 2025

ACWA

2025 Summary of Appellate Cases

2025 KEY FEDERAL WATER ISSUES

ABOUT ACWA

ACWA was formed in 1910 when five irrigation districts came together to address common needs. First known as the Irrigation Districts Association, member districts in 1973 to ensure the organization the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) to better reflect its changing role in California water.

Today, ACWA is the largest statewide coalition of public water agencies in the country. As a leader in California water issues and a respected voice for its members in both Sacramento and Washington, D.C., ACWA has been a driving force in California water policy for more than a century and continues to help shape the laws and regulations that affect the State's water agencies and their customers.

ACWA's approximately 470 public agency members are responsible for 95 percent of the water delivered to communities, farms and businesses in California. Together, they play an active role in managing the State's water resources and promoting investments in safe drinking water, water use efficiency, water recycling, surface and groundwater storage and other strategies to meet California's water needs.

ACWA's mission is to provide comprehensive leadership, advocacy and resources for California public water agencies to ensure a high quality and reliable water supply in an environmentally sustainable and fiscally responsible manner.

2025 Key Federal Water Issues

Awards

ACWA recognizes its members' achievements throughout the year by showcasing their outstanding efforts and dedication to advancing the California water industry.

➤ Learn more at acwa.com/awards



Excellence in Water Leadership

Recognizing individuals who have made a remarkable and visible contribution to California water.

Wes Monier

*Retired Chief Hydrologist for
Turlock Irrigation District*

Sponsor  **BLACK & VEATCH**



Lifetime Achievement

Recognizing individuals who, throughout their career, have made remarkable and lasting contributions to the California water community.

Mike Wade

*Executive Director, California Farm
Water Coalition*



John P. Fraser Emissary

Recognizing remarkable contributions to California water through voluntary service to ACWA.

Cristel Tufenkjian

*Deputy Executive Director,
McMullin Area Groundwater
Sustainability Agency*

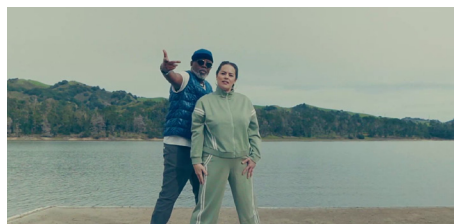


Clair A. Hill

Recognizing exemplary projects and programs developed by ACWA member agencies.

**Calleguas Municipal Water District
and Las Virgenes Municipal
Water District for their Calleguas-
LVMWD interconnection.**

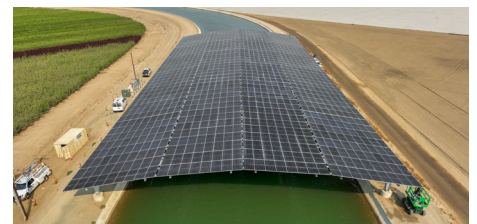
Sponsor **Jacobs**



Huell Howser Excellence in Communication

Recognizing outstanding achievements by public water agencies in communicating with customers, legislators, media, the public and others.

**East Bay Municipal Utility
District's H2Flow Campaign.**



Excellence in Innovation

Recognizing member agencies' innovations that continue to move the water industry forward.

**Turlock Irrigation District's
Project Nexus**

Sponsor  **CDM
Smith**



Outreach

Recognizing the most active ACWA member agencies in each region, as well as an overall winner, through the Outreach Awards Program.

Overall Outreach: West Valley Water District

Most Active Small Agency: Monte Vista Water District

Federal Issues: City of Santa Rosa's Water Department

Scholarships

ACWA supports and encourages future water leaders through its scholarship program. In 2025, \$34,500 in scholarships and a fellowship was awarded to exceptional students.

➔ Learn more at acwa.com/scholarships



ACWA SCHOLARSHIP
(\$3,500)

Amelia Flores

Environmental Policy Analysis
and Planning Student
University of California, Davis



ACWA SCHOLARSHIP
(\$3,500)

Kirsten Larson

Agricultural Education Student
California State University,
Fresno



CLAIR A. HILL SCHOLARSHIP
(\$5,000)

Peter Otoshi

Civil Engineering Student
Cal Poly Pomona



**EDWARD G. "JERRY" GLADBACH
SCHOLARSHIP**

(\$2,500)

Jade Meichtry

Bioresource and Agricultural
Engineering Student
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

SPONSOR
 SCV WATER



**ARTHUR L. LITTLEWORTH BBK DIVERSITY
SCHOLARSHIP**

(\$10,000 over four years)

Christina Huang

Civil Engineering and Environmental
Engineering Student
University of California, Berkeley

SPONSOR
 BBK
BOSTON BROTHERS & BROTHERS, LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



**STEPHEN K. HALL WATER LAW & POLICY
SCHOLARSHIP**

(\$10,000)

Oliver Slosser

Law Student
University of California, Los Angeles



JOHN P. FRASER WATER LEADERS FELLOWSHIP
(up to \$5,250)

Pacal Cornejo-Reynoso

Senior Policy and Governmental Affairs
Manager
Eastern Municipal Water District

YouTube Channel Launched

ACWA officially launched its YouTube channel in 2025, expanding the association's digital communications and storytelling efforts.

The ACWA YouTube channel serves as a dynamic platform to increase the visibility of ACWA's work, inform audiences about California water policy, innovation, and challenges, and showcase the leadership and solutions developed by ACWA and its member agencies. Content includes member spotlights, ACWA event recaps, policy-focused videos and other educational resources designed to engage water professionals, policymakers and the public.

In the months following its launch, ACWA posted 15 videos and seven shorts to the channel.



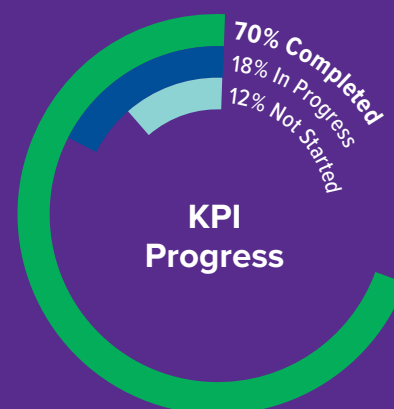
ACWA Makes Headway on Strategic Plan Priorities

2025 marked a pivotal kickoff year of ACWA's 2025–'29 Strategic Plan, with early momentum across initiatives designed to turn long-term goals into action. The plan includes 50 Board-approved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that guide ACWA's work and strengthen service to members.

One early highlight was the creation of a Board-appointed Task Force that recommended improvements to make ACWA's policy development process more member-driven and action-oriented. Alongside other early initiatives, ACWA continued empowering region boards and committees to play a more active role in shaping strategic priorities.

Built with clear objectives and defined responsibilities for staff, committees and region boards, the Strategic Plan emphasizes accountability and transparency, with progress updates provided at every Board meeting. By the end of the Strategic Plan's first year, 70% of KPIs were completed.

Momentum carries into 2026, as ACWA advances some of its most impactful efforts — including strengthening its voice in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., expanding relevant educational content, creating meaningful opportunities for member connection and supporting workforce development across California's water community.



Financial Highlights

In 2025, ACWA took additional steps to strengthen the long-term financial health of the organization. Based on the recommendations and guidance of the association's Finance Committee and the leadership of its Board of Directors, ACWA:

- Paid CalPERS' required unfunded liability amount under the newly adopted 15-year amortization schedule, plus an additional \$77,000 due to CalPERS investment returns.
- Received a clean opinion with minimal adjustments on the annual financial audit.
- Generated more than \$149,000 in spring conference sponsorships and \$138,000 in fall conference sponsorships, representing significant year-to-year gains.
- Generated about \$40,000 in non-dues revenue through ACWA's Preferred Provider program.



- **Dues**
\$9,475,758 (69%)
- **Conference / Seminars**
\$3,349,793 (25%)
- **Other**
\$959,211 (6%)



- **Salaries / Benefits**
\$8,287,520 (67%)
- **Admin / General**
\$2,024,880 (16%)
- **Events**
\$1,392,750 (11%)
- **Depreciation**
\$211,910 (2%)
- **Professional Fees**
\$443,338 (4%)

Member, Staff Surveys Lead to Improvements

ACWA conducted three large-scale surveys in 2025 to gather valuable information that led to process improvements and other changes.

Member Engagement

ACWA launched a comprehensive Member Engagement Survey in October to collect feedback on specific services and to prioritize key legislative and regulatory issues.

Independent research company FM3 completed the fieldwork in December and shared the results with staff, who will be using the results to inform policy priorities, events, communications and other areas. Similar surveys have been conducted about every three years to ensure staff's work is aligned with member needs.

91% of members are satisfied with ACWA's performance and 94% rate the overall value of membership as "excellent/good" or "OK."

Conference

In response to ACWA's 2025-'29 Strategic Plan, staff conducted a large-scale survey of previous conference attendees to assess member satisfaction with conference length, logistics and programming.

Based on the survey results, staff incorporated a number of changes to the 2025 Fall Conference & Expo that provided more networking opportunities, diversified program context and improved logistical support.

Staff will continue to survey conference attendees to inform ongoing improvements.

Gallup

Partnering with Gallup, an internal employee survey measured engagement to help improve staff performance.

ACWA first conducted a survey with Gallup in 2023, which resulted in internal policy improvements. The 2025-'29 Strategic Plan called for a follow-up to help identify and reinforce the core conditions that high-performing teams need to thrive.

The results showed a high level of satisfaction and engagement, especially when compared to similar workplaces, reinforcing the importance of continued investment in employee engagement.

ACWA Combines Election Processes

As a result of bylaw changes approved by the membership, in 2025 ACWA combined the election process for the 2026-'27 term for President, Vice President and region boards of directors. Voting for both board officers and region boards was done electronically on a single ballot.

The electronic ballots listed all qualified candidates, and candidates for ACWA President and Vice President participated in a town hall style webinar in which members were able to ask questions. In addition, ACWA had dedicated pages on its website to share candidates' names and statements of qualifications.



Stay Connected and Involved

ACWA ALERTS & ADVISORIES

acwa.com/alerts-advisories

Receive timely updates on legislative, regulatory and communications related topics.

ACWA TOOLKITS

acwa.com/resources

Toolkits are produced throughout the year to help member agencies educate and inform stakeholders about high-priority water issues.

ACWA ENEWS

acwa.com/subscribe-to-eneews

Weekly e-newsletter that highlights water news and upcoming events.

ACWA NEWS

acwa.com/newsroom

Monthly newsletter with water industry and member agency news and features.

EVENTS

acwa.com/events

Share and view upcoming water industry related events.

INNOVATION

acwa.com/innovation

See examples of exceptional work being done by ACWA members that drive the water industry forward.

WEBINARS

acwa.com/resources

Purchase ACWA webinars, recorded conference sessions and printed publications.

OTHER RESOURCES

acwa.com

Summary of Legislation, Summary of Appellate Cases, Monthly Priority Issues Update, Federal Regulatory Issues chart, Regulatory Roundup and more.



2024 – ‘25 ACWA Board Of Directors

Cathy Green, ACWA President, 10
Ernie Avila, ACWA Vice President, 5
Pamela Tobin, Immediate Past President, 4
Tom Barcellos, Region 7 Vice Chair
Jennifer Burke, Region 1 Vice Chair
Duane Cave, Energy Cmte. Chair
William Cooper, Region 8 Vice Chair
Jessica Diaz, Legal Affairs Cmte. Chair, 5
Edgar Dymally, Water Quality Cmte. Chair, 8
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Carol Lee Gonzales-Brady, Region 9 Vice Chair
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Deanna Jackson, Region 6 Chair
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Eric Larrabee, Region 2 Chair
Lauren Layne, State Legislative Cmte. Chair, 6
Joone Lopez, Membership Cmte. Chair, 10
Larry McKenney, Region 3 Chair
George Murdoch, Region 10 Vice Chair
Sheridan Nicholas, Region 7 Chair
G. Patrick O'Dowd, Region 9 Chair
Sarah Palmer, Region 5 Vice Chair
Don Patterson, Finance Committee Chair
David Pedersen, Water Management Cmte. Chair, 8
Bruce Rupp, ACWA JPIA Vice President, 1
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Brian Sanders, Region 4 Chair
Michael Saunders, Region 3 Vice Chair
Anjanette Shadley, Agriculture Cmte. Chair
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Jolene Walsh, Federal Affairs Cmte. Chair, 9
Josh Watkins, Region 2 Vice Chair
Melissa Williams, Communications Cmte. Chair, 4
John Woodling, Groundwater Cmte. Chair, 4
Greg Zlotnick, Local Government Chair, 4

Orange County Water District, Director
Contra Costa Water District, Director
San Juan Water District, Director
Lower Tule River Irrigation District, Director
City of Santa Rosa, Water Dept., Water Director
Moulton Nigel Water District, Director
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, Director
Central Coast Water Authority, Outside Counsel
MWD of Southern California, Outside Representative
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, Director
Santa Fe Irrigation District, Director
Rancho Water District, Director
Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Director
Tri-County Water Authority, Executive Director
Solano Irrigation District, General Manager
Western Canal Water District, Director
Alta Irrigation District, Outside Counsel
Moulton Niguel Water District, General Manager
Amador Water Agency, General Manager
East Orange County Water District, Director
Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District, Engineer-Manager
Salton Sea Authority, Executive Secretary/ General Manager
Zone 7 Water Agency, Director
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Assistant General Manager
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, General Manager
Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District, Director
Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control & WCID, General Manager
City of Sacramento, Dept. of Utilities, Gov't. Affairs Program Specialist
Georgetown Divide Public Utility District, Director
Western Canal Water District, Assistant General Manager
Mesa Water District, Water Policy Manager
Valley Water, Director
Eastern Municipal Water District, Executive, Policy & Government Affairs
City of Redding, Water Utility Manager
Modesto Irrigation District, Public Affairs Specialist
Elk Grove Water District (FRCD), Outside Representative
San Juan Water District, Water Resources & Strategic Affairs



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ACWA Vision

ACWA envisions a California that values and invests in water as an essential and plentiful resource that is managed efficiently and sustainably from headwaters to the ocean to meet all of California's present and future needs.

ACWA Values

- Essential Public Service
- Community
- Culture
- Collaboration
- Resource Stewardship
- Integrity
- Solutions

ACWA Mission

ACWA provides comprehensive leadership, advocacy and education to serve California public water agencies' infrastructure and other water management needs to ensure high quality, sustainable and reliable water supplies in an environmentally, socially and fiscally responsible manner.