A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
248 E. FOOTHILL BLVD. ROOM #103, MONROVIA, CA 91016
4:00 P.M. – February 28, 2024

AGENDA

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA [1]

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

   Anyone wishing to discuss items should do so now. The Board of Directors may allow additional input during the meeting. A three-minute time limit on remarks is requested.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS [2]

   (a) Committee Appointments for 2024 *(Board President to announce committee assignments.)*
      1. *Government Affairs and Community Outreach Committee*
      2. *Administrative and Finance Committee*
      3. *Water Resources and Facility Management Committee*

6. CONSENT CALENDAR [1]

   (a) Minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Directors held on February 14, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

7. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS [1]

   (a) Update on Colorado River Negotiations - Presentation *(Bill Hasencamp, Manager of Colorado River Resources for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, will provide a presentation.)*

   Recommendation

   This item is for information only. No action is anticipated.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS [2]

   (a) Press Releases and News Articles.

9. ATTORNEY'S REPORT [2]

10. ENGINEER'S REPORT [2]

11. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT [2]

12. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS [2]

13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS [1]

14. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION – None.

15. ADJOURNMENT - To a regular meeting of the Board of Directors to be held on March 13, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. at 248 E. Foothill Blvd. Room #103, Monrovia, CA 91016.

LEGEND: [1] INDICATES ACTION ANTICIPATED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON THIS ITEM
[2] INDICATES INFORMATION ITEM - NO BOARD ACTION NECESSARY

PRESIDENT JENNIFER SANTANA, PRESIDING

American Disabilities Act Compliance *(Government Code Section 54954.2(a))*
To request special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Upper District office at (626) 443-2297 or venessa@usgvmwd.org at least 24 hours prior to meeting.

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT 248 E. FOOTHILL BLVD, ROOM #103, MONROVIA, CALIFORNIA 91016 4:00 P.M. – February 14, 2024

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held in the office of the District, 248 E. Foothill Blvd, Rm. 103, City of Monrovia, County of Los Angeles, State of California, within said Water District, on February 14, 2024 at the hour of 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Chavez, Garcia and Treviño

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Santana, Fellow

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Love, General Manager; Steve O'Neill, District Counsel; Patty Cortez, Assistant General Manager, External Affairs; Evelyn Rodriguez, Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer; Venessa Navarrette, Executive Assistant; Jennifer Aguilar, Water Use Efficiency Analyst; Katherine Vazquez, Government and Community Affairs Assistant; and Priscilla Lu, Accounting/Financial Analyst

OTHERS PRESENT

Lenet Pacheco and Jose Martinez

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On motion by Director Treviño, seconded by Treasurer Garcia, the agenda was adopted as presented by the following roll call vote:

SANTANA:	**ABSENT**
FELLOW:	**ABSENT**
GARCIA:	**AYE**
CHAVEZ:	**AYE**
TREVIÑO:	**AYE**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Next scheduled committee meeting dates are as follows:

(a) Government Affairs and Community Outreach – March 4, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
(b) Administration and Finance – March 5, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.
(c) Water Resources and Facility Management – March 6, 2024, at 4:30 p.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion by Treasurer Garcia, seconded by Director Treviño, the consent calendar was approved by the following roll call vote:

SANTANA:	**ABSENT**
FELLOW:	**ABSENT**
GARCIA:	**AYE**
CHAVEZ:	**AYE**
TREVIÑO:	**AYE**

(a) Minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Directors held on January 24, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.
(b) List of Demands.
(c) Financial Reports – December 2023.
    1. Financial Statements.
    2. Director's Public Outreach.
    3. Quarterly Report Regarding District Investments

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY AND POSITION

Patty Cortez, Assistant General Manager, External Affair, gave a quick overview of Senator Padilla's legislative bill that will provide funds to owners and operators of public water systems or treatment works to assist low-income households in paying arrearages.

Director Treviño moved to approve staff recommendation to approve Senator Padilla's legislative bill related to the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Establishment Act, which is consistent with Upper District's 2023-2024 Legislative Policy Principles adopted by the Board in January 2023.

Treasurer Garcia seconded the motion, which was approved by the following roll call vote:

SANTANA:	**ABSENT**
FELLOW:	**ABSENT**
GARCIA:	**AYE**
CHAVEZ:	**AYE**
TREVIÑO:	**AYE**

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

The General Manager stated that staff are working on some goals and objectives for the new strategic plan adopted by the board in 2023. He then asked Ms. Cortez to give a presentation.

Director Treviño suggested postponing the item until the next meeting due to the absence of two board members.

Secretary Chavez requested staff to provide a summary and bring the item back to the next meeting for a full discussion.

Ms. Cortez briefly reviewed the strategic plan process and highlighted three major planning objectives related to water reliability, financial integrity and workforce. She stated that these objectives were selected for completion by the end of this fiscal year.

Vice President Fellow arrived at 4:19 p.m.

The General Manager commented that staff are not only preparing the biennial budget, but also working with Watermaster to update the minimum purchase letter agreement.

INFORMATION ITEMS

The following items listed on the agenda for the information of the Board were read and ordered received and filed:

(a) Press Releases and News Articles

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

District Counsel reported working with staff on administrative matters and provided updates on legal cases involving PFAS.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The General Manger reported on the average precipitation in Northern California. He stated that water storage in the main San Gabriel Basin increased to its highest level in 15 years, and that conditions would be optimistic if more atmospheric rivers and storms emerged in the coming weeks.

A written report was provided in the Board's agenda packet.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The General Manager reported on a planned audio visual system upgrade for the boardroom. He stated that staff will provide details to the Water Resources and Facility Management Committee when all proposals are received. He then reported that Bill Hasencamp, Metropolitan's Colorado River Resources Manager, will give a presentation at the board meeting on February 28th.

Secretary Chavez thanked the General Manager for reminding directors to use microphones during the meeting.

METROPOLITAN REPORT

Vice President Fellow reported on ongoing issues discussed during Metropolitan's sessions including a budget deficit of about $430 million and the general manager's call for a new business model. He then reported on a recent water resources committee meeting that MWD will store water in groundwater basins such as the San Gabriel Valley. He also shared the discussions among MWD board of directors on the status of MWD-owned islands in the Bay Delta. He also reported on upcoming workshops covering all areas of the budget, including personnel, investments, and conservation programs.

A written report was also provided in the Board's agenda packet.

WATER QUALITY AUTHORITY REPORT

Secretary Chavez reported on the WQA retaining a law firm and making adjustments to the contract as well as changing banks to BMO for better service and interest rates.

WATERMASTER REPORT

Vice President Fellow reported that the Watermaster board authorized the hiring of Russ Bryden as the new Executive Officer.

Secretary Chavez stated that the hiring process is different now than when he served on the board.

A summary report was included in the packet.

AB 1234 COMPLIANCE REPORT

A summary report was included in the packet.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Treviño stated that he was not in favor of buying the islands when he was on the MWD Board. He recommended that the Board consider imposing term limits on MWD directorships to give everyone an opportunity to participate.

The General Manager and Director Treviño discussed that there is currently no specified term for Upper District's representative on the MWD board and that further discussions can take place in the future.

Secretary Chavez and District Counsel discussed the procedure for the Board President developing future agenda items.

Treasurer Garcia wished everyone a happy Valentine's Day.

Vice President Fellow discussed his recent ACWA conference in Sacramento. He also discussed Monrovia's recent State of the City, adding that Upper District is well connected to the city and its council.

Secretary Chavez shared that it is both Valentine's Day and his 32nd wedding anniversary. He added that 2024 is a year when the Olympics, presidential election and leap year occur.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Secretary Chavez asked if there were any other business to come before the Board. There being none, the meeting was duly adjourned to a regular meeting of the Board of Directors to be held on February 28, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at 248 E. Foothill Blvd., Room #103, Monrovia, CA 91016.

_____
SECRETARY

ATTEST

_____
TREASURER

SEAL

Attachment 1
Consent Item 6 (b)
February 14, 2024

Demands numbered 22294 through 22330 on the General Fund Account of the Upper District at Citizens Business Bank, in the amount of $403,036.78 and demands numbered 1207 through 1213 on the Water Fund Account at the same bank in the amount of $46,508,519.11.

22294	Black Bird Fire Protection, Inc.	Inv. 20391011924, Fire Sprinkler Service ***(Previously paid 01/22/24)***		$ 650.00
22295	GMS Elevator Service, Inc.	Inv. 118083, Building Elevator Modernization, Final Payment ***(Previously paid 01/22/24)***		9,582.40
22296	City Electric	Inv. 6879, Webasto EVSEs Installation ***(Previously paid 01/22/24)***		15,150.00
22297	789, Inc.	Inv. USGV-429110, Marketing and Creative Services, February 2024 ***(Board approved 7/12/23)***		5,575.00
22298	Aaron Read & Associates, LLC	Inv. 213167, State Legislative Advocacy Services, December 2023 ***(Board approved 10/12/22)***		10,000.00
22299	Accent Computer Solutions, Inc	Inv. 160515, IT Management Support, December 2023 ***(Board approved 02/09/22)***		2,891.27
22300	ACI Consulting Corporation	Inv. IN-006962, Sage Support, December 2023 Inv. IN-007036, Sage Support, January 2024 Inv. SO-000340, Sage Business Care Renewal through 02/26/25	700.00 100.00 3,549.00	4,349.00
22301	ACWA/JPIA	Inv. 0701571, Health Insurance Premium - February 2024		33,491.76
22302	Aleshire & Wynder, LLP	Professional Services, December 2023 Inv. 83409, Transactional Fees Inv. 83432, Retainer ***(Board approved 04/13/22)***	 3,740.00 4,404.00	8,144.00
22303	Azusa Light & Water	Inv. 4579, MAA Program Reimbursement		2,356.30
22304	Best Best & Krieger, LLP	Inv. 984426, Federal Legislative Advocacy Services through 12/31/23 ***(Board approved 10/12/22)***		7,500.00
22305	California Contract Cities	Inv. 515383, 2024 Silver Level Membership Dues		5,000.00
22306	California Water Efficiency	Inv. MD-2024-230, 2024 CalWEP Dues		2,210.24
22307	Civic Publications, Inc.	Inv. 1824, January 2024: 2022-23 Annual Report		5,800.00
22308	CORO Southern California	Inv. 20240108-02, Water & Energy Focus Week Sponsorship		1,500.00
22309	Department of Water & Power	Inv. GA434210, Recycled Water Program Permit Fees		83.33
22310	EcoTech Services, Inc.	Inv. 2895, Home Leak Repair Kits, December 2023 Inv. 2923, Landscaping Maintenance, February 2024 ***(Board approved 06/08/22)***	810.00 900.00	1,710.00
22311	Image Property Services, LLC	Inv. MCS-11187, Consumables, December 2023 Inv. MCS-11449, Janitorial Services, January 2024	171.60 1,907.59	2,079.19
22312	Joey C. Soto	Inv. 2023-UD-GA-DEC-111, Grant Writing Services, December 2023 ***(Board approved 06/08/22)***		682.50
22313	John Robinson Consulting, Inc.	Inv. UD202301-08, As-needed Engineering Support Services, December 2023		1,320.00
22314	Luis Aguilar	Inv. 309077, UD Logo Items		27.88
22315	Manny Parras	Inv. GRNT 23-24, Water Education Grant FY 2023-24 ***(Board approved 12/06/23)***		1,000.00
22316	Rene Burguan	Inv. 05/11/24UD, Waterfest Performer, Deposit		500.00

22317	San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership	Inv. 8026, Leader Level Membership through 01/31/25		20,000.00
22318	San Gabriel Valley Water Association	Inv. 01/01/24, 2024 Associate Dues		100.00
22319	Sheldon Extinguisher Co., Inc.	Inv. 163317, Fire Extinguisher Service		120.00
22320	Stetson Engineers, Inc.	Inv. 2533-212, General Engineering Support Services, November 2023	16,027.10	
		Inv. 2728-023, General Engineering Support Services, November 2023	370.00	16,397.10
22321	Upper District Payroll Fund	Inv. DEC 23, Reimbursement of Payroll and Payroll Taxes for Employees	146,321.37	
		Inv. DEC 23D, Reimbursement of Payroll Taxes for Directors	9,815.44	156,136.81
22322	Upper District Revolving Fund	Inv. JAN 24, Revolving Fund Account Replenishment - January 2024		
		Office Supplies	832.34	
		Computer Systems/Equipment/Maintenance/Insurance/Outside Service	768.27	
		Directors's Outreach	903.00	
		Telephone/Utilities/Building Maintenance	3,604.49	
		Workers Compensation	2,623.05	
		Water Conservation Program Expenses	939.40	
		WRP Operation & Maintenance/Permits/Water Purchases/PM/Public Info	22,562.25	
		Medical/ODA Reimbursement/Processing Fee/Others	15,498.96	47,731.76
22323	Urban Water Institute	Inv. 02/21/24UD, Spring Water Conference Sponsorship		3,000.00
22324	U.S. Bank Corporate Payment System	CalCard Changes through 01/22/24		
		Membership/Other	460.00	
		Meetings, Travel, Conferences	8,485.43	
		Computer Systems/Office Equipment/Supplies/Maintenance & Service/Utilities	561.45	
		Conservation Program Expenses, Education and Outreach	2,380.68	11,887.56
22325	Willdan Financial Services	Inv. 010-57287, FY 2023/24 Standby Charge Services through January 2024		14,400.04
22326	Bright Horizon Landscape	Inv. 2023211, Parking Lot Renovations		750.00
22327	Webasto Charging Systems, Inc.	Inv. 34000968, TurboConnect Pedestal, Access Control Port	5,280.55	
		Inv. 34001256, TurboConnect DX EV Charging Station	2,355.65	7,636.20
22328	Ed Chavez	Director's Compensation, January 2024		
		10 Days District Business	2,550.00	
		Meeting/Travel Expenses/Allowance	516.87	
		Less Deferred Comp.	(500.00)	
		Less Taxes Withheld	(1,840.04)	726.83
22329	Charles Treviño	Director's Compensation, January 2024		
		10 Days District Business	2,550.00	
		Meeting/Travel Expenses/Allowance	(532.74)	
		Less Deferred Comp.	(500.00)	
		Less Taxes Withheld	(515.91)	1,001.35
22330	Jennifer Santana	Director's Compensation, January 2024		
		7 Days District Business	1,785.00	
		Meeting/Travel Expenses/Allowance	516.87	
		Less Deferred Comp.	(500.00)	
		Less Taxes Withheld	(255.61)	1,546.26
			TOTAL	**$ 403,036.78**

1207	Central Basin MWD	Invoice No. USGV-DEC23, Purchase of 2.8 AF of Recycled Water in November 2023 ***(Previously paid 02/06/24)***	$	2,023.87
1208	City of Industry City Hall	Invoice No. R12312023-D, Purchase of 19.2 AF of Recycled Water in December 2023		6,624.00
1209	City of Industry City Hall	Invoice No. R12312023-E, CIP Charge for December 2023 @ $98 per AF		1,881.60
1210	Metropolitan Water District	Invoice No. 11368, Purchase of 302.5 AF of Treated Water and 53,630.10 AF of Untreated Water in December 2023		46,209,511.70
1211	Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles	Invoice No. 42354, Purchase of 1,417.08 AF of Recycled Water in FY 22/23		266,524.59
1212	San Gabriel Valley MWD	Invoice No. 560, 91.44 AF of Water Delivered through the Alhambra/MWD Exchange Agreement in December 2023 @ $220 per AF		20,116.80
1213	Suburban Water System	Invoice No. 6749, Phase IIB Normal Operating Charge, January 2024		1,836.55
			TOTAL	**$ 46,508,519.11**

THIS JUST IN ... DWR increases State Water Project allocation to 15%

DWR News Agency News February 21, 2024 0 90 February 21, 2024

Allocation update takes into account hydrology conditions up to February 1 and latest spring runoff forecasts

From the Department of Water Resources:

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today announced an increase in the State Water Project (SWP) allocation forecast for 2024. The forecasted allocation is now 15 percent of requested supplies, up from the 10 percent initial allocation announced in December. This translates to about 200,000 acre-feet of additional water for the 29 public water agencies that serve 27 million Californians.

This assessment does not include the results of any of the storms that hit California earlier this month. The State Water Project will review conditions and may revise the forecasted allocation in mid-March. The February allocation forecast update takes into account snow survey measurements and data up until February 1 and spring runoff forecasts outlined in the first Bulletin 120 of the season.

While California has seen a series of winter storms the past two months, those storms have been warmer and brought historic rainfall to Southern California. Northern California, the headwaters of the State Water Project, has seen less of a benefit from these storms and precipitation for that region was below average.

The State Water Project has been able to take advantage of these storms, increasing storage at both Lake Oroville and San Luis Reservoir. Lake Oroville has increased 460,000 acre-feet and San Luis Reservoir has increased 85,000 acre-feet since January 1.

"We will continue to assess our State Water Project allocation forecast as more storms materialize in February and March," said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. "This season is an important reminder of our extreme conditions and shift to bigger, flashier storms and the need to continue increasing the state's ability to capture and store stormwater when it comes as rain instead of snow."

As of today, the statewide snowpack is 86 percent of average for this date, and 69 percent of its April 1 average, which is considered the peak snowpack for the season.

State Water Project reservoirs remain above average for this time of year, as the state continues to benefit from last winter's historic snowpack and efforts to capture and store as much water as possible. Lake Oroville, the State Water Project's largest reservoir, is at 134 percent of average for this date.

With recent storms bringing more rain than snow, DWR continues to work with local water agencies to capture and store as much stormwater as possible. DWR is also supporting efforts statewide to capture stormwater and use it to recharge critical groundwater basins.

Each year, DWR provides the initial State Water Project allocation by December 1 based on available water storage, projected water supply, and water demands. Allocations are updated monthly as snowpack, rainfall, and runoff information is assessed, with a final allocation typically determined in May or June.

PRESS RELEASE: New Analysis Finds Sites Reservoir Would Be 80 Percent Full After Recent Storms If It Were Operational Today

mavensnotebook.com/2024/02/17/press-release-new-analysis-finds-sites-reservoir-would-be-80-percent-full-after-recent-storms-if-it-were-operational-today/

Press Release/Notice Press Release/Other February 17, 2024 2 195 February 17, 2024

2023 and 2024 storms combined would have yielded 1.2 million acre-feet of water

From the Sites JPA

The Sites Project Authority (Authority) announced that with the recent storms, Sites Reservoir could have diverted and captured 1.2 million acre-feet of water in 2023 and 2024 to date. Based on 2023 flows and significant storms this January and February, it is estimated that Sites Reservoir would be 80 percent full today following the critically dry prior years when Sites water would have been depleted.

"These latest storms show the need for Sites Reservoir to capitalize on California's rainy season and store excess stormwater for the betterment of communities, farms, and the environment," said **Fritz Durst, Chairman of the Sites Project Authority Board of Directors.** "While the exact amount of water will vary from year to year, we need to be prepared to capture water from major storms when they happen and save it for the next inevitable dry period. With hotter and drier weather threatening California's water supply, we have no time to waste."

Sites Reservoir is specifically designed to capture and store water generated by extreme storm events, like the atmospheric rivers that seasonally make landfall in California, to increase water flexibility, reliability, and resiliency in drier years.

The analysis found Sites Reservoir could have safely diverted a relatively small part of Delta outflow, leaving a significant natural flow in the Sacramento River and the Delta for ecosystem needs. Estimates show that during these most recent two months of 2024 storms and projecting diversions through mid-March, approximately 450 thousand acre-feet (TAF) could have been stored so far in 2024. There are still about two months of wet season remaining with the potential to raise water levels even more. A single acre-foot of water is enough to exceed the average annual indoor and outdoor water use of one to two California households, according to the Water Education Foundation.

This latest study shows that during major storms, and after all other needs being met, Sites Reservoir would be able to store excess water while meeting the project's protective diversion criteria. This real time observation is consistent with the Authority's robust water availability analyses, as presented in the Sites water right application currently being considered by the State Water Resources Control Board, where multiple analytical methods used predicted there is enough water for Sites, the environment, and existing senior water right holders in the Delta Watershed under a variety of water supply scenarios, now and in the future.

"The entire Sites team is invested in ensuring there will be water for Sites Reservoir while not harming the environment, which is why we conducted the most extensive water availability analysis in California history for this project," said **Jerry Brown, Executive Director of the Sites Project Authority.** "The real-time data matches what the models are saying and demonstrates Sites can viably capture and store water for drier periods. We are confident in our analysis and are asking the State Water Resources Control Board to expeditiously come to the same conclusion and issue our water right permit, so we can get busy building this new, badly needed facility to provide more water certainty for all of California."

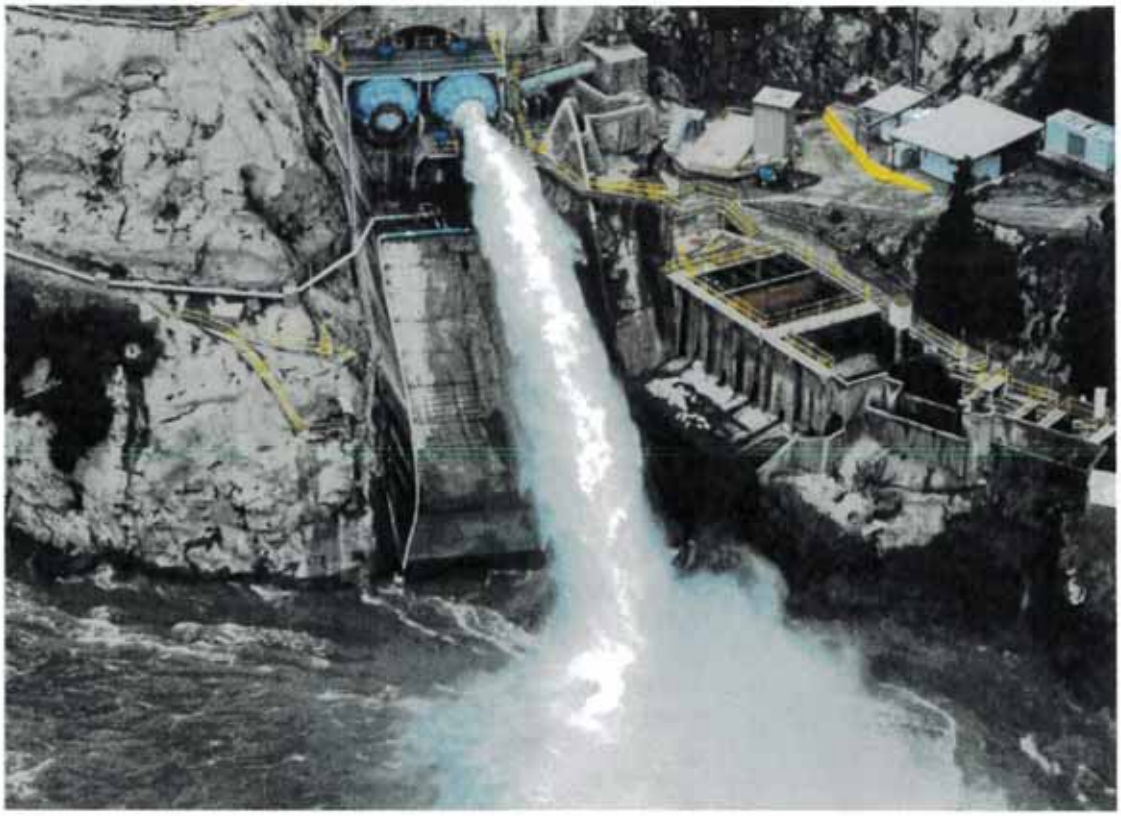
Sites Reservoir is an off-stream reservoir that will capture and store a portion of stormwater from the Sacramento River—after all other water rights and regulatory requirements are met—and release water to California communities, farms, business, and wildlife during drier years. Sites Reservoir has broad statewide support from cities, counties, water agencies, and irrigation districts throughout the Sacramento Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Bay Area, and Southern California which are working together to advance the project. The Sites Reservoir Project is locally led by the Sites Project Authority, which is made up Sacramento Valley water districts, cities, and counties.

Sites is an off-stream reservoir proposed north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where it would provide unique water supply and environmental benefits during dry periods, especially during extended drought. Additional information can be found at sitesproject.org or on Facebook and Twitter at @SitesProject.

NEWS • News

A system of dams, percolating ponds, rubber barriers saved 95% of torrential rain

L.A. County uses dams, blow-up barriers on rivers, gravelly spreading grounds to save rainfall in aquifers



Morris Dam, between storms on Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2024. Part of the "Big 3 Dams" of the San Gabriel Mountains, where water is saved behind the dam from recent storms but also being released from one of two large pipes to allow more space for future rainstorms and to put water into the San Gabriel River and spreading grounds for underground water storage. (Photo by Dean Musgrove, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

By STEVE SCAUZILLO | sscauzillo@scng.com | Daily News
PUBLISHED: February 15, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. | UPDATED: February 17, 2024 at 6:52 p.m.

Do you ever wonder what happens to the stormwater that starts out as rain during a monster deluge in Southern California?

If you answered, "It all flushes down to the Pacific Ocean," you would be wrong, according to flood control and water supply managers in Los Angeles County.

About 90% to 95% of rainwater is captured behind 14 dams and then slowly released into the Los Angeles and San Gabriel rivers. The captured water pools in 27 permeable "spreading grounds" where it percolates into natural underground basins called aquifers, said Sterling Klippel, interim assistant deputy director of L.A. County Public Works.

From these below-ground reservoirs that contain groundwater, 200 local water agencies pump up the water from their wells and deliver potable water to millions of customers across L.A. County, he added.

It's like dipping a straw into a tall drink.

"When it rains, and pours, that is our opportunity to get that rainwater and keep it from being wasted," Klippel said.

Engineers and managers for L.A. County Public Works will be tested again Sunday and Monday, when a winter storm is expected to drop between 1.5 inches and 3.0 inches of rain on coastal and valley areas of Ventura and L.A. County, said Rich Thompson, National Weather Service meteorologist on Wednesday, Feb. 14.

Of course, between 5% and 10% of the rain doesn't get stored and that's mostly when rain is falling at high volumes and rushing down flood control channels at a fast clip. It also depends where the rain falls. If mostly on the lower elevations, the twin rivers can slow the flow. But that water has passed by the higher-elevation reservoirs in the San Gabriel Mountains and the San Fernando Valley.

Dams and water capture

Dams play a critical role in the capture of rainfall, including the water stored after the recent atmospheric river event on Feb. 4, Feb. 5 and Feb. 6 that dropped 10 inches on many residential areas. The rainfall totals are 24 inches to date this season in the San Gabriel Mountains, a few inches shy of the seasonal average.

Cogswell Dam, San Gabriel Dam and Morris Dam in the San Gabriel Mountains north of the San Gabriel Valley foothill communities held back 20,000 acre-feet of water from the recent winter storms, Klippel reported. An "acre-foot" is the amount of water, one foot deep, and stretched across an acre of land, or about 325,851 gallons. The increase in water storage at these dams equaled about 6.5 billion gallons of water.

The water stored behind the big three dams in San Gabriel Canyon on Feb. 12 totaled 42,000 acre-feet or approximately 14 billion gallons, Klippel reported. For comparison, the average Californian used 83 gallons of water per day in April 2022, according to a recent study. That amounts to 30,295 gallons per year.

Water was also captured behind Hansen Dam in the San Fernando Valley, and some was sent down the L.A. River, Klippel said. L.A. Mayor Karen Bass estimated that Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) in conjunction with county Public Works, captured 7 billion gallons of stormwater in Los Angeles alone from the storms earlier this month.

As of Feb. 9, Klippel estimated total stormwater captured at all the county dams and the spreading grounds equaled 87,000 acre-feet or about 28 billion gallons since Oct. 1, 2023.

"We were able to capture a lot of water immediately downstream of Hansen Dam," Klippel said. "And also, farther downstream where we operate the Tujunga Spreading Grounds with LADWP."

"I will say they do a good job. But I will always say we all can do more," said Conner Everts, executive director of the Southern California Watershed Alliance, an environmental group that works on water conservation projects and water quality issues.

Last year, when downtown L.A.'s rain gauge topped at 33.4 inches, almost double the average rainfall year, the county conserved a total of 628,000 acre-feet of storm water or about 200 billion gallons, the second-highest amount ever stored in one year, the county reported.

How does this help water retailers? By raising the groundwater levels and allowing for more pumping, he said.

In the largest underground basin in the region, the Main San Gabriel Basin, as of Feb. 1, 2024, the key well measured 221 feet above the mean sea level, 40 feet higher than the previous year, the San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District reported.

To supplement local water, L.A. County on average imports about 65,000 acre-feet from Northern California through the State Water Project. Also, the county has been increasing its supply of highly-treated recycled water, which is now at about 45,000 acre-feet per year, Klippel said.

"That is not a bad start," Everts said on the amount of recycled water produced. Usually, recycled water is wastewater that is treated in many stages, then injected into the ground where it undergoes natural filtration before reaching aquifers.

Rivers and rubber dams

The early February storms sent social media hounds scurrying to post pictures of water flowing down the L.A. River, from Studio City to Glendale to Long Beach. About 14.6 inches of rain has fallen in Downtown Los Angeles since Oct. 1, close to the 15.4 seasonal average. After this weekend's rains, the amount should exceed the average.

But actually, the L.A. River at Wardlow Road near the Long Beach (710) Freeway during the peak of the storms earlier this month was running at 65,000 cubic feet per second, only one-third the maximum capacity for that section of the river of 182,000 cubic feet per second, Klippel said.

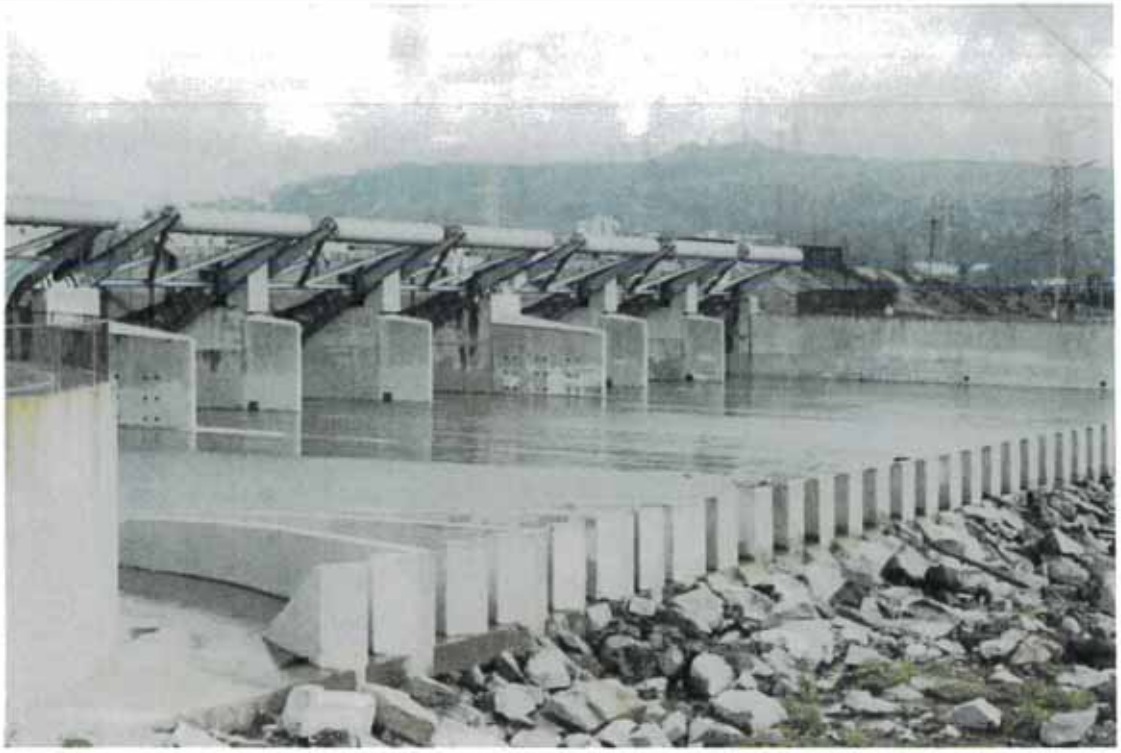
"We were capturing most of that water upstream," he explained.

And despite social media posts, the L.A. River was nowhere near overflowing its banks.

Besides keeping water behind the dams, the county inflated seven rubber dams in the L.A. River near the Wardlow Road channel, he said, which pools water for percolation into underground aquifers.

During the storms, the county inflated the largest rubber dam in North America near Irwindale across the San Gabriel River. "Once that rubber dam is inflated, it is keeping water from going downstream and that water is going into the spreading grounds," Klippel said.

Seven other rubber dams are used in the San Gabriel River below the Whittier Narrows Dam located between South El Monte and Whittier, he said. "It is a soft-bottom river so the water will percolate into the ground," he said. This differs from many parts of the L.A. River which has a concrete bottom.



Whittier Narrows Dam on Friday, Jan. 18, 2019. (Photo by Dean Musgrove, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

Everts mentioned a project at Jackson Elementary School in Altadena where asphalt was replaced with decomposed granite and gravel — water storage on a smaller level. This curbs the heat island effect and allows more water to seep into the ground, stopping runoff and preventing local flooding, he said.

"In areas where they put in just gravel and sand, a teacher poured out a jug of water and the water just disappears. It is amazing. And the kids love it," Everts said. "We have more infrastructure in place for capturing storm water than we have had in the past."

Reservoirs, snowpack and cisterns

The state's major reservoirs are at 118% of average as of this week. "They are still in a good position thanks to carry-over storage (from last year's storms) and efforts by the DWR (state Department of Water Resources) and our partner agencies to capture as much water as possible from this winter's storms," wrote Jason Ince, DWR spokesperson in an emailed response.

When the snowpack in the Sierra Nevada melts in the spring, it sends clean water down the aqueduct known as the State Water Project, which serves one-third of California's water supply and is the source of imported water for Southern California water agencies.

The early February storms provided a significant boost to the snowpack, which was just 50 percent of average on Jan. 31 and is now 73 percent of average as of Feb. 14, Ince reported and DWR data shows. But the snowpack has not reached its April 1 average yet.

With some climatologists predicting a return to La Niña conditions next year, that could bring back drier, even drought conditions to Southern California. The cyclical nature of water and snowpack is a constant reminder not to get complacent, Everts said.

Homeowners can pursue rebates to replace thirsty front lawns with drought-tolerant landscaping, he said. Or buy cisterns to put underground to capture rain water.

Some new houses are being built with underground tanks, he said. A 200,000-gallon cistern under the Santa Monica Library holds and filters rainwater runoff from the roof, keeping the water from overburdening the storm system or flooding the streets. The stored water is used to irrigate the landscaping.

"We will never capture all of the runoff so we need to adapt," Everts said.

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Close

SJV WATER: World Ag Expo: Water seminar lands with a thud as speaker details "devastating" amount of acreage expected to go out of production

mavensnotebook.com/2024/02/14/sjv-water-world-ag-expo-water-seminar-lands-with-a-thud-as-speaker-details-devastating-amount-of-acreage-expected-to-go-out-of-production/

SJV Water News and Features February 14, 2024 1 2810 February 14, 2024

By Lisa McEwen, SJV Water

The sun was shining and blue skies reigned over the 57th World Ag Expo in Tulare County Tuesday but inside seminar trailer No. 2 the mood was gloomy to dismal as panelists discussed the San Joaquin Valley's water outlook.

The upshot is that with surface supplies from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta shrinking and increased groundwater pumping restrictions looming, more than 900,000 acres in the Central Valley will have to go out of production, according to Michael Ming, a broker with Alliance Ag Services LLC, which has been tracking ag land valleys with respect to water for nearly 20 years.

The bulk of that fallowing will be in Kern, Kings and Tulare counties, he said.

"Upwards of 625,000 acres," Ming said, will need to be taken out of farming in those counties over the next 15 years to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, which requires depleted aquifers come back into balance by 2040.

Ming predicted at least 250,000 of that total will be fallowed in Kern County. That's about 28% of Kern's currently harvested acres, per the 2022 Kern County Crop Report.

Yes, the numbers are alarming, he said to the packed, silent room.

Then he joked that he'd brought friends to handle any rock throwing.

The numbers come from a 2022 internal analysis by RRG Nature Based Solutions, which used the Department of Water Resources' 2018 Crop Survey and review of submitted Groundwater Sustainability Plans as of February 2022. (It did not take into account fallowing caused by unrelated factors such as changing commodity prices.).

He said the biggest culprit is "hostile state water policies" that have curtailed imported surface water from the State Water Project, which brings supplies from the delta to towns and cities in southern California via the California Aqueduct along Interstate 5.

Environmental and water quality regulations have required more water to run through the delta, which has crimped supplies sent south.

The trend has gotten worse over the years, Ming said.

At this point, ag districts with State Water Contracts can count on just 34% of their contracted amounts, on average.

Areas reliant on State Water Project supplies will take the brunt of fallowing, Ming predicted.

On Kern's west side where growers rely mainly on state water, districts will likely have to fallow between 35% and 50% of irrigated acres, Ming said. That includes the Berrenda Mesa, Belridge, Lost Hills and Semitropic ag districts.

"And I think it could go higher, except for districts with large farming operations that can bring water to bear," he said.

That means growers big enough to be able to consolidate their water sources to the most productive grund or that can afford to buy water on the open market. In drought years, water has escalated to more than $1,500 per acre foot, something out of reach for most smaller farmers.

The lack of water security is also a driving force on land valuations.

Even in districts such as Arvin-Edison Water Storage District, which has access to federal, state and Kern River water, land prices have fallen recently from $22,000 an acre to an average of about $17,000 an acre.

Landowners whose parcels are not in a water district, called "white lands" because they appear as white on maps, are the real canaries.

Land prices have dropped from $15,000 to $4,000 an acre, Ming said, and he anticipates them going even lower.

"Most of these lands will go fallow."

Other speakers on Tuesday included Ellen Hanak of the Public Policy Institute of California, who highlighted land use alternatives, such as converting to solar farms.

Consultant Stacie Ann Silva of Altum Aqua Logic dissected SGMA implementation for the many farmers in the room.

"I want to help you all understand the magnitude of the problem we are dealing with," she said. "We have to, as a collective, get from where we are today in pumping which is 2.8 acre-feet per acre on average to sustainable yield. Surface water on top of that is helpful but if you're in an area without access to surface water, that's the future you're planning toward."

Sustainable yield is the amount of water that naturally enters a GSA and varies from region to region.

Aaron Fukuda of Tulare Irrigation District his district's shift toward implementation of its groundwater sustainability plan versus building more recharge projects.

Finally, Johnny Amaral, chief operating officer of Friant Water Authority, joined Atlas Water CEO Eric Averett and other speakers for a question and answer session on topics ranging from groundwater recharge to continued subsidence of the Friant-Kern Canal.

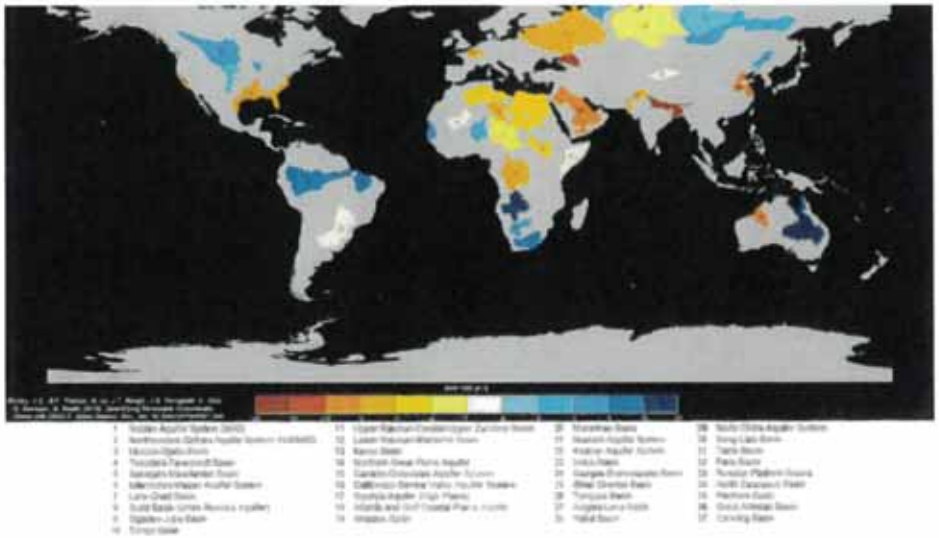
SJV Water is a nonprofit, independent online news publication covering water in the San Joaquin Valley. Lois Henry is the CEO/Editor of SJV Water. She can be reached at lois.henry@sjvwater.org. The website is www.sjvwater.org.

EOS: Groundwater levels are dropping around the world

American Geophysical Union News and Features February 14, 2024 0 75 February 14, 2024

Well data from around the world show declines driven by water use and climate change.

by Katherine Bourzac



A map of groundwater storage trends for Earth's 37 largest aquifers using GRACE data.

Farmers rely on groundwater to grow crops, especially when rainfall is scarce. Declines in this crucial resource can slash agricultural yields and have long-term effects on water quality, well levels, and even local geology—when groundwater is depleted, the land above can subside.

Groundwater level declines have accelerated in 30% of the world's aquifers, according to an assessment published in *Nature*. The declines were particularly pronounced in agricultural regions with dry climates.

The assessment drew on 40 years of water level data collected from 170,000 monitoring wells in 1,693 aquifers.

In some places, the declines were dramatic. In 36% of the aquifers included in the study, groundwater levels fell faster than 0.1 meter per year, and in 12% of them, levels dropped by half a meter per year. The Rashtkhar Aquifer in Iran, for instance, had a median decline of 2.6 meters per year in the 21st century. In California's Chowchilla Subbasin, water levels dropped by about 1 meter per year. Both are agricultural areas.

The researchers attributed global declines to both water use and climate change.

In 80% of the aquifers where groundwater declines were accelerating, precipitation also dropped, said Debra

> "Their ability to map these patterns at fine resolution is exciting."

Perrone, a water resources engineer and scientist at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), and one of the study's authors. When there's less rain, farmers need to tap into groundwater. And without precipitation to recharge underground reservoirs, there's no way to build them back up to compensate for increased use.

Precipitation isn't the only issue. "As temperatures are rising, farmers are applying more irrigation," said Meha Jain, an environmental scientist at the University of Michigan who was not involved in the study. Jain's own work has shown that if critically depleted wells in India dry up, cropping intensity in the country will decrease by 20%.

The new study "fills long-standing gaps in the literature," Jain said. Satellites such as NASA's GRACE (Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment) can provide a lot of information about the world's water supply, but they don't have the spatial resolution to see smaller underground reserves. The monitoring wells used in this study let the researchers analyze changes in individual aquifers. "Their ability to map these patterns at fine resolution is exciting," Jain said.

Declines were not universal, however, and the data showed that pumping can sometimes be managed. In some areas, groundwater levels have even risen. After dropping in the 1980s and 1990s, groundwater beneath Bangkok, Thailand, recovered when the government increased fees on pumping water. An aquifer in New Mexico saw levels rise, thanks to water transferred from another overtaxed system, the Colorado River.

"There are far more places where things are bad than where things are good right now," said UCSB water scientist Scott Jasechko, the first author on the study. He said he hopes the success stories "might inspire action."

Citation: Bourzac, K. (2024), Groundwater levels are dropping around the world, *Eos, 105,* https://doi.org/10.1029/2024EO240071. Published on 14 February 2024.

SGMA Implementation: DWR's Groundwater Models Provide Valuable Resources for Managers of California's Critical Water Supply

mavensnotebook.com/2024/02/02/sgma-implementation-dwrs-groundwater-models-provide-valuable-resources-for-managers-of-californias-critical-water-supply/

DWR News Agency News February 2, 2024 1 116 February 2, 2024

From the Department of Water Resources

California's historic effort to bring sustainability to the state's critically important groundwater basins revealed an increased need for new and easily accessible groundwater data and tools to help local agencies better understand and manage their groundwater basins. After the passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in 2014, the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) Statewide Groundwater Management program was there to meet the need with its long history of collecting, monitoring, and reporting statewide groundwater data that provides an understanding of current groundwater conditions and trends over time.

California's groundwater basins provide critical water supply to millions of Californians. State and local agencies are working hard to ensure the long-term sustainability of this vital resource that maintains communities, agriculture, businesses, and the environment. Since groundwater is out of sight – stored in the rocks, sands, and soils beneath our feet – a suite of data and specialized tools is needed for informed decision-making that will keep our groundwater resources healthy through the climate-driven weather extremes of drought and flood.

"In our role of assisting groundwater sustainability agencies, we continue to expand our data resources and tools to support those local organizations," said Paul Gosselin, DWR Deputy Directory of Sustainable Groundwater Management. "DWR's Modeling and Tools section and Modeling Support Branch develop leading edge groundwater modeling applications that are being utilized in many groundwater basins throughout the state."

What are groundwater models?

Groundwater models are simplified representations of the physical conditions in the groundwater basins and subbasins beneath our feet, based on mathematical equations. Groundwater professionals develop these models using existing data about a basin's geologic conditions, as well as water supply and demand through time.

The "engine" or platform of the groundwater model calculates groundwater elevation and flow throughout the area covered by the model. Groundwater models are helpful because they can integrate the understanding of the basin within a single tool, and they can be used

to test out how various water management scenarios, such as a new groundwater recharge project, may impact groundwater and surface water resources if implemented.

Before SGMA, many groundwater basins did not have local groundwater models in place, and for these basins, DWR's modeling tools are an invaluable resource. Without these resources, GSAs would have to start from scratch to develop a model for their basin, costing them money and time. There would also likely be a wide variety of model types used throughout the various basins in the state. With the modeling tools provided by DWR, GSAs in neighboring basins can choose to use the same DWR model, which helps the agencies coordinate SGMA planning and implementation across basin boundaries, a requirement under SGMA.

Integrated Water Flow Models

The primary modeling platform provided by DWR is the **Integrated Water Flow Model**. This model is a water resources management and planning software that can simulate groundwater, surface water, stream-groundwater interaction, and other components of the hydrologic system that are critical for groundwater managers to understand. Find out more at: https://water.ca.gov/Library/Modeling-and-Analysis/Modeling-Platforms/Integrated-Water-Flow-Model.

IWFM-based applications provided by DWR include:

- **California Central Valley Groundwater-Surface Water Simulation Model (C2VSim)**: This model simulates the historical response of the Central Valley's groundwater and surface water flow system to historical stresses, such as drought, and can also be used to simulate the response to projected future stresses. Two versions are available, one based on a coarse model grid and the other on a fine grid. Find out more at: https://water.ca.gov/Library/Modeling-and-Analysis/Central-Valley-models-and-tools/C2VSim and https://data.cnra.ca.gov/dataset/c2vsimfg.
- **Sacramento Valley Simulation Model (SVSim)**: This is a newer model of the Sacramento Valley based on the above C2VSim-Fine Grid dataset. This model supports a more detailed analysis of streamflow depletion due to groundwater substitution transfers and supports the implementation of SGMA. This model has an updated representation of the hydrogeologic conceptual model and aquifer parameters based on extensive lithologic texture analysis. It also has a more refined (smaller) horizontal grid along major waterways and more discretized vertical layering. Documentation of the SVSim design, input data development, model calibration, and sensitivity analysis is also available. Find out more at: https://data.cnra.ca.gov/dataset/svsim.

As the state continues to face ongoing challenges of climate change, sustainable groundwater management in conjunction with surface water management is helping provide a reliable and resilient water supply for California. DWR will continue to deliver the latest data, tools, and technology to ensure that local agencies have the resources to manage their groundwater basins for long-term sustainability.

For additional information about groundwater models:

- Modeling and Analysis Webpage: https://www.water.ca.gov/Library/Modeling-and-Analysis
- Best Management Practices for the Sustainable Management of Groundwater, Modeling: Modeling BMP (ca.gov)

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February 2, 2024 | Written by Kelly M. Doyle

Delta Conveyance Project Faces Stronger Headwinds with Court Ruling Rejecting Financing Scheme and New Environmental Litigation

Though the Delta Conveyance Project ("DCP" or the "Project") was only recently approved by the Department of Water Resources' ("DWR" or the "Department") after completing the lengthy California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, the DCP faces new obstacles to implementation. Nine lawsuits challenging DWR's December 21, 2023 approval of the Project were recently filed in Sacramento County Superior Court by a total of thirty-three plaintiffs representing all the Delta counties, the City of Stockton, environmental and other nongovernmental organizations, and tribe[s]. Resolution of that litigation could take several years.

In the meantime, DWR will have to revisit its plans for financing the Project, most recently estimated to cost $16 billion. In an action known as *Sierra Club, et al. v. California Department of Water Resources*, the Sacramento County Superior Court rejected the Department's attempt to validate revenue bond resolutions that would provide necessary funding to the Project. This article provides a brief analysis of the background and legal outcome of the case.

Background

The DCP is a possible future component of the State Water Project and is the progeny of the abandoned "twin tunnel" project and, before that, the Peripheral Canal, which was rejected by the voters in a statewide initiative in 1982. Last month, DWR certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the DCP, completing the environmental review process required by CEQA and clearing the way for construction of a tunnel that would divert water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for export to Silicon Valley, central and southern California.

On August 6, 2020, DWR adopted three bond resolutions (Bond Resolutions) which would have authorized revenue bond financing as the mechanism to fund the DCP. The Bond Resolutions were intended to fund a combination of expenses DWR labeled as the "Delta Program" which the Department defined as:

- [T]he environmental review, planning, engineering, design, and, if and when [DWR] determines to be appropriate, acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of facilities for the conveyance of water in, about and through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, subject to such further specification thereof as [DWR] in its discretion may adopt. Delta Program facilities may include, but are not limited to, water diversion intake structures located on the Sacramento River and a tunnel to convey water to Banks Pumping Plant.

DWR concurrently filed a validation action (Validation Action). The Validation Action sought a judicial determination that DWR's issuance of bonds, are valid, legal, and binding. Following the Department's filing, the Sierra Club, and numerous other parties, including Sacramento County, Sacramento County Water Agency, and the City of Yuba, filed answers raising numerous affirmative defenses challenging the legality of DWR's adoption of the Bond Resolutions.

Analysis

The court's ruling in the Validation Action addressed just one of the challengers' affirmative defenses – i.e., arguments that the Delta Program, as DWR defined it in the Bond Resolutions – was not within the scope of DWR's statutorily delegated authority under the Central Valley Project Act (CVPA) to construct and operate as a unit of the State Water Project. Specifically, the court considered whether the Delta Program amounts to a mere modification of the Feather River Project (FRP) unit described in the CVPA in three historical reports, as DWR asserted, or whether the Delta Program was defined so broadly that it constitutes more than a mere modification, and therefore falls outside of the scope of DWR's delegated authority.

DWR contended that the planning and construction of the Delta Program is within the authority granted to the Department by section 11260 of the Water Code (last amended in 1959) to modify the FRP, which at one time included a Delta Cross Channel to move water from the Sacramento River to pumping facilities in the south Delta. The Department argued that the Delta Program facilities would serve the same function as the facilities described in section 11260, as the facilities would be transporting water from the Feather River and Sacramento River to the south Delta for export.

Defendants argued that the DCP could not in any sense be considered a further modification of the historic "Delta Cross Channel" mentioned in the historic reports because these reports do not describe any facilities peripheral to or under the Delta. Additionally, Defendants argued that the DCP could not be a further modification of the FRP because DWR had formally dispensed with the Delta Cross Channel and DWR did not show that the DCP is a further modification of any other Delta facility associated with the CVPA. DWR did not offer an interpretation of "further modification thereof" that relied on rules governing statutory interpretation or case law and instead argued for a "discretionary standard" – i.e., whether the "function and purpose" of the FRP and Delta Program are the same.

The court found the Department's arguments unpersuasive. Judge Mennemeier stated that, "[a]lthough the Legislature plainly delegated broad authority to (the Department), it did not delegate infinite authority." The court held that DWR's definition of the Delta Program ignores the scope of the FRP's objectives and could theoretically provide for DWR to approve facilities that would serve purposes other than those set forth in the reports. Judge Mennemeier stated, "[i]n plain words, the problem with (the Department's) definition of the 'delta program' is that its definition is untethered to the objectives, purposes, and effects of the Feather River Project." The court also rejected DWR's reliance on the second sentence of the definition of the Delta Program to support its claim that the definition is consistent with the purposes of the FRP. Specifically, the court stated that the second sentence is merely illustrative, not restrictive. In sum, Judge Mennemeier found that DWR did not show that its definition of the Delta Program would amount to a mere modification of the FRP.

Therefore, the court found that section 11260 does not delegate to DWR the authority to adopt the Bond Resolutions and as such, DWR's actions exceeded the scope of its authority. Because DWR lacks the authority to adopt the "Delta Program" as a "modification" of the FRP unit, the court found that "it necessarily follows that DWR lacks the authority to issue revenue bonds to finance the Delta Program." In accordance with this holding, the court denied and dismissed the Department's Validation Action.

Although the court characterized the ruling as "narrow," the practical implications of the ruling are consequential. Without a judgment from a court validating DWR's authority to issue bonds, DWR's ability to finance the environmental review, planning, design, and construction of the Delta tunnel project is compromised because potential bond buyers lack assurance of DWR's authority to issue bonds and impose charges that will generate a revenue stream necessary to repay the bonds.

Any effort to confirm DWR's authority to fund the DCP with revenue bonds faces additional legal uncertainty, whether DWR appeals the superior court decision or adopts new bond resolutions and attempts to successfully prosecute a new validation action. The January 16 decision did not address numerous other legal issues raised by validation defendants that may be raised in any future validation proceeding related to Delta tunnel revenue bond financing.

A link to the court's decision can be found here.

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FOX 40 LOCAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

California's reservoirs maintain capacity as snowpack struggles to rebuild

by: Matthew Nobert
Posted: Jan 25, 2024 / 09:10 AM PST
Updated: Jan 27, 2024 / 06:00 PM PST

(FOX40.COM) — California nears completion of a January that has seen far less rain and snow than the previous year leaving a significantly lower snowpack while reservoirs statewide remain at historic highs.

The month began with a disappointing snowpack measurement in the Central Sierra Nevada at the Phillips Station snow survey.

Snowpack levels were measured at 30% of the average for Jan. 2, which was a stark contrast to the over 200% above average snowpack measurement taken at the same location on Jan. 10, 2023.

"Here at Phillips last year on this date we were standing on nearly five feet of snow," Department of Water Resources Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecast Section Manager Sean de Guzman said following the measurement. "So vastly different than what we are standing on here today."

Other snow surveys around the state concluded that the statewide snowpack average was around 25% of the year-to-date average.

Over the following weeks, sporadic snowfall mixed with rain passed over the Sierra Nevada dropping several feet of fresh snow and multiple inches of rain on the foothills and valley.

Despite forecasts indicating extremely heavy snowfall from the upper foothills to the peaks of the Sierra, many of these storms would come up short.

While the upper peaks and passes of the Sierra received a little over a foot of snow, the lower regions of the mountain range would only tally up a few inches.

This has left the statewide average snowpack level for Jan. 24 at 54%. Compared to a statewide average snowpack of 227% this same time in 2023.

In the Central Sierra, which parallels the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys' snowpack levels are at 56% for Jan. 24.

While the state snowpack is reeling, its reservoirs are maintaining similar levels to the previous year.

The state's two largest reservoirs, Oroville and Shasta, are still holding well over 100% of their average for this time of year and each is over 70% capacity.

Currently, the combined amount of water being held by the two reservoirs is 6.1 million acre-feet of water.

Folsom Reservoir, which serves as flood control for the southern Sacramento Valley and a major source of water for the region is at 53% capacity, which is 118% over its average for this time of year.