



Director Karla Nemeth, Department of Water Resources

Introduction

The Commission's September meeting will focus on important water issues affecting San Joaquin Valley agriculture and communities. Department of Water Resources (DWR) Director Karla Nemeth will deliver an introductory presentation addressing important issues to valley communities and agriculture and detailing DWR's new Human Right to Water policy.

DWR adopted its Human Right to Water (HR2W) policy in July 2021. The policy grounds environmental justice concerns in all of the Department's work. The policy will influence all aspects of the Department's work, including management of the State Water Project and DWR's role in the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, both of which are critical water management efforts within the Central Valley. This policy also expands DWR's role at the local, regional, and state level to empower communities to build long-term capacity in the development and delivery of HR2W projects. Specifically, DWR will work with communities to identify significant water resource management challenges that are prohibitive to providing safe and reliable water to their communities. Where feasible, Department staff will contribute expertise in project management, outreach and engagement, and available state funding. DWR's commitment to formalizing and improving these efforts will be complementary to the work already being done by DWR and other agencies, such as the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience (SAFER) program.

Background

In 2012, California became the first state in the nation to pass groundbreaking legislation that recognized water as a human right – that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.

This agenda item advances Goal One of the Commission's Strategic Plan. Goal One directs the Commission to serve as a primary public forum for the discussion of improving water management policy to assist regions in achieving climate resiliency, advise the Department, and inform the Governor and Legislature on selected statewide issues, including those actions of the Water Resilience Portfolio assigned to the Commission.

Meeting Overview

Karla Nemeth, Director of DWR, will provide introductory remarks about how DWR's new Human Right to Water policy relates to the State Water Project and the Sustainable

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Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and how these matters affect agriculture and communities in the Central Valley.

This is an informational item.

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