



State Water Project Briefing: Strategic Plan and Operations Update

Introduction

The fourth State Water Project (SWP) briefing of 2024 will focus on the second and fifth goals of the SWP's Strategic Plan, and will cover workforce status, key workforce initiatives, and the California Aqueduct Subsidence Program. The briefing will also provide an update on current year operations of the SWP.

Anthony Meyers, Operating Officer of the State Water Project, will cover SWP's efforts to be an employer of choice, including the comprehensive workforce attraction and retention strategies SWP is implementing to address various challenges, such as shifting workforce expectations, competition for skilled resources, and the impending retirement of a significant portion of the water sector workforce.

Jesse Dillon, the Program Manager for the California Aqueduct Subsidence Program, will provide an overview of the SWP's approach to dealing with subsidence along the California Aqueduct.

Tracy Hinojosa, State Water Project Operations Manager, will provide an update on the current year's operations. This presentation will update the Commission on the current water year allocation, planning decisions made to date, hydrology to date, and considerations for the rest of the year.

Background

The California State Water Project, consisting of 36 water storage facilities and 700 miles of rivers, pipelines, and canals, supplies water to 27 million people and irrigates 750,000 acres of farmland. The system includes 21 pumping plants, powered by a system of power-generation and power-recovery plants. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) also operates the world's tallest water lift – the Edmonston Pumping Plant – which pumps water more than 1,900 feet up and over the Tehachapi Mountains into Southern California.

In 2024, DWR released the State Water Project risk-informed Strategic Plan that considers external risks to the continued operation of the SWP. In addition to advancing an industry-leading safety culture, other goals include being an employer of choice; accelerating adaptation and strengthening resiliency for a changing climate; promoting awareness of the SWP's significance; and optimizing infrastructure, financial integrity, and operations.

Goal Two of the Commission's Strategic Plan directs the Commission to remain apprised of the operations and construction activities of the SWP, focusing on how it adapts and responds to hydrological extremes expected with climate change, restores critical ecosystems, and

Agenda Item: 14

Meeting Date: September 18, 2024

Page 2

addresses aging infrastructure. As required by Water Code section 165, the Commission conducts an annual review on the progress of the construction and operation of the SWP and reports its findings and recommendations to DWR and the Legislature. This briefing will inform the Commission of SWP activities in preparation for the Commission's 2024 annual review.

Meeting Overview

At the September meeting, Deputy Director John Yarbrough will offer introductory remarks, and DWR staff will make presentations as described above. Commissioners will have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments in anticipation of producing findings and recommendations in the Commission's 2024 annual report on the SWP.

This is an informational item.

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