California Water Commission 2012-2013 Workplan DRAFT

(Suggest Workplan Cover Fall 2012-2013, subsequent workplans updated by Calendar Year)

Introduction

Mission Statement:

> The California Water Commission provides a public forum for discussing water issues, advises the Department of Water Resources, and takes appropriate statutory actions to further the development of policies that support integrated and sustainable water resource management and a healthy environment.

The California Water Commission consists of nine members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Seven members are chosen for their expertise related to the control, storage, and beneficial use of water and two are chosen for their knowledge of the environment. The Commission advises the Director of the Department of Water Resources on matters within the Department's jurisdiction, approves rules and regulations, and monitors and reports on the construction and operation of the State Water Project. The roles and responsibilities of the California Water Commission are defined in the Water Code, sections of the Government Code, and the Civil Procedures code.

Background

Over the course of several months the California Water Commission developed its Strategic Plan, a high-level document intended to guide the activities of the Commission for the next five years. The Strategic Plan was officially adopted in September 2012.

The plan defines the mission of the California Water Commission, its major goals, and the broad strategies the Commission will use to achieve its goals.

The purpose of this document is to further define those strategies and ensure accountability by outlining the specific actions that the Commission will take under each strategy in order to achieve its goals.

Actions Organized by Strategy

Goal 1: Serve as a primary public forum for the dissemination of information and discussion of statewide water issues and solutions.

<u>A. Inform and engage the public on water issues</u>

- Identify opportunities for members to participate in and present at conferences and workshops related to water policy and activities, publish or respond to media articles, and initiate communication with the stakeholders and the public.
- Hold public hearings on all facilities proposed to be added to the State Water Project on an as needed basis. This may take place as part of a regular public meeting.

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- Hear specific and general comments from members of the public at all Commission meetings and in correspondence submitted directly to the Commission.

B. Promote public discourse on the future of water storage in California

- In-depth review of topics related to specific water storage issues at regular meetings.
- Develop recommendations based on discussions of public benefits and/or identify issues for additional research and analysis; provide recommendations to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Delta Stewardship Council.
- Host public forums and workshops on issues related to water storage policy.

C. Provide transparent access to information

- In December of each year, publish an annual report summarizing the key activities and accomplishments of the Commission that year.
- Post a written summary of meeting results to the Commission website following each Commission meeting.
- Continually update and improve Commission website to provide easy and transparent access to information.
- Respond to all telephone calls, emails, and written correspondence timely and efficiently.
- Webcast meetings when possible. If not possible, post recording of meeting to the Commission's website as soon as possible after each meeting.
- Develop a database of public interactions on water issues, allowing public to see what issues have been raised and Commission's response.

Goal 2: Ensure DWR decisions on key programs and activities are sound and sustainable by providing strategic advice, recommendations and oversight.

A. Ensure DWR rules and regulations are clear, fair, useful, and necessary

- Review and approve all regulations of DWR for submittal to the Office of Administrative Law, except for those expressly exempted.
- Provide a forum for the public to participate in the rulemaking process; give due consideration to all public comments.

B. Approve priority areas for the Delta Special Projects Program

- Review and approve the Delta Special Projects' Program investment priority areas on an as needed basis.

C. Review and inspect the State Water Project

- Conduct site visits and inspections of State Water Project facilities annually.
- Receive semi-annual briefings from State Water Project staff on critical issues.
- Advocate for policies, procedures, and legislative and administration actions to resolve critical issues and improve the operation of the State Water Project.

D. Ensure eminent domain proceedings initiated by DWR meet legal requirements

- Provide notice to affected landowners at least 21-days in advance of the Commission meeting and consider each property at a minimum of two Commission meetings in accordance with the Commission's Procedure for Eminent Domain adopted August 17, 2011.
- Ensure that DWR has met all of its statutory obligations and made its best efforts to negotiate with the property owner prior the use of eminent domain.

Goal 3: Develop and support integrated water management policies that result in sustainable water resources and a healthy environment statewide.

A. Establish the Commission's role as a policy leader

- Participate in the exchange of ideas at water conferences and events, publish informative articles and reports.
- Receive regular briefings from DWR's programmatic, legislative, and budget offices, as well as other key program areas quarterly, or as necessitated by the legislative or budget process, or other events.
- Make recommendations to the Director on key policy issues as appropriate.
- Actively participate in the development of the California Water Plan Update 2013.
- Contribute to policy discussions as appropriate by writing letters, speaking at events, and conveying information to the public and to other organizations.
- Engage on a variety of water management and policy issues including groundwater and conjunctive management, conservation, integrated water management, storage, etc.

B. Develop strategies for effectively investing in the public benefits of water projects in California

- Hold public workshops to gather background information, input and advice on the public benefits of storage projects. This may occur as part of the Commission's regular meetings.
- Work with stakeholders and other agencies to prepare information which could be used to evaluate the value of public benefits of water storage projects.
- Receive regular updates from DWR's staff and others involved with the regulations development team, provide feedback and direction, and consider public comments.
- Participate in the California Water Plan Update 2013 Finance Caucus.

C. Improve coordination between federal, state, tribal and local public agencies and stakeholders

- Engage other agencies and non-governmental organizations on key water issues by attending meetings and inviting representatives to speak at Commission meetings. Provide support for sound water policies through collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

- Engage with organizations that have proposed statutory or administrative changes to the management of DWR and the State Water Project, water financing, and related issues. (E.g. Little Hoover Commission, State Legislature, Policy Think Tanks, etc.) Provide input and feedback on the development of these proposals.

D. Develop and support policies that advance Integrated Resource Management

- Participate in the development of the California Water Plan 2013. The Commission will become an active participant in the California Water Plan State Agency Steering Committee, participating in monthly meetings.

E. Support actions and research to mitigate and adapt to climate change to facilitate more sustainable water management policies

- Receive regular briefings on Climate Change activities and policies from DWR and other appropriate organizations.
- Support Climate Change adaptation and mitigation through the Commission's federal advocacy, policy leadership, and public outreach activities.
- Review third party research from government and intergovernmental agencies, academia, non-profits and private parties on climate change and its impacts to California water.

F. Contribute to the public discourse and body of knowledge on key water policy issues

- Identify a list of water policy subject areas for further research and discussion to inform the Commission's activities.
- From that list, research, analyze, and develop white papers on key policy issues.

G. Advocate to the Congressional appropriations committees for federal funding

- Work with DWR to develop a new federal advocacy program.
- Work with DWR staff, and other agencies including the Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to identify project funding needs.
- Receive regular briefings from DWR staff to stay appraised of the federal appropriations process; timing to be determined by the federal budget process and congressional hearings.
- Write to the Congressional appropriations committees informing them of California's funding priorities once each year. Members of the Commission may conduct an annual trip to Washington DC as necessary and if resources allow.

Actions Organized by Month (All timing is tentative subject to change at the discretion of the Commission)

October 2012

- Briefing on California Water Plan (CWP) Update 2013 Plenary Session
- Briefing on DWR Groundwater Program and CWP Groundwater Enhancements
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Tour State Water Project Facilities
- Update on Priority Areas for Delta Levees Special Projects program
- CWP State Agency Steering Committee
- Participate in Workshop to Align Agency Conservation Plans and Programs

November 2012

- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment Presentation on Ecosystem Services by Department of Conservation
- Briefing on SWP Power and Energy Issues
- Report on State Water Project tour
- Report on *A Framework for Regulatory Transition: Accommodating Projected Climatic Shifts at the Operational Level*

December 2012

- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
- Briefing on CWP Forest Management Strategy
- Update on State Water Project Facilities
- Approval of Commission Workplan
- State Water Project Panel at AWCA Conference
- Post 2012 Summary of Activities to CWC Website
- Participate in CWP Public Advisory Committee Meeting

January 2013

- Approve 2012 Annual Report on the Construction and Operation of the State Water Project
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Review DWR Regulation Calendar for 2013, approve for submittal to OAL
- Initial Consideration of State Water Project Encroachment Regulations
- DWR Program Briefing
- Commission identifies key subject areas for further research

- Meeting with DWR's Deputy Director for Integrated Water Management (IWM)

February 2013

- Review DWR Delta Levees Investment Priorities
- Consideration of Changes to/Adoption of State Water Project Encroachment Regulations
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Update on Status of Urban Water Management Plans
- DWR Program Briefing
- Participate in CWC Public Advisory Committee Meeting
- Meet with Central Valley Flood Protection Board

March 2013

- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Initial Review of Resolutions of Necessity in support of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan
- Legislative and Budget Update
- Presentation on Public Benefits in the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan
- Update on Status of Agricultural Water Management Plans
- Initial briefing on proposed amendments to Agricultural Water Measurement Regulations
- Briefing on Federal Appropriations
- Briefing on California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM)
- Compose/Submit Comments on Public Draft of Bay Delta Conservation Plan
- Participate in California Water Policy Conference
- Attend/Participate in WEF Executive Briefing

April 2013

- Update on SWP key issues and activities
- Presentation on IWM Public Benefits Efforts
- Consideration of Resolutions of Necessity in support of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan
- Reservoir Site Tour (as suggested by Friends of the River)
- Presentation on Public Review Draft of California Water Plan Update 2013
- Review Federal Appropriations for Flood Control Project in California, Review Draft Letter to Federal Appropriations Committees of Congress
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- DWR Program Briefing
- Participate in Integrated Water Management Summit and Workshop

May 2013

- State of the State Water Project Workshop
- Comment period on Commission White Paper on Subject TBD
- Prepare and submit comments on California Water Plan Update 2013
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Meet with Delta Vision Foundation
- DWR Program Briefing
- Participate in CWP Groundwater Caucus

June 2013

- Release of Commission White Paper on Subject TBD
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- DWR Program Briefing

July 2013

- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Commission FY 2013/2014 Budget Update
- Federal Legislative Update
- DWR Program Briefing

August 2013

- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- DWR Program Briefing

September 2013

- Update on SWP key issues and activities
- DWR Program Briefing
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Tour of State Water Project Facilities
- Attend/Participate in the Floodplain Management Association 2013 Annual Conference

October 2013

- Public workshop on topic TBD
- Submit comments on Final Bay Delta Conservation Plan EIR/S
- Staff begins drafting 2013 SWP annual report for approval in January 2014
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- DWR Program Briefing
- Participate in/attend Groundwater Resources Association Annual Conference

November 2013

- Review of CWC Workplan 2014
- Discuss public financing strategies for investments in water resources and environment
- Anticipated Deadline for Final Approval of SWP Encroachment Regulations
- DWR Program Briefing

December 2013

- Approval of CWC Workplan 2014
- Election of Commission Chair and Vice Chair
- Approval of SWP annual report
- Staff post 2013 Summary of Activities to CWC Website
- Participate in ACWA Conference