



Presentation on California Water Plan Recommendations for Improved Participation and Engagement of Disadvantaged Communities and the Companion Report – Californians Without Safe Water and Sanitation

Background

Historically, some economically disadvantaged communities and vulnerable populations have not had adequate or equal representation in statewide water planning processes; these communities are more likely to lack access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation. Beginning in 2005, the California Water Plan recommended specific strategies to increase representation of these communities along with those experiencing related environmental justice (EJ) concerns in water planning processes, to ensure equal access to State funding for water projects, and improve access to safe drinking water for all Californians.

California Water Plan Update 2005 recommended that DWR and other State government departments and agencies should invite, encourage, and assist representatives from disadvantaged communities (DACs) and vulnerable populations, and the local agencies and private utilities serving them, to participate in statewide, regional, and local water planning processes and increase access to State funding for water projects. Those recommendations were expanded in the California Water Plan Update 2009, Implementation Plan which included *Objective 13 -- Ensure the Equitable Distribution of Benefits* and 5 related actions to benefit DACs. For the California Water Plan Update 2013, DWR convened a DAC/environmental justice (EJ) caucus to refine the related actions in Objective 13. In addition to this effort, the California Water Plan's DAC/EJ caucus, Water Quality caucus, Tribal Advisory Committee, and State Agency Steering Committee all assisted with updating a 2005 report titled *Californians Without Safe Water and Sanitation*.

Objective 13 outlines some of the obstacles and difficulties faced by DACs and includes seven related actions. The actions focus on issues such as the policy goals of Water Code Section 106.3 (commonly known as the "human right to water"), increasing EJ and DAC participation in state agency water-related planning and programs, removing barriers to funding, and providing incentives for consolidation of small systems.

Californians Without Safe Water and Sanitation, Update 2013 includes a framework to estimate the number of Californians that lack safe drinking water and/or lack adequate sanitation facilities. Some data is available; however, there are significant data gaps and a complete statewide assessment cannot be made. The report discusses challenges faced by small communities and tribal communities. It also includes recommendations to achieve safe drinking water and adequate sanitation for all Californians.

At this meeting Kamyar Guivetchi, Chief of DWR's Integrated Water Management Branch, will discuss the Water Plan's work with DACs and the EJ community, as well as the Plan's recommended actions.

Agenda Item: 9

Meeting Date: April 16, 2014

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Attachments

California Water Plan, Update 2013: Objective 13 -- Ensure the Equitable Distribution of Benefits
Californians Without Safe Water and Sanitation, Update 2013

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