



April 14, 2015

Rachel Ballanti
Acting Executive Director
California Water Commission
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, California 95814

SUBJECT: Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees and Meeting Procedure

Dear Ms. Ballanti:

The California Water Commission (Commission) is currently undertaking the tremendous effort of determining how to issue \$2.7 billion in grants as part of the Water Storage Investment Program. We would like offer the following comments that we feel will assist the overall process as it moves forward.

Ad-Hoc Advisory Committees

The Commission recently has begun the process of setting up two-member ad hoc advisory committees to tackle numerous issues, such as approving groundwater regulations from the Department of Water Resources, analyzing public benefit guidelines from Department of Fish and Wildlife and the State Water Resources Control Board, hiring of a new Executive Director, and internal budgeting. The Commission has chosen to expedite these processes, but are concerned about the lack of public access to the ad hoc advisory committees as they pertain to future actions the Commission must take in regards to regulations.

As you are aware, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act requires open meetings where an advisory committee contains three Commissioners. With meetings containing only two Commissioners, there is no public access to these meetings, nor stakeholder input. When this comes to developing positions on regulations, we would like to understand how the Commission gets to their positions and urge the Commission to open these processes to the public for the matters that are not internal to the Commission.

Public Meetings

The Commission is also expanding the number of meetings they are having and travelling throughout the state. The Commission regularly provides opportunity for the public to comment on non-agendized items at the beginning of their hearings. During these meetings, the public may wish to comment on agenda items, and it is not always clear how the Commission would like to receive these comments.

We would suggest the Commission adopt similar procedures as other agencies in providing comment cards at hearings. These cards allow the public to identify themselves as wanting to speak, and the agenda item they wish to speak on so the Chair can easily maximize public input during the hearings on agendized items.

We thank the Commission for the work they are doing, and hope that our comments can be adopted to ensure an open process that maximizes public access and input.

Sincerely,



Kyle Jones
Policy Advocate