



REGULAR BOARD MEETING

AUGUST 6, 2024



**STOCKTON
EAST WATER
DISTRICT**

PROVIDING SERVICE SINCE 1948

www.sewd.net

DIRECTORS

Richard Atkins
President
Division 1

Andrew Watkins
Division 2

Alvin Cortopassi
Division 3

Melvin Panizza
Division 4

Paul Sanguinetti
Division 5

Paul Nakaue
Division 6

Thomas McGurk
Vice President
Division 7

STAFF

Justin M. Hopkins
General Manager

Juan M.Vega
Assistant General Manager

LEGAL COUNSEL

Jeanne M. Zolezzi
General Counsel

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6767 East Main Street
Stockton, CA 95215

Post Office Box 5157
Stockton, CA 95205

MEETING NOTICE

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT WILL BE HELD AT 12:30 P.M., TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2024 AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE, 6767 EAST MAIN STREET STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA 95215

Assistance for the Disabled: If you are disabled in any way and need accommodation to participate in the meeting, please contact Administrative Staff at (209) 948-0333 at least 48-hours in advance for assistance so the necessary arrangements can be made.

FOR CONTINUED CONVENIENCE STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS WILL BE AVAILABLE BY TELECONFERENCE.

Please call (347) 566-2741/Passcode: 300 937 522# to be connected to the Regular Board Meeting, to begin at 12:30 p.m. Agendas and minutes are located on our website at www.sewd.net.

AGENDA

Page No

- A. Pledge of Allegiance (Manager Hopkins) & Roll Call**
- B. Consent Calendar (None)**
- C. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)**
- D. Scheduled Presentations and Agenda Items**
 - 1. Minutes 07/30/24 01
 - 2. Warrants – California Public Employees’ Retirement System 07
 - 3. Water Year 2023 – Accounts Receivable Credits for Refund for AG and Municipal & Industrial (M&I) 09
- E. Committee Reports**
- F. Report of the General Manager**
 - 1. Water Supply Report 07/30/24 11
 - 2. Informational Items
 - a. Harder Works On Tunnel Death Blow, Manteca/ Ripon Bulletin, 07/23/24 13
 - b. As California Seeks To Curb Groundwater Declines, Farmers In One County Fight Back In Court, Los Angeles Times, 07/27/24 17
 - 3. Report on General Manager Activities
 - a. Stockton East Water District Activities Update
 - 4. Stockton East Water District Engineering Update

G. Director Reports

1. ACWA's Regions 3 & 4 Event and Tour, 07/31/24

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H. Communications

I. Agenda Planning/Upcoming Events

1. ACWA State Legislative Committee Meeting, 10:00 a.m., 08/09/24
2. Stockton East Water Suppliers (SAWS) Meeting, 1:00 p.m., 08/09/24
3. San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition Steering Committee Meeting, 9:00 a.m., 08/12/24

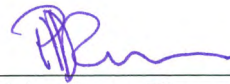
J. Closed Session

1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION Potential exposure to litigation – Government Code Section 54956.9 – one case

K. Adjournment

Certification of Posting

I hereby certify that on August 1, 2024 I posted a copy of the foregoing agenda in the outside display case at the District Office, 6767 East Main Street, Stockton, California, said time being at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Stockton East Water District (Government Code Section 54954.2).
Executed at Stockton, California on August 1, 2024.



Priya Ram, Finance Director
Stockton East Water District

Any materials related to items on this agenda distributed to the Board of Directors of Stockton East Water District less than 72 hours before the public meeting are available for public inspection at the District's office located at the following address: 6767 East Main Street, Stockton, CA 95215. Upon request, these materials may be available in an alternative format to persons with disabilities

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT WAS HELD AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE
6767 EAST MAIN STREET, STOCKTON, CA
ON TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2024, AT 12:30 P.M.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

President Atkins called the regular meeting to order at 12:30 p.m., and President Atkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at roll call at the District were Directors Atkins, Cortopassi, McGurk, Nakaue, Panizza, Sanguinetti and Watkins. Also present were Manager Hopkins, Finance Director Ram, District Engineer Evensen, Maintenance Manager Higaes, Administrative Assistant Rodriguez, Legal Counsel Selke and Consultant Barkett.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR (None)

C. PUBLIC COMMENT (None)

D. SCHEDULED PRESENTATIONS AND AGENDA ITEMS

1. Minutes 07/23/24 Regular Meeting

A motion was moved and seconded to approve the July 23, 2024 Minutes, as presented.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Atkins, Cortopassi, McGurk, Nakaue, Panizza, Sanguinetti, Watkins

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

2. Warrants

- a. Fund 67 – Agricultural Fund
- b. Fund 68 – Municipal & Industrial Groundwater Fund
- c. Fund 70 – Administration Fund
- d. Fund 71- Water Supply
- e. Fund 91- Vehicle Fund
- f. Fund 94 – Municipal & Industrial Fund
- g. Summary
- h. Short Names/Acronym List
- i. SEWD Vehicles & Heavy Equipment

Director McGurk inquired on the following expense on page 22, line item 120, Kludt & Sons, Inc for Red Diesel for emergency generators on LLPS-lighting power outage in the amount of \$21,635.48. Manager Hopkins replied the District does not have tier-4 generators.

Director McGurk inquired on the following expense on page 23, line item 139, UniFirst Corporation for weekly uniform and laundry service week 06/27/24-07/11/24 in the amount of \$888.66. Manager Hopkins replied Cintas will start their service on August 1st.

Director Atkins inquired on the following expense on page 22, line item 120, Kludt & Sons, Inc for Red Diesel for emergency generators on LLPS-lighting power outage in the amount of \$21,635.48. Manager Hopkins replied staff was filling up fuel pods.

Director Sanguinetti inquired on the following expense on page 18, line item 87, United Rentals North America, Inc for rental of variable reach forklift to unload fish screen 06/18/24-06/19/24 in the amount of \$ 855.12. Manager Hopkins replied the District had not yet received the new boom truck since it went to the Board in July and the fish screen was installed in June.

A motion was moved and seconded to approve the July 30, 2024, Warrants, as presented.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Atkins, Cortopassi, McGurk, Nakaue, Panizza, Sanguinetti, Watkins

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

3. Water Year 2023 – Accounts Receivable Credits for Refund for AG and Municipal & Industrial (M&I)

President Atkins reported this item will return on August 6th at the Regular Board Meeting.

4. Stockton East Water District – Consider Approving The Reorganization and Reclassification Of Staff Memo

Manager Hopkins presented the Board with the Stockton East Water District – Consider Approving The Reorganization and Reclassification Of Staff Memo. Manager Hopkins reported staff met with the Administration Committee to discuss proposed changes with one being the re-organization and classification of staff. Manager Hopkins reported when staff met with the Administration Committee there were six proposed changes, of which this memo covers five of the six. Manager Hopkins reported the sixth proposed change will be presented to the Board once management speaks to the affected employee(s). Manager Hopkins also reported the five proposed changes staff is recommending the Board approve are the following:

Administrative Services Manager to Account Clerk since the Administrative Services Manager position is currently funded yet vacant. This change will save the District approximately \$7K a month. The second proposed change is to reorganize one of the Administrative Assistant positions to Safety and Compliance Analyst. The third proposed change is converting one of the Electrical Technician II to an Electrical Supervisor position since management determined that two Electrical Technician II positions are not needed. With this change, the proposed pay for the Electrical Supervisor impacts the salary schedule for Maintenance Manager. In order to keep the appropriate separation between job classifications with regards to percentages as delineated in the most current salary survey, the Maintenance Manager will require an increase of \$1,501.44 per month, which is accounted for in the total financial impact section of the memo. The fourth proposed change is to create a Water Supply II position since the Water Supply Department was the only Department lacking advancement opportunities within its hierarchy. The fifth proposed change is changing the Finance Director job title to Director of Finance and Administration in order to reflect the expanded duties of the Finance Director and ensure organizational clarity. Manager Hopkins also reported the financial impact will be a savings of \$25,304.48 for FY2024-2025 and the annual savings are estimated at \$37,956.72 based on step 5 wage. Staff respectfully recommended the Board approve the re-organization and classification changes.

Director Cortopassi inquired on how the difference is calculated on Table 1. Manager Hopkins replied the Administrative Service Manager will be removed and replaced with the Accounts Clerk whose pay is \$4,818 a month and the Administrative Service Manager's pay was \$11,941.

A motion was moved and seconded to authorize the General Manager to modify the re-organization and classification, as presented.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Atkins, Cortopassi, McGurk, Nakaue, Panizza, Sanguinetti, Watkins

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation Monthly Water Committee Meeting, 07/23/24
Manager Hopkins attended the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation Monthly Water Committee Meeting. Manager Hopkins reported North San Joaquin Water Conservation District (NSJWCD) is raising their groundwater rate \$5 an acre foot and South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) is also raising their groundwater rates for both their per acre cost and per acre-foot cost not to exceed the maximum of their rate schedule established previously.

Director Atkins inquired if NSJWCD has reached the point of year to increase their groundwater rates. Manager Hopkins replied yes, NSJWCD took the opportunity to increase their groundwater rates.

F. REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

1. Water Supply Report as of 07/23/24

Manager Hopkins provided a handout of the Water Supply Report for information only that included storage, release, and production data collected from various sources as of midnight last night.

There is 208,172 AF in storage at New Hogan Reservoir. Current releases are set at 223 cfs. There is 1,937,655 AF in storage at New Melones Reservoir. Current releases are set at 1,873 cfs. The current release at Goodwin Dam to Stanislaus River is set at 353 cfs and release to all water users is set at 1,998 cfs. The District Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is currently processing 56 mgd. North Stockton is currently utilizing 15 mgd. South Stockton is currently using 8 mgd. Cal Water is currently utilizing 27 mgd. The City of Stockton WTP is currently processing 18 mgd.

2. Information Items:
 - a. Manager Hopkins noted items: F-2a
3. Report on General Manager Activities
 - a. Stockton East Water District Activities Update
Manager Hopkins reported when the Cummins standby generator was returned to service with the rental still mobilized, the Cummins service staff discovered there was a bad circuit board. The District kept the rental connected for the Administrations and Operations building. Manager Hopkins stated the District is waiting for a quote from Cummins on the circuit board which is expected today. Also, the District is still waiting on a quote from Caterpillar to come and finish trouble shooting the CAT standby generator. The District replaced the previous rental portable standby generator for a smaller rental portable standby generator with the rental rate being \$17,000 a month.

Director Watkins inquired how many kilowatts is the new rental standby generator. Manager Hopkins replied 895 kW.

Manager Hopkins reported the Growers Meeting was successful, resulting in interest from two customers. One customer is interested in recharging and potentially selling, while the second customer is considering switching to surface water. Assistant Manager Vega reported five customers have reached out wanting to switch to surface water.

Director McGurk inquired how many acre-feet of surface water total. Assistant Manager Vega replied it is an undetermined amount at this point of the discussions.

Director Panizza noted Manager Hopkins did an excellent job on the presentation in the Growers Meeting. Manager Hopkins replied the District received positive feedback from the attendees.

Manager Hopkins reported the Water Supply Enhancement Project is slowly moving forward. Legal Counsel Zolezzi and Manager Hopkins met with the Districts' water rights consultant last week. The water rights consultant will begin updating the documents which go to the State Water Resources Control Board for the Districts' water right application.

Manager Hopkins reported he met with staff to discuss the proposed incentive program and received positive feedback and hopefully by the end of August the proposed incentive program will go to the Board for approval.

4. Stockton East Water District Maintenance Update

Maintenance Manager Higaes provided the Board with an update of the District's maintenance staffing and mechanical, construction and electrical updates. Maintenance Manager Higaes reported all mechanic positions have been filled with the most recent addition of the newest Maintenance Mechanic I. The District is still looking for an Electrical Technician I. Recently, staff repaired multiple leaks on the Bellota Pipeline at the Machado property, replaced the front main seal of the Cummings generator, repaired the Peters Pipeline leak at a turnout, replaced air release valves (ARV) on the Bellota Pipeline, provided District-wide preventive maintenance and constructed FEMA repair work starting at Funk Road. Maintenance Manager Higaes also reported multiple repairs due to the lighting strike, the installation of the P-27 VFD, and the installation of the electrical for the security gate in the process. Staff installed raw water meters is in the water treatment plant process and plant-wide calibration.

G. DIRECTOR REPORTS

1. Stockton East Water District – Growers Meeting, 07/26/24

Director Atkins, Director Watkins, Director Cortopassi and Manager Hopkins attended the meeting. Director Atkins reported the event was a great turnout. Chris Donis, Water Supply Manager, and Gianna O'Day, Associate Engineer I, also presented at the Growers Meeting. Director Atkins reported the attendees seemed concerned on how the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) works and who is involved. Director Atkins reported since the Growers Meeting took place there has been five customers reaching out wanting to switch to surface water.

H. COMMUNICATIONS

I. AGENDA PLANNING/UPCOMING EVENTS

1. ACWA's Region 3 & 4 Event Tour, 10:00 a.m., 07/31/24

J. REPORT OF THE COUNSEL

1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION Potential exposure to litigation – Government Code Section 54956.9 – two cases
2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – Personnel Government Code 54957

President Atkins adjourned the meeting to closed session at 1:03 p.m. The regular meeting reconvened at 1:42 p.m., with no reportable action.

K. ADJOURNMENT

President Atkins adjourned the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin M. Hopkins
Secretary of the Board

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**STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT
INVOICES FOR BOARD PACKAGE
CALPERS EFT REQUEST
AUGUST 06, 2024**

Vendor name	District Fund#	Account #	Description	Amount	Invoice No.
1 CA Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)	70	10-5049-0	Retirement Contributions for Payroll 08/02/24-Admin	5,997.31	08/02/24 1245106351
			Total Fund 70 Admin	\$ 5,997.31	
2 CA Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)	71	10-5049-0	Retirement Contributions for Payroll 08/02/24-WS-NM	5,454.91	08/02/24 1245106351
3 CA Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)	71	10-5058-0	Retirement Contributions for Payroll 08/02/24-WS-NH	1,480.05	08/02/24 1245106351
			Total Fund 71 Water Supply	\$ 6,934.96	
4 CA Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)	94	10-5049-0	Retirement Contributions for Payroll 08/02/24-M&I	21,430.15	08/02/24 1245106351
			Total Fund 94 Municipal & Industrial	\$ 21,430.15	
Grand Total for Electronic Funds Transfer Request on RBM 08/06/24				\$ 34,362.42	

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STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT
RBM AUGUST 6, 2024
2023 WATER YEAR - AG CREDIT REFUND

AG

Line	Client Name	Refund Amount
1	SINGH & SONS FARMS INC	\$10.55
2	NORTHCOTT, ROYCE M TR	\$11.19
3	HANSEN, VERNON TR ETAL	\$13.76
4	FOPPIANO, HENRY J IV	\$14.64
5	SOLARI PROPERTIES LP	\$15.07
6	CORTOPASSI PARTNERS LP	\$16.64
7	MAGNASCO, ANDREW SR & MILENA ETAL	\$16.69
8	PUCCI, LOUIS & C ETAL	\$16.88
9	CATAO, MANUEL V & MARIA S TR	\$17.22
10	DONDERO, B R & J INC	\$18.26
11	BECKER, GARRETT & RENEE TR	\$18.43
12	ROSSI, JOHN A & MARIE J TR	\$25.83
13	LAGORIO, BRETT A TR ETAL	\$30.01
14	APG & DJG CO PTP	\$32.16
15	JIMENEZ, ALFRED J SR & M	\$33.30
16	BILLIGMEIER, JAMES M TR 009	\$37.58
17	SANCHEZ, THOMAS A & D M	\$40.50
18	BAUTISTA, V ETAL	\$43.05
19	GARZA, ANITA	\$44.00
20	BARLEY, KRISTA TR	\$44.76
21	JOHN A DAVIS FARMS LLC 6002	\$47.02
22	PRIMA ROSSA ORCHARDS LLC	\$48.22
23	ARTHER, JASON L & ANGELINA	\$49.00
24	GILLAND, DAVID F & VANESSA	\$49.00
25	BEDOLLA, FERNANDO CALDERON	\$52.00
26	CAFFESE, ROBERT A & KIMBERLY TR	\$52.00
27	CELLI, LARRY I & KAREN L	\$52.00
28	GREEN, RALFANNA	\$52.00
29	HANSON, MARVIN & R	\$52.00
30	INGS, RUSSELL SR & C	\$52.00
31	LAGORIO LAND COMPANY - L6 - 14351	\$52.00
32	RACHHOD, HARSHA	\$52.00
33	RODRIQUEZ, GUSTAVO N	\$52.00
34	SAMBADO, B&L ENTERPRISES LLC	\$52.00
35	PACAS, ESTEBAN M & LETICIA	\$56.04
36	PRATO FARMS	\$61.65
37	HWK LTD PTP	\$62.28
38	BAUTISTA, JOSEPH MELVIN	\$64.24
39	CELLI, GINO J	\$69.65
40	VALLERY, JORDAN JR & S TR	\$73.19
41	MARCIANO, ROBERT TR	\$74.91
42	CELLA, S T TR ETAL	\$85.76
43	WATKINS, G TR (Ronnie Lynn)	\$90.00
44	GOTELLI, A & P ETAL (CR 01-B)	\$98.11
45	GARCIA, JOHN TR	\$104.00
46	GOMEZ, JOE F & SALLY M TR	\$105.08
47	I C INK CO INC	\$117.60
48	AZAM, MOHAMMAD AZEEM	\$119.31
49	MACHADO, MICHAEL & DIANA TR	\$121.22
50	MLC DONDERO INVESTMENTS LP	\$150.68
51	DE DIAZ, MARIA T DE S ETAL	\$172.20
52	ABDULLAH, BRENDA & DERICK	\$175.91
53	HOGAN, KANDY M	\$208.00
54	CORTOPASSI, ALVIN G & D 003	\$214.19
55	PARK VIEW MAUSOLEUM & CREMATORY ASSN	\$227.83
56	SANGUINETTI, STEVEN M	\$240.27
57	REITNAUER, RICHARD W & M TR	\$241.94

58	ARMOTO PARTNERS LLC 046	\$243.09
59	FRASER, THOMAS ROBERT TR	\$268.63
60	ROBERTSON, DAVID & LEISHA TR	\$270.58
61	NICOLINI, JANET TR ETAL	\$279.49
62	HIDDEN VINEYARDS LLC 011	\$543.05
63	GIUDICE, LYNNE B TR ETAL	\$571.14
64	RIGATO, PAULA ANN EST	\$722.39
65	SANGUINETTI, PAUL M TR	\$733.69
66	WILLIAMS, WEBSTER	\$840.18
67	COOPER OUT WEST INC	\$870.11
68	BECKLEY VINEYARD, LLP	\$1,044.66
	TOTAL	\$10,534.83

2023 WATER YEAR - M&I CREDIT REFUND

M&I

Line	Client Name	Refund Amount
1	SJC, COMMUNITY INF ENGIN, CSA46-1	\$23.20
2	LINDEN UNIF.SCH.DIST, WATERLOO SCHOOL 3	\$72.89
3	SAHARA MOBILE HOME PARK LLC 016	\$102.65
4	BEL AIR MHS LLC M&I	\$484.56
5	SJC, COMMUNITY INF ENGIN, SHADED TERRACE	\$485.61
6	SJC, COMMUNITY INF ENGIN, MORADA ACRES	\$2,761.76
	TOTAL	\$3,930.67

	President Atkins - Board of Directors	Priya Ram - Finance Director
	Justin M. Hopkins - Board Secretary	

Weekly Water Report	As of: July 30, 2024	As of: August 6, 2024
New Hogan (NHG) TOC	317,100	AF
Storage:	208,172	AF
Net Storage Change:	-3,629	AF
Inflow:	20	CFS
Release:	223	CFS
New Melones (NML) Allocation	75,000	AF
Storage:	1,937,655	AF
Net Storage change:	-16,649	AF
Inflow:	531	CFS
Release:	1,873	CFS
Source: CDEC Daily Reports		

Goodwin Diversion (GDW)		
Inflow (Tulloch Dam):	2,012	CFS
Release to Stanislaus River (S-98):	353	CFS
Release to OID (JT Main):	1,034	CFS
Release to SSJID (SO Main):	361	CFS
Release to SEWD & CSJWCD:	<u>250</u>	CFS
Total Release	1,998	CFS
Source: Tri-Dam Operations Daily Report		
Farmington Dam (FRM)		
Diverted to SEWD:	170	CFS
Diverted to CSJWCD:	125	CFS

Surface Water Used		
Irrigators on New Hogan:	13	
Irrigators on New Melones:	5	
Out-Of-District Irrigators:	3	
DJWWTP Production:	56	MGD
North Stockton:	15	MGD
South Stockton:	8	MGD
Cal Water:	27	MGD
City of Stockton DWSP Production:	18	MGD

District Ground Water Extraction		
74-01	0	GPM
74-02	0	GPM
North	0	GPM
South	0	GPM
Extraction Well # 1	<u>0</u>	GPM
Total Well Water Extraction	0	GPM
Total Ground Water Production	0	MGD

Note: **The data reported here is available as of 07/28/24
***The data reported here is available as of 07/29/24**
All other flow data reported here is preliminary, as of 9:00 a.m. on 07/30/24

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Harder Works On Tunnel Death Blow

Manteca/ Ripon Bulletin, 07/23/24

Congressman Josh Harder uses the State of California’s own words to make his case to make it impossible for the \$20 billion Delta bypass tunnel to be built.

It would:

*Increase salinity.

*Devastate San Joaquin County agricultural production.

*Deteriorate critical ecological systems that fish rely on.

*Land a severe economic blow to the region.

And just how would Harder make it impossible from his position in Congress to pull the plug on a state water project pushed by urban Southern California and large southern San Joaquin Valley corporate farm concerns?

Harder is pushing for the adoption of legislation directing the Army Corps of Engineers not to issue a required permit to allow federally controlled Central Valley Project water — essentially flows from Shasta Dam — to be diverted into the proposed tunnel south of Sacramento.

Without the permit or the participation of the federal Bureau of Reclamation, the tunnel can’t be built or the water diverted.

Harder called the state’s proposal to address the environmental and economic havoc the tunnel project would create by providing one-time funds of \$250 million to local entities to help cope with the long-term problems the project will create as “outrageous.”

“It’s not even a drop in the bucket,” Harder said.

Harder pointed to toxic algal blooms — just one part of the long list of negative impacts — to illustrate how the tunnel would deteriorate the quality of life in and around the Delta as well as create regional health hazards.

The environmental impact report noted the diversion of water would likely increase the growth of such toxic algal blooms.

The Centers for Disease Control note such blooms cause a variety of mild to serious illness for humans and can be deadly for animals.

Harder said he has enlisted bipartisan support within the California delegation — basically the Central Valley, the Bay Area, and Northern California.

Beyond the state's borders, Harder said it is more of a challenge given most others in Congress have never heard of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

He is working to change that in the roughly two year time frame until the state is expected to formerly ask for the required federal permits.

Harder noted the San Joaquin Valley — which would be significantly impacted by the tunnel produces 40 percent of the nation's fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

The ripple effect of the tunnel would take land out of production, reduce farm production and drive up prices nationally.

“(The EIR)acknowledges what we've known all along: the Delta Tunnel is meant to benefit Beverly Hills and leave Delta communities out to dry,” Harder said.

Among the project's negative impacts:

- *3,787plus converted acres of prime, unique farmland along with more saline water and reduced crops.

- *70 plus significant impacts requiring mitigation.

- *17 plus significant impacts on Delta communities identified, including noise, air quality, aesthetics, and agriculture.

- *\$20 billion cost to statewide ratepayers.

- *13 plus years of disruptive construction across 6 counties with 4,383,500+ truck trips on Delta roads.

- *Massive water intake structures on top of productive farms and adjacent to Delta legacy communities

The 40-foot diameter tunnel proposed 150 feet below the ground is almost universally opposed in the region.

Nowhere is that truer than in San Joaquín County that has the bulk of the Delta that will negatively be impacted by the bypass of water via a tunnel to reach the California Aqueduct pumps northwest of Tracy.

Environmental report concludes

tunnel will have major impacts

on San Joaquín County

The Army Corps of Engineers' 691-page Environmental Impact Study on the proposed Delta determined building the tunnel will have major impacts on San Joaquín County as well as the Northern San Joaquin Valley including agricultural, local water supply, air quality, endangered species, and essential fish habitat.

The tunnel — if built — could have domino impacts beyond the actual project.

That's because courts and the state will be pressed to seek to replace water that is now used for environmental purposes to keep salt water at bay, and sustain ecological systems before being diverting into the California Aqueduct northwest of Tracy.

By diverting the water into a tunnel south of Sacramento to bypass the Delta to reach the pumping station it would result in higher saltwater intrusion farther east in the Delta especially during droughts.

The most likely target to replace the water are the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced river watersheds that are key to the economic vitality of Northern San Joaquin Valley urban areas and farming as well as regional ecological systems. Harder along with fellow Congress member John Garamendi in July 2022 introduced an amendment to prohibit the Army Corps of Engineers from issuing a Clean Water Act permit for the tunnel

Their argument is the tunnel would rob the Delta of the benefit of Sacramento River water that currently flows through it on the way to the pumps at the head of the California Aqueduct northwest of Tracy.

That would impact not just the quality of water but it would reduce the volume which in turn can raise water temperatures than can be fatal to fish as it robs water of dissolved oxygen. At the same time less water in the Delta means salt water would push farther to the east toward Stockton, Lathrop, and Manteca.

Potential fallout for San Joaquin County, which has the largest land mass within the Delta region, include:

- *Extensive damage to the Delta ecological system.

- *Negative impact on fish including the endangered Chinook salmon.

- *Long-range issues with saltwater intrusion impacting water supplies the cities of Lathrop, Tracy, Manteca, and Stockton take from the underground aquifer that is impacting when fresh water levels above and below the surface in the Delta drop.

- *The quality and sustainability of Delta recreational opportunities.

- *Tens of thousands of acres of farmland, some of the richest agricultural ground in the world, could go out of production.

- *Domestic water supplies would be impacted.

The state's Delta tunnel plan benefits the massive Metropolitan Water District in Southern California, several East Bay cities as well as billionaire and corporate farmers in West Kern County.

Originally it was rolled out as a twin tunnel plan with the idea of protecting Delta water supplies for Southern California in the event that earthquakes collapsed Delta levee. It has since been scaled back to one tunnel.

The justification has morphed into one where the project is now justified to combat anticipated rises in sea level not by protecting the Delta from intrusion with a seawall or such but by diverting water to users in the south state taken from Northern California via a tunnel.

As such it would rob the Delta of water flows that for centuries has helped sustain fish and the Delta's unique ecological system that serves as the biggest estuary along the Pacific Flyway.

As California Seeks To Curb Groundwater Declines, Farmers In One County Fight Back In Court

Los Angeles Times, 07/27/24

With long-term declines in groundwater levels putting thousands of domestic wells at risk and causing the ground to sink in parts of the San Joaquin Valley, state regulators are moving forward with efforts to force local agencies to take stronger steps to begin to rein in chronic over pumping by California's agriculture industry.

But these efforts have recently run into complications as growers in one area, the Tulare Lake subbasin, are suing to challenge state officials' decision to intervene by placing the area on probationary status — a step that's called for under California's groundwater law when local water managers fail to come up with adequate plans to curb declines in water levels.

The State Water Resources Control Board's attempt to intervene was slowed this month when a judge in Kings County issued an order temporarily putting on hold the state's determination and delaying a requirement that farmers begin measuring and reporting how much groundwater they pump.

"We're fighting for everybody in Kings County, and we're fighting for everybody in the state of California," said Dusty Ference, executive director of the Kings County Farm Bureau, which sued the state in May over the board's decision.

Ference said his group aims to overturn the state's decision and reject measures that farmers view as unreasonable, damaging to the local economy and "overreaching" beyond the requirements of the state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, or SGMA.

"We think that it will set precedent," Ference said. "We hope that the state more carefully considers whether or not to place a subbasin on probation and understands that their decisions have real consequences up and down the state."

The extent to which the case might hinder state-led efforts to manage groundwater will depend on upcoming court hearings.

In the meantime, state officials took a step toward intervening in another part of the San Joaquin Valley, announcing Thursday that they are recommending the state water board also place the Kern County subbasin on probation. They said the area's local plans don't adequately address chronic lowering of groundwater levels, sinking land or impacts to water quality, and that a lack of coordination among 20 local agencies has also been problematic.

The state water board plans to decide whether to intervene in Kern County at a Feb. 20 meeting, after considering whether to take similar measures in two other areas of the San Joaquin Valley, the Kaweah and Tule subbasins. They are among six areas where the state has declared local groundwater plans inadequate.

“All of these basins face urgent and irreversible harms occurring due to groundwater overdraft,” said Natalie Stork, assistant director of the board’s Office of Sustainable Groundwater Management.

A state analysis found that about 230 domestic wells could go dry during a drought, based on water level trends in the Kern subbasin, she said. The analysis also found that plans presented by local agencies could allow for water levels to decline so dramatically that more than 400 wells would go dry.

Land subsidence caused by groundwater depletion is also a major concern, with the ground having sunk as much as 2.4 feet in some areas since 2015, Stork said. Where the ground is sinking at such rates, it can damage canals, roads, levees and other infrastructure.

As water levels drop, harmful contaminants such as arsenic and nitrate can also become more concentrated in water pumped from wells, posing health hazards.

After state regulators determined in 2022 that the Kern groundwater plans were inadequate, the 14 so-called groundwater sustainability agencies in the area began splitting and forming new local agencies, Stork said. There are now 20 different groundwater agencies in the area, and they recently submitted seven separate revised plans.

“I think that is a reflection of the management challenges in this subbasin,” Stork said.

She said some local agencies have also recently split in the Tulare Lake and Tule regions over the last few months, “which is concerning since this will make coordination more challenging.”

Stork noted, however, that while having many separate agencies and plans may complicate coordination, it’s allowed under the state’s 2014 groundwater law.

“Coordination is critical to sustainable groundwater management,” she said. “Otherwise, actions or decisions in one area could adversely impact another.”

In another region, the Delta-Mendota subbasin, 23 separate local agencies recently got together and submitted a single plan covering the entire area, which Stork said is expected to improve coordination.

The state groundwater law, which was signed nearly 10 years ago, requires local agencies in many areas to develop groundwater plans and curb over pumping by 2040.

In parts of the Central Valley, state officials have repeatedly disagreed with local water officials about the pace at which pumping reductions should occur and the adequacy of measures to protect drinking water supplies and combat land subsidence.

As the law's limits on pumping gradually take effect in the coming years, the restrictions are expected to require taking some farmland out of production in the Central Valley, requiring major changes in a farming region that produces vast quantities of nuts, fruits and other crops, as well as cattle and dairy products.

When Stork was asked during a conference call with reporters about how the Kings County court case could affect state efforts elsewhere, she said: "It only applies to the Tulare Lake subbasin, so it doesn't impact our work in other basins."

Edward Ortiz, a spokesperson for the state water board, said the agency's officials disagree with the court's temporary order suspending the requirement for well owners to report how much water they are pumping. He said this requirement is an important part of the probationary process and "protects groundwater resources for the benefit of all Californians."

The lawsuit over the decision to place the Tulare Lake region on probation was widely expected after the board's vote following a contentious debate in April. Farmers and representatives of local groundwater agencies had urged the state water board to postpone the intervention and give them more time to improve their plans. But the five-member board found local plans didn't include adequate measures to address declines in water levels or the problem of sinking ground, which has repeatedly damaged levees.

Last year, the long-dry Tulare Lake, which was drained generations ago to serve agriculture, reappeared on thousands of acres of farmland. The lake then receded, and growers have continued relying on groundwater.

The area's large landowners, among them J.G. Boswell Co., pump groundwater to irrigate tomatoes, cotton, pistachios and other crops.

Ference, a citrus farmer, said agriculture generates about \$2 billion in gross revenues each year in Kings County and provides 1 in 4 jobs.

"Agriculture funds this county and this community. And without it, Kings County becomes a ghost town very quickly," Ference said. "What's at risk is our ability to pump groundwater. And without the ability, then we lose our entire foundation."

He said growers agree that changes will need to be made to achieve sustainability and meet the requirements of the groundwater law.

"But we have to make those changes in a way that doesn't decimate not only the agriculture industry but the community," Ference said.

The Kings County Farm Bureau is asking Superior Court Judge Kathy Ciuffini to issue a preliminary injunction that would put state intervention on hold while the case is heard.

Ference said the state water board's approach is "arbitrary and capricious."

"They've arbitrarily moved the compliance date from 2040 to today," he said. "We've not been given the opportunity to implement a plan and even see if it's going to work."

He said the state plan to impose pumping fees of \$300 per well and \$20 per acre-foot of water pumped would be far too costly and would go toward "funding a police force with unmitigated authority."

Instead, those funds would be better used locally to build infrastructure to help recharge the aquifer, he said.

"SGMA is designed for local control, and that's where it needs to stay," Ference said.

The state water board, he said, should "allow the process to work, allow us the time to work through implementing plans."

Others argue the state water board was right to put the area on probation.

"Locals have had years now to get their groundwater management plans correct," said Nataly Escobedo Garcia, water policy coordinator for the group Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability.

The lawsuit is concerning because it could impede efforts to move toward solutions, Escobedo Garcia said.

Researchers have warned that plans prepared by local agencies would allow water levels to decline significantly between now and 2040, potentially putting thousands of wells at risk of going dry.

Scientists have also found that crops' water demands are growing because of rising temperatures driven by climate change, which is contributing to declines in aquifer levels.

"Our aquifers are still critically over drafted. And while 2040 sounds far away, there is a lot of work that has to go into aquifer recovery," Escobedo Garcia said.

She said further delays could put in jeopardy the region's ability to truly move toward sustainability by 2040, as the law requires.



REGIONS

Guardians of the Source: Watershed Resilience for Future Generations

ACWA Regions 3 & 4 Program and Membership Meeting – Agenda and Itinerary

July 31, 2024 | Roseville City Corporation Yard, 2005 Hilltop Circle, Roseville

- 9:30 a.m. Check-in, onsite registration (*space permitting*), and continental breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions
Larry McKenney, Chair, ACWA Region 3
Brian Sanders, Chair, ACWA Region 4
Cathy Green, President, ACWA Board of Directors
Ernie Avila, Vice President, ACWA Board of Directors
- ACWA Update
Dave Eggerton, Executive Director, ACWA
- 10:30 a.m. **Harnessing the Power of our Regional Watershed Through Conjunctive Use & Strategic Management**
*Moderated by **Michael Saunders**, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District*
Dan Corcoran, Director of Operations, El Dorado Irrigation District
Andy Fecko, General Manager, Placer County Water Agency
Trevor Joseph, Manager of Technical Services, Regional Water Authority
Dan York, General Manager, Sacramento Suburban Water District
- 12:00 p.m. Networking Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. **Exploring the City of Roseville's Groundwater Program Legacy & Insights**
Sean Bigley, Assistant Director Environmental Utilities Department, City of Roseville
George Hanson, Water Utility Manager, City of Roseville
- 2:15 p.m. **Depart for Tour of Roseville's Solaire Aquifer Storage and Recovery Well**
- 2:30 p.m. **Tour of Roseville's Solaire Aquifer Storage and Recovery Well**
Mike Simi, Water Distribution Superintendent
John Tadlock, Water Distribution Supervisor
- 3:30 p.m. Concluding Remarks
Michael Saunders, Vice Chair, ACWA Region 3
Cary Keaten, Vice Chair, ACWA Region 4
- 3:45 p.m. Program Concludes

ACWA REGION 3 BOARD 2024-2025

Chair: Larry McKenney, Amador Water Agency • **Vice Chair:** Michael Saunders, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District

Board Members: Jim Abercrombie, El Dorado Irrigation District; Sean Barclay, Tahoe City Public Utility District; Jennifer Hanson, Nevada Irrigation District; Michael Minkler, Calaveras County Water District; Jessica Self, Union Public Utility District

ACWA REGION 4 BOARD 2024-2025

Chair: Brian Sanders, City of Sacramento – Department of Utilities • **Vice Chair:** Cary Keaten, Solano Irrigation District

Board Members: Ronald Davis, Carmichael Water District; Tom Orvis, Oakdale Irrigation District; Kristin Sicke, Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District; Andrew Watkins, Stockton East Water District; David Weisenberger, Banta-Carbona Irrigation District

Event underwritten by ACWA Regions 3 and 4

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