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METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Doreen E. Duff
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

August 24, 1995

To: Board of Directors (Engineering and Operations Committee - Information)
(Special Committee on Water Quality & Environmental
Compliance - Information)

From: General Manager

Subject: Colorado River Watershed Sanitary Survey

RECOMMENDATION:

For information only.

John R. Wodraska
General Manager

Submitted by:

Ray L. Wolfe

td Mark D. Beuhler
Director of Water Quality

Concur:

John R. Wodraska

John R. Wodraska
General Manager

MAM/MDB/mi

Attachments

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DETAILED REPORT:

The California Department of Health Services' (CDHS) Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR) mandates that all public water systems with surface water sources complete a sanitary survey of their watershed(s) every five years with the first survey due by January 1, 1996. The SWTR stems from a federal Safe Drinking Water Act mandate to protect against pathogens.

The Water Quality Division (WQD) is currently in the process of conducting a watershed sanitary survey of the Colorado River (above Parker Dam) and associated facilities (the Colorado River Aqueduct, Lake Mathews, and Lake Skinner), as required by CDHS. The survey is being performed in-house by WQD staff assisted by personnel from Operations, Planning and Resources, and Environmental Compliance Divisions. A Member Agency Advisory Committee (see Attachment No. 1) has been formed to provide input and has already met.

This will satisfy the requirement to conduct a watershed sanitary survey for all member agencies treating Colorado River water. Consequently, the overall effort will be more cost effective than if individual member agencies attempted to each do their own individual sanitary survey of the Colorado River. The State Water Project sanitary survey is being updated (a complete survey was completed in 1990) by a State Water Contractors' committee which includes Metropolitan as an active participant.

The sanitary survey is an assessment of the watershed and any impact on the ability of Metropolitan and its member agencies treating Colorado River water to meet the SWTR. The goal is to identify potential sources of contamination in the watershed and recommend measures to reduce and/or remove contaminants which may degrade source water quality and impact treatment plant performance. The primary focus of the survey will be microbial contaminants. Information collected during the survey relating to salinity issues will be forwarded to the Colorado River Branch of the Planning and Resources Division for follow-up.

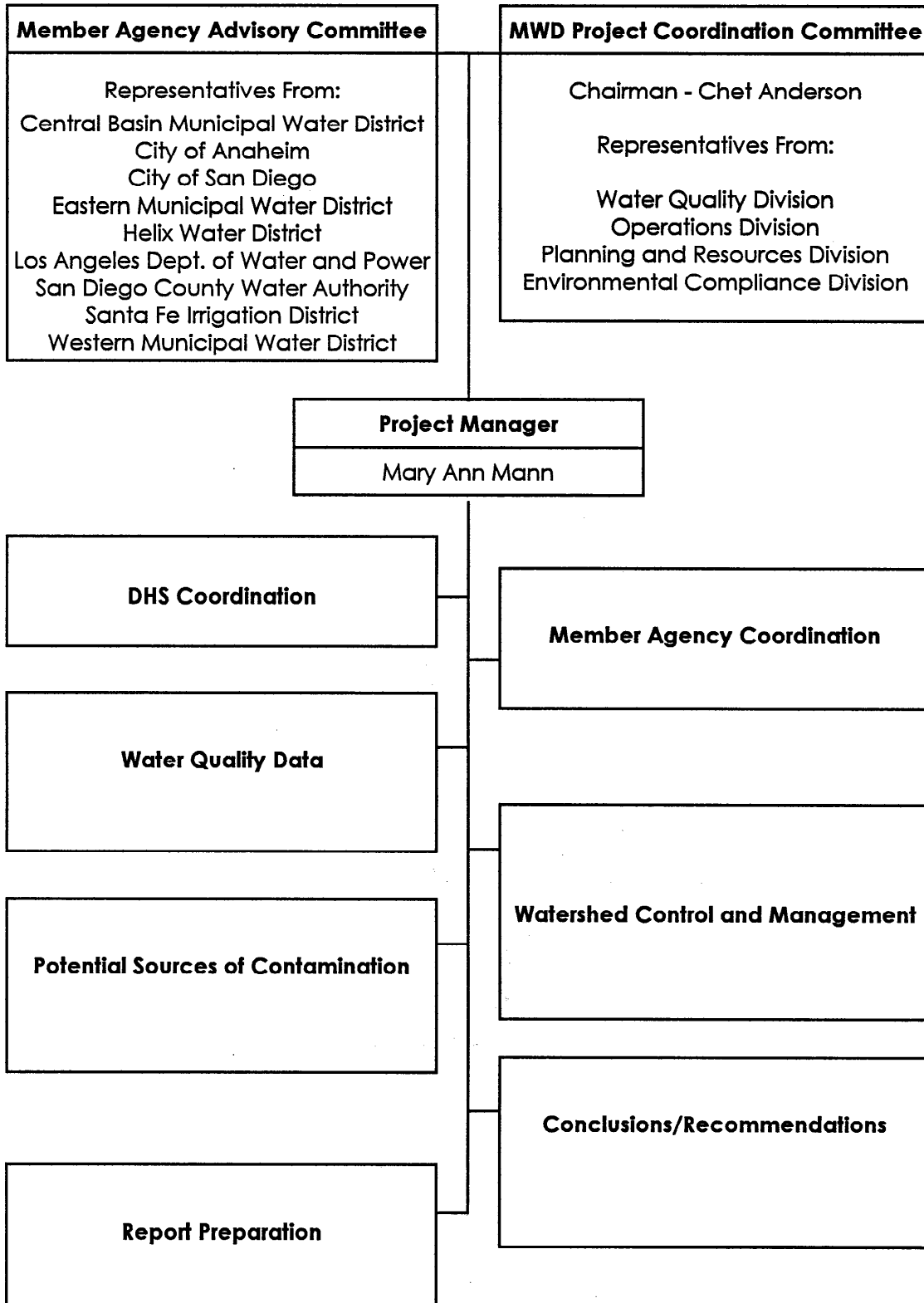
The sanitary survey will provide valuable information regarding the discharge of contaminants and prevention of pollution within the watersheds. It is also an important part of Metropolitan's source water protection program.

Information regarding National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits and other potential sources of contamination will be obtained from various agencies and field inspections. Within the Colorado River watershed, inspections will include on-site review of waste water treatment plants, major recreational areas, industries, as well as agricultural and animal husbandry operations. Field inspections will also be performed within the watersheds of Lake Mathews and Lake Skinner, and along the Colorado River aqueduct. It is planned that the level of detail upstream of Lake Mead would be much more general than in Lake Havasu and in Metropolitan's aqueduct and reservoirs (see Attachment No. 2 for a description of the scope of the sanitary survey).

We will be updating the Board on the findings and recommendations resulting from the survey. The results of the survey will be presented in a report to CDHS.

ATTACHMENT NO. 1

COLORADO RIVER WATERSHED SANITARY SURVEY
PROJECT ORGANIZATION CHART



ATTACHMENT NO. 2**SCOPE OF THE COLORADO RIVER WATERSHED SANITARY SURVEY**

Because of the size of the watershed, the California Department of Health Services has given preliminary approval to Metropolitan's plan for the initial survey to focus on the areas with the greatest potential impact. The activities planned for the different areas of the watershed and Metropolitan's facilities are described below:

- Lake Mathews and Lake Skinner. The sanitary surveys for Lake Mathews and Lake Skinner will include data to be collected through field inspections, contacts with Riverside County authorities, a review of management practices, historical data, and operational records.
- Metropolitan's Colorado River Aqueduct. Based on Metropolitan's routine inspection and patrolling, available documents will be evaluated, including maintenance and water quality records, and field reviews will be conducted of selected areas, including the San Diego and Casa Loma canals, where follow-up is indicated.
- Lake Havasu to Lake Mead. The watershed sanitary survey proposed for Lake Mead, Lake Havasu, and the area between will include: field inspections, contacts with California, Arizona, and Nevada state, federal, and local authorities, and a review of historical data.
- Above Lake Mead. A general overview of recreational activities and potential sources of contamination will be completed and will include a list of critical discharges obtained from the USEPA and other regulatory agencies. No field review is planned during this initial sanitary survey.