

- **Board of Directors**
Executive Committee
Communications and Legislation

February 8, 2000 Board Meeting

10-4

Subject

Metropolitan Initiatives 2000

Description

Water quality and reliability are key components of Metropolitan's mission statement. The board has adopted a series of policy principles on these issues, consistent with the theme of fairness. An example of applying the fairness theme to water quality and reliability issues is reflected in the policy principles on CALFED and Bay-Delta programs. Staff's goal is to expand that approach and coordinate the district's activities for this year in such a way as to reflect and support these two key policy components, within the context of fairness. The attached set of policy initiatives on water quality, water reliability and fairness illustrate how that goal would be achieved ([Attachment 1](#)). We will report the results of these efforts at the end of the year.

Embodied within these policy initiatives is recognition that Metropolitan is not the sole participant, stakeholder, manager, implementer or decision-maker necessary for successful water resource management in Southern California. Once stated, these initiatives help focus Metropolitan's time, energy and direction for policy challenges and solutions this year, consistent with adopted Board policy principles.

While each initiative could stand alone in terms of importance and affect on Metropolitan's direction, when taken together a synergistic effect elevates their value and significance to the whole of Metropolitan's mission. Collectively these initiatives set a goal of promoting fairness for Southern California through the development of choice in the areas of water quality and water reliability. These initiatives will include specific actions that are tied to milestones. The overall objective, upon which the success of these initiatives will be measured, is to foster a positive spirit based on integrity, cooperation and trust within the water management entities in Southern California. As regulatory and other pressures continue to mount, the need for cooperative and united positions and priorities become crucial. By working together, and focusing on water quality and reliability through the lens of fairness, we ensure water supply and treatment choices are maximized for Southern California. Ensuring the full scope of choices in water management programs helps to guard against predictable and unpredictable threats such as regulatory droughts and other similar situations.

Policy

Within the General Manager's authority.

Fiscal Impact

None.



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Ronald R. Foster 1/24/00
General Manager *Date*

Attachment 1 – Metropolitan Initiatives

METROPOLITAN'S INITIATIVES 2000

Water Quality Initiative

In cooperation with the State of California, other agencies and organizations, this initiative serves as an umbrella for a series of issues that directly impact water quality in Southern California in the present, near-term and long-term future. This initiative is also a key component and feature within the Water Reliability Initiative described in the next section. At the center of this initiative is a checklist of water quality needs and associated milestones or time tables that will drive specific programs, activities and actions, including:

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| ➤ | Create momentum to clean up radioactive mine tailings seeping into Colorado River at Moab, Utah | January 2000 |
| ➤ | Accelerated banning of MTBE | January - Mid February 2000 |
| ➤ | Salinity on the Delta and Colorado River | March - June 2000 |
| ➤ | Source Water Quality Communications | August - December 2000 |

These four areas, Moab, MTBE, Salinity and Source Water, will be the focus and feature of MWD external communications tailored to educate legislators, opinion leaders and the public about the direct impacts of poor water quality on water reliability. Several communication outlets already exist, including the regular legislative blue sheet, regional newspaper advertisements, member agency events and communications and collaborative activities with other statewide initiatives.

In addition, other external communications activities will be used as well. These include advancing complimentary legislative efforts to further these water quality needs, such as bills related to reducing salinity in source waters. The identified water quality needs will also be featured as part of other successful activities in the educational and community partnering and sponsorship programs.

Water Reliability Initiative

The Metropolitan Board has taken a position that increasing water resources available to southern California communities is contingent upon providing those resource choices in a cost-effective manner. This is a major theme of the Metropolitan Strategic Planning process, is featured in the Board adopted position of CALFED, and policy principles of the Colorado River. The nexus between high quality water and affordable, adequate water resources is evident in the Bay-Delta. Without adequate high quality water from the State Water Project, the ability for local agencies to purchase, transfer and blend Colorado River supplies is diminished. This directly affects local agencies' options to recycle and conserve these imported supplies, and exacerbates the need to desalt other local groundwater supplies.

The checklist of needs, programmatic priorities and associated milestones for the water reliability initiative include:

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| ➤ | Water supply data assessment and Simulated drought workshop | Mid-Feb 2000 |
| ➤ | Dedication of Diamond Valley Lake | Mid March 2000 |
| ➤ | Water Bond education, application and appropriation | January - December 2000 |
| ➤ | Dry-year water transfer RFP | February – March 2000 |
| ➤ | Drought Update workshop | Late May 2000 |

- CALFED Record of Decision Evaluation, assessment workshop June 2000 Following R.O.D.
- Strategic Plan Components Feb. - Sept. 2000

For each of these water reliability programs water quality issues are included.

Fairness Goal - Protecting and Promoting Choices for Local Communities

The concept of fairness is a prime aspect of both the water quality and water reliability initiatives. It permeates both, links them socially, politically and technically, and drives emotional and economic concerns. Fairness issues also link northern and southern California water resources management agendas. According to a 1996 Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce study, southern California agencies and taxpayers have spent more than \$8 billion in water conservation, recycling and storage since the defeat of the Peripheral Canal initiative in 1982. As a result of these investments, southern California uses less water today than in 1975, despite a population increase of 5 million in the region.

Understandably northern California interests are concerned with decisions affecting the timing and quantity of water supplies from northern sources to southern uses. What may not be so apparent is the role water quality plays in ensuring continued and expanded conservation and recycling practices in the south, which enhance reliability in a wise water use manner. These practices in essence produce 'new water' within the southern region, without impacting northern areas. The challenge to secure adequate high quality water from northern sources to ensure reliability, is equaled only by the need to protect the health and economic welfare of 16 million people in southern California. Understanding and valuing these two challenges statewide is at the heart of the fairness initiative.

As a result, each of the milestones in the water quality and water reliability initiatives will feature a fairness component, such as described below:

Initiative	Program/Need	Fairness Component
Quality	Moab, Utah	Threat of health impacts in Southern California from uranium in Utah.
Quality	Ban MTBE	Without the ban, reduces use of groundwater supplies, may reduce flexibility to plan for natural shortages of water. Links quality reliability initiatives
Quality	Salinity	Study in 1998 found regional economy incurs \$100 million in added costs for each 100 milligrams of salt in the water supplies. Added costs include increases in the average costs for southern California residents due to accelerated pipe corrosion and hot water heaters.
Quality	Source Protection	Greater organic contaminants in Bay Delta water require additional treatment with associated disinfection by-products that affect public health.
Reliability	Drought workshop	Impacts of 'regulatory droughts' and consequences to southern California region.
Reliability	Reservoir Dedication	Completion of significant storage to ensure reliability, paid for by southern California.
Reliability	Water Bond Education	Value of southern California voters.
Reliability	Drought Update workshop	Water quality and water reliability cost factors and impacts tallied
Reliability	Rec. of Decision	Costs of implementing CALFED.
Reliability	Strategic Plan Components	Rates and choices for Member agencies.

These initiatives provide the platform upon which the General Manager's priorities and work plan for year 2000 will be placed. It signals the commitment of Metropolitan to its member agencies, all water users in southern California and throughout the state, to focus on providing high quality, affordable and reliable water while fairly pursuing important resource stewardship and management obligations. Conducted in a collaborative and interactive fashion these initiatives may demonstrate a new way of providing choices in the business of water in the west.