

- **Board of Directors**  
**Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee**

April 9, 2002 Board Meeting

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**10-4**

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**Subject**

Status Report on activities to improve Lake Perris water quality and operations

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**Description**

This letter provides an update regarding activities to improve water quality and increase operational flexibility of Metropolitan's State Water Project (SWP) supplies at Lake Perris. Lake Perris is a SWP facility located at the terminus of the East Branch of the California Aqueduct. Metropolitan's SWP Contract provides Metropolitan the right to draw on 65,000 acre-feet of "Flexible Storage" independent of SWP operations. Flexible Storage enables Metropolitan to receive benefits by using Lake Perris for a number of purposes including drought supplies, seasonal shifting, facility outages, and emergencies.

2001 Accomplishments

Metropolitan's efforts in 2001 accomplished the following:

- Completed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among Metropolitan, Department of Water Resources (DWR), Department of Fish and Game, Department of Parks and Recreation, and Department of Boating and Waterways to create a task force that has as its goal the cooperative development of an agreed-upon approach to integrate and optimize all resource values including water supply, recreation, and fisheries.
- In cooperation with the Department of Parks and Recreation, arranged for the marina vendor to switch to MTBE-free fuel and implemented a public education campaign to promote use of MTBE-free fuel at the lake.

These accomplishments required the collaboration of key stakeholders through the Lake Perris Task Force (Task Force). As a result, in 2001 Metropolitan was able to withdraw 11,000 acre-feet of water without impacting other resource values. This enabled the optimization of reservoir operations to reduce energy requirements in 2001.

2002 Targets

**Competitive Grant Proposal**

Metropolitan is seeking \$5 million in state grant funding to develop and implement actions addressing pathogen and MTBE contamination. If successful, a local cost-sharing commitment of 20 percent may be required for funding capital costs. Receipt of the grant would create a valuable opportunity to obtain increased cooperation from other Task Force members in optimizing the value of Lake Perris.

**MTBE-Free Fuel for Summer 2002**

In 2002, the Task Force will continue to explore the increased use of MTBE-free fuel for boating. An expanded public education program is being developed to build upon last year's campaign for water quality protection.

**Develop Operational Criteria**

Staff is continuing to work with the Task Force to develop a mutually agreed-upon approach to preserve the resource values of interest to the participants.

**Increased Agency Cooperation and Public Awareness**

Metropolitan is continuing to develop and strengthen relationships with key stakeholder agencies to reach a consensus and develop a mutually beneficial approach to solving problems. In addition, an overall outreach program is being developed to increase the effectiveness of Metropolitan’s efforts.

Long-term Targets

Staff is developing information that will identify long-term options that could be pursued to improve access to stored water. For example, aeration of the lake when low dissolved oxygen conditions exist, may increase Metropolitan’s ability to use the lake.

Benefits

Recent planning efforts have identified that Metropolitan will directly benefit from the withdrawal of 65,000 acre-feet from SWP Flexible Storage from Lake Perris as a key water management action during shortage conditions. Improving access to Lake Perris also indirectly helps protect against Delta pumping restrictions related to the Endangered Species Act by supplementing Metropolitan’s ability to participate in the Environmental Water Account (EWA)-Source Shifting program.

**Policy**

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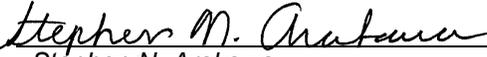
By Minute Item No. 44274, the Board, at its Dec. 12, 2000 meeting, authorized staff to pursue, as a legislative proposal, the funding resolution of water quality concerns at Lake Perris.

By Minute Item No. 44282, the Board, at its Dec. 12, 2000 meeting, was informed of Metropolitan’s initiatives to increase the value of the SWP including the improvement of Lake Perris water quality and access to storage.

**Fiscal Impact**

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Existing constraints to the use of Lake Perris limit its value, yet Metropolitan is responsible for nearly \$5 million in annual payments to the SWP associated with the lake. More reliable use of Lake Perris would provide Metropolitan greater return on its investment and avoid the use of more costly water management actions during shortage conditions. Actions to improve water quality and reliable operations may result in an increased cost to Metropolitan that would be addressed at future decision points.

	3/8/2002
Stephen N. Arakawa Manager, Water Resource Management	Date

	3/18/2002
Ronald R. Gastelum Chief Executive Officer	Date