



● **Board of Directors**  
***Water Planning and Stewardship Committee***

March 10, 2009 Board Meeting

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9-3

**Subject**

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2009 Water Supply Allocation Plan Status

**Description**

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This letter provides an update of conditions and considerations that affect the decision to implement the Water Supply Allocation Plan (WSAP) and allocate limited water supplies to the member agencies.

At this time of year, a significant part of the water year has passed. Better information from the state snow surveys and other system conditions is becoming available, allowing staff to make more accurate estimates of the water supply availability for the year, particularly on the State Water Project. The most important aspect of this month's update is the significant wet conditions in the northern Sierra watersheds in the month of February. Although the water supply will still be impacted from the extremely dry conditions in the month of January, precipitation and snowpack are near normal levels for the year to date and, as a result, have improved the potential for SWP Table A allocations expected for 2009.

The precipitation from February has not significantly changed the 3 in 4 chance of implementing the WSAP in 2009 as reported in the February board report. The wet February conditions have the primary impact of reducing the size of potential allocations. Where the region was previously at risk of having higher levels of allocations of Metropolitan supplies under the WSAP, the reasonable expectation of regional allocations now approach the 10 to 20 percent range if wetter hydrology continues.

**Update of Potential Conditions in 2009**

A description of how the significant water supply and demand factors have changed over the past four reports is provided below:

- Department of Water Resources (DWR) analysis on SWP Allocation
  - November 2008 Report – A greater than 50 percent SWP allocation for calendar year 2009 under median conditions (0.95 MAF Table A available to Metropolitan), with an initial 2009 State Water Project allocation of 15 percent (based on a conservative dry-condition projection for 2009 that will be exceeded 9 times out of 10). This analysis was based on State Water Project supplies under the most restrictive Wanger pumping restrictions to protect Delta smelt.
  - December 2008 Report – No update of DWR's Allocation Study had been released at that time. Impacts from the final Operations Criteria and Plan (OCAP) Biological Opinion on Delta smelt were not yet available.
  - January 2009 Report – An updated SWP allocation study, which now included impacts from the OCAP Biological Opinion that was released on December 19, 2008. This study supported the initial 2009 SWP allocation of 15 percent of Table A, but showed a significant impact to supplies over the range of potential hydrologic conditions.
  - February 2009 Report – An updated SWP allocation study, which included precipitation, snowpack, and runoff conditions through January 20, was released on January 21, 2009. The dry conditions and lack of snowpack led to a faster depletion of storage at Lake Oroville, and to lower projections of runoff for the year. The study no longer supported DWR's initial 2009 SWP allocation of 15 percent of Table A, but the official allocation remained at 15 percent as the weather and hydrologic conditions began to change. Expectations for water supply under wetter

- conditions through the rest of the year were also significantly lower, with a 35 percent Table A allocation at the 50 percent exceedence level.
- March 2009 Update – An updated SWP allocation study was released by DWR on February 23, 2009, but it did not include any actual February precipitation conditions. Based on the information in that study, staff estimates that the February precipitation should reasonably increase the minimum expectations for SWP allocations to 20 to 25 percent of Table A. DWR is expected to update the study following the March 1 Cooperative Snow Surveys.
  - A minimum storage level for Metropolitan’s total storage of 1.40 MAF at the end of calendar year 2009 (this includes Metropolitan’s emergency storage reserves)
    - November 2008 Report – Metropolitan’s total storage was projected to be 1.73 MAF at the end of 2008, allowing for the use of 0.39 MAF within calendar year 2009 to augment imported supplies to meet demands while still maintaining minimum storage levels for 2010.
    - December 2008 Report – Metropolitan’s total storage was projected to be 1.71 MAF, a decrease of 20 TAF due to increased demands in October/November.
    - January 2009 Report – Metropolitan’s total storage for the end of 2008 was revised to 1.75 MAF. The minimum storage level for the end of calendar year 2009 was revised to 1.40 MAF.
    - February 2009 Report – The minimum storage level for the end of calendar year 2009 was unchanged from the previous 1.40 MAF. The minimum storage level for the end of calendar year 2009 was incorrectly reported in the February Report to be 1.49 MAF.
    - March 2009 Update – No change in the estimate of minimum storage level for the end of calendar year 2009 with the correction noted above. For the purposes of estimating water supply allocations, the minimum storage level of 1.40 MAF allows for the use of 0.35 MAF within calendar year 2009.
  - Five-Year Supply Plan
    - November 2008 Report – Implementation of 0.453 MAF in equivalent water supply benefits in 2009, of which 0.215 MAF is due to conservation.
    - December 2008 Report – No change in the implementation goals or approach.
    - January 2009 Report – A net increase to 0.492 MAF, mostly due to identification of additional Colorado River Programs.
    - February 2009 Report – A decrease to 0.426 MAF due to unfavorable developments in the State Water Bank.
    - March 2009 Report – No change in the Five-Year Supply Plan.
  - Colorado River Aqueduct Deliveries in 2009
    - November 2008 Report – A range of 0.9 MAF to 1.0 MAF of net deliveries.
    - December 2008 Report – No change in the estimate of net deliveries.
    - January 2009 Report – No change in the estimate of net deliveries.
    - February 2009 Report – No change in the estimate of net deliveries.
    - March 2009 Report – No change in the estimate of net deliveries.

- Demands on Metropolitan in 2009
  - November 2008 Report – A range of 1.6 MAF to 2.6 MAF (before the conservation efforts included in the Five-Year Supply Reliability Program).
  - December 2008 Report – No change in the estimate of the range of demands for 2009.
  - January 2009 Report – No change in the estimate of the range of demands for 2009.
  - February 2009 Report – An increase of 156 TAF of demand due to estimates of increased firm purchases from groundwater agencies and from the “opt-out” of IAWP demands.
  - March 2009 Update – A decrease of 147 TAF of demand for calendar year 2009 due to wetter conditions in the service area to date and from scheduled system outages.

**Recommendation on Advancing WSAP Implementation**

The chance of allocation in 2009 has remained at a 3 in 4 chance, including the very wet conditions in February in the northern Sierra watershed. March hydrologic conditions will also have to be very wet in order to avert implementation of the WSAP. Staff recommends keeping the April time frame for making a final decision on implementing the WSAP allocation to ensure that the allocation level is appropriate. Estimates at this time show that an allocation, if necessary, will likely be in the range of 10 to 20 percent, with a WSAP Level of 2 to 4. Metropolitan’s message and outreach over the next month will continue to emphasize the need to take actions to prepare. Those actions include ongoing communication to customers regarding the water supply conditions and continuing to implement water conservation ordinances enforceable at the local level to prevent wasteful uses of water and encourage reasonable outdoor landscape irrigation practices.

Metropolitan staff will bring a recommendation on implementing the WSAP to the Water Planning and Stewardship Committee in April 2009. It is still very important to note, however, that the conclusions and analysis presented in this letter do not include potential additional curtailments of SWP supplies from regulatory actions to protect Longfin smelt and Chinook salmon. Although the Biological Opinion for Chinook salmon has been delayed to June 2009, it is not clear at this time how those actions, if any, will impact SWP supplies.

**Policy**

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Water Supply Allocation Plan, adopted February 12, 2008

**Fiscal Impact**

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None

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Debra C. Man Assistant General Manager/Chief Operating Officer	Date
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	3/3/2009
Jeffrey Kightlinger General Manager	Date