AGENDA
COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING
WITH BOARD OF DIRECTORS*
ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, CA (714) 378-3200
**February 8, 2024 12:00 p.m.- Conference Room C-2**

*The OCWD Communications and Legislative Liaison Committee meeting is noticed as a joint meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of strict compliance with the Brown Act and it provides an opportunity for all Directors to hear presentations and participate in discussions. Directors receive no additional compensation or stipend as a result of simultaneously convening this meeting. Items recommended for approval at this meeting will be placed on the **February 21, 2024** Board meeting Agenda for approval.

This meeting will be held in person. As a convenience for the public, the meeting may also be accessed by Zoom Webinar and will be available by either computer or telephone audio as indicated below. Because this is an in-person meeting and the Zoom component is not required, but rather is being offered as a convenience, if there are any technical issues during the meeting, this meeting will continue and will not be suspended.

**Computer Audio: You can join the Zoom meeting by clicking on the following link:**
https://ocwd.zoom.us/j/99465334409

**Telephone Audio: (213) 338 8477**

**Webinar ID: 994 6533 4409**

Teleconference Sites:
10382 Bonnie Drive, Garden Grove
19 Cannery, Buena Park
20 Civic Center Plaza, Room 813, Santa Ana
1454 Madison Street, Tustin
8856 Citrus Avenue, Westminster
* Members of the public may attend and participate at all locations.

## ROLL CALL

## ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE AGENDIZED

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt resolution determining need to take immediate action on item(s) and that the need for action came to the attention of the District subsequent to the posting of the Agenda (requires two-thirds vote of the Board members present, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present.)

## VISITOR PARTICIPATION

Time has been reserved at this point in the agenda for persons wishing to comment for up to three minutes to the Board of Directors on any item that is not listed on the agenda, but within the subject matter jurisdiction of the District. By law, the Board of Directors is prohibited from taking action on such public comments. As appropriate, matters raised in these public comments will be referred to District staff or placed on the agenda of an upcoming Board meeting.

At this time, members of the public may also offer public comment for up to three minutes on any item on the Consent Calendar. While members of the public may not remove an item from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion, a Director may do so at the request of a member of the public.

## CONSENT CALENDAR (ITEM NO. 1)

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved by one motion, without separate discussion on these items, unless a Board member or District staff request that specific items be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate consideration.

1. MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JANUARY 4, 2024

   RECOMMENDATION: Approve minutes as presented

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

2. STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

   RECOMMENDATION: Agendize for February 21 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate

3. FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

   RECOMMENDATION: Agendize for February 21 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

4. CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL UPDATE

5. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OUTREACH REPORT (JANUARY)

**CHAIR DIRECTION AS TO WHICH ITEMS IF ANY TO BE AGENDIZED AS A MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE FEBRUARY 21 BOARD MEETING**

**DIRECTOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS**

**GENERAL MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENT/REPORT**

**ADJOURNMENT**

## COMMUNICATION AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Denis Bilodeau - Chair
Van Tran - Vice Chair
Roger Yoh
Bruce Whitaker
Steve Sheldon

Valerie Amezcua
Natalie Meeks
Dina Nguyen
Erik Weigand
Cathy Green

Agenda Posting: In accordance with the requirements of California Government Code Section 54954.2, this agenda is posted in the window of the guard shack at the main entrance of the Orange County Water District, 18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, CA and on the OCWD website: www.ocwd.com not less than 72 hours prior to the meeting date and time above. All written materials relating to each agenda item are available for public inspection in the office of the Assistant District Secretary. Backup material for the Agenda is available at the District offices for public review and can be viewed online at the District's website: www.ocwd.com.

Accommodations to the Disabled: Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with a disability who require a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, may request such modification or accommodation from the District Secretary at (714) 378-3234, by email at cfuller@ocwd.com by fax at (714) 378-3373. Notification 24 hours prior to the meeting will enable District staff to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to the meeting.

Availability of Agenda Material: As a general rule, agenda reports or other written documentation that has been prepared or organized with respect to each item of business listed on the agenda can be reviewed at www.ocwd.com. Copies of these materials and other disclosable public records distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Board of Directors in connection with an Open Session agenda item are also on file with and available for inspection at the Office of the District Secretary, 18700 Ward Street, Fountain Valley, California, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. If such writings are distributed to members of the Board of Directors on the day of a Board meeting, the writings will be available at the entrance to the Board of Directors meeting room at the Orange County Water District office.

MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WITH COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LIAISON COMMITTEE
ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
January 4, 2024, 12:00 p.m.

Director Tran called the Communications and Legislative Liaison Committee meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. in the District Conference Room C-2. Public access was also provided via Zoom webinar. The Secretary called the roll and reported a quorum as follows:

Committee Members
Denis Bilodeau
Van Tran
Roger Yoh (arrived 12:04 pm)
Bruce Whitaker
Steve Sheldon

OCWD Staff
Mike Markus – General Manager
Gina Ayala – Director of Public Affairs
Crystal Nettles – Principal Communications Specialist
Alicia Harasty – Legislative Affairs Liaison
Dani Berch – Communications Specialist
Leticia Villarreal – Assistant District Secretary

Alternates
Valerie Amezcua
Natalie Meeks (absent)
Dina Nguyen (absent)
Vacant
Cathy Green

CONSENT CALENDAR
The Consent Calendar was approved upon motion by Director Green, seconded by Director Whitaker and carried [5-0] as follows*:*
***Ayes –Bilodeau, Tran, Whitaker, Amezcua, Green***

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

**The minutes of the December 7, 2023 Communications/Legislative Liaison Committee meetings are approved as presented.**

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

2. State Legislative Update

OCWD Consultants, Jason Gonsalves and Don Gilbert, provided recommendations to prepare for the 2024 Legislative session to gain PFAS funding and other OCWD goals.

3. Federal Legislative Update

Federal Consultant Eric Sapirstein reported on progress towards an exemption for water entities from PFAS liability and funding for PFAS cleanup. He also provided information on a federal bill dealing with water supply. Legislative Affairs Liaison Alicia Harasty shared that OCWD does not typically take positions on bills that have not been dropped but advised this potential bill aligns completely with OCWD's legislative policies to gain water supply at Prado Dam. Staff recommended that OCWD write a support letter in concept to Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano and copy the rest of OCWD's delegation.

**Upon motion by Director Tran, seconded by Director Whitaker and carried [5-0], the Committee Recommended for approval at the January 17 Board meeting: Write a letter of support of concept.**

**Ayes: Bilodeau, Tran, Yoh, Whitaker, Sheldon**

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

4. Children's Water Education Festival Update

Communications Specialist Dani Berch provided an update on the 2024 Children's Water Education Festival. She reported there are 5,754 students currently registered representing 213 classes and 23 cities. She noted there will be 25 presenters and shared that staff would continue to solicit sponsors, presenters and volunteers and will continue to provide updates to the committee monthly.

5. Public Affairs Outreach Report (December)

Director of Public Affairs Gina Ayala provided an overview of outreach for December 2023 and highlighted 2023 accomplishments:

**December**

- In December there were 166 tour guests and 4 speakers bureau engagements

**2023 in Review**

- The District hosted 117 tours of the GWRS (99 in person & 17 virtual), Lab hosted 1 tour with 18 guests, Prado hosted 6 tours with 188 guests, FHQ hosted 5 tours with 74 guests.
- Groundwater Adventure Tour had 74 guests
- OCWD had 82 speaker's bureau engagements
- 4 webinars, 784 live attendees and 1,881 YouTube views (& counting)
- School education programs: Next Generation Water Leaders had 491 students among 15 programs. This program for middle and high school students is in collaboration with Inside the Outdoors. Children's Water Education Festival returned in-person with 4,000 students in attendance. Prado Wetland Field Trip virtual program had 851 students among 33 programs.
- OCWD received 19 awards in 2023
- The OCWD History book was updated

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

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Roger Yoh, Director

2

# AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date**: February 8, 2024

**To**: Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.
Board of Directors

**From**: John C. Kennedy

**Staff Contact**: G. Ayala/A. Harasty

**Budgeted**: N/A
**Budgeted Amount**: N/A
**Cost Estimate**: N/A
**Funding Source**: N/A
**Program/Line-Item No**.: N/A
**General Counsel Approval**: N/A
**Engineers/Feasibility Report**: N/A
**CEQA Compliance**: N/A

**Subject: STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

## SUMMARY

Orange County Water District (OCWD) consultants will provide recommendations as first steps to prepare for the 2024 Legislative session to gain PFAS funding and other OCWD goals.

Attachment:

- Joe A. Gonsalves and Son – Edelstein Gilbert Robson & Smith February 2024 State Legislative Update

## RECOMMENDATION

Agendize for February 21 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

### Funding for PFAS Clean-up

On January 25, 2024, OCWD President Green, senior staff and lobbyists had a productive meeting with the Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and key senior SWRCB staff regarding funding to assist OCWD in per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) clean-up. The state's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Emerging Contaminants (EC) Principal Forgiveness program was discussed, in relation to addressing PFAS in local water supplies. The current SWRCB practice of limiting each water system to a single application poses a challenge. For context, the City of Anaheim requires approximately $140 million for treatment of its 19 impacted wells, while the City of Santa Ana faces around $75 million in treatment costs for its 12 wells.

Given the scale of Orange County's PFAS contamination issue, OCWD is advocating that the SWRCB allow water systems with four or more PFAS-impacted wells to submit a second Drinking Water SRF EC Principal Forgiveness application. This adjustment would help to alleviate the financial burden on ratepayers. Such a policy change would not only benefit OCWD but would also set a precedent for supporting other communities facing similar challenges. Please see attached "Joe A. Gonsalves and Son – Edelstein Gilbert Robson & Smith February 2024 State Legislative Update."

## ACTIVITIES

January 31 Senator Janet Nguyen's staff, Joe Pena, was briefed by Alicia Harasty

January 29 Senator Kelly Seyarto's staff, Madison Marks-Noble, was briefed by Alicia Harasty

January 26 Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris met with President Cathy Green, John Kennedy and Alicia Harasty regarding OCWD and its state priorities

January 25 OCWD President Green, senior staff and lobbyists had a productive meeting with the Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board

January 24 Assembly Member Tri Ta's staff, Colin Edwards, Assembly Member Dixon's staff, Kristin Vallandi, Senator Umberg's staff, Fidel Vasquez, was briefed by Alicia Harasty

January 23 Assembly Member Petrie-Norris's staff, Michael Tou, was briefed by Alicia Harasty

January 16 The following Sacramento staff to the Orange County delegation were briefed by Alicia Harasty: Jessica Matlock, Office of Senator Newman; Hannah Skaggs, Office of Assembly Member Dixon; Christopher Aguilera, Office of Assembly Member Quirk-Silva; Katherine Moore, Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water/Senator Min key contact; Victoria Harris, Office of Assembly Member Petrie-Norris; Christian Lopez, Office of Senator Seyarto; Ted Blanchard, Office of Senator Nguyen; Katie Guthrie, Office of Assembly Member Valencia

## UPCOMING ACTVITIES

February 15 Orange County Supervisor Chaffee Briefing

March 7 Assembly Member Dixon Briefing

March 8 Assembly Member Valencia Briefing

EDELSTEIN GILBERT ROBSON & SMITH LLC

Joe A. Gonsalves & Son
Anthony D. Gonsalves
Jason A. Gonsalves
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TO: ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

FROM: JOE A. GONSALVES AND SON
EDELSTEIN GILBERT ROBSON & SMITH LLC

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: January 30, 2024

The Legislature returned to Sacramento on January 3.

2024 is the second year of the Legislature's two-year session. Any bills introduced in 2023 that did not pass out of the house they were introduced in last year must move out of their "house of origin" by the end of January to stay alive in 2024. Meeting this deadline has consumed much of the Legislature's attention for the last month.

More importantly, the Governor unveiled his 2024-2025 Proposed Budget on January 10. As anticipated, the state is facing enormous fiscal challenges. There are a few important observations about the Governor's Budget. First, the Governor and the highly respected non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) have different takes on the size of the state's deficit. In December, the LAO warned of a $68 billion budget deficit. This is a very large deficit. By contrast, the Governor believes that the state is only facing a $37.9 billion deficit. While much of the discrepancy relates to the Governor's assumption that the Legislature will change existing law to reduce the state's obligations to schools and transportation infrastructure, a significant gap remains between the LAO's projected deficit and the Governor's.

Drawing on reserves is a significant part of the Governor's plan to resolve the deficit. He will draw on $13.1 billion of reserves, leaving only $18.4 billion for future years. The Governor is also proposing $8.5 billion of cuts, $2.9 billion of which can be categorized as "climate" reductions which include cuts to grant and loan programs that would otherwise be available for water infrastructure. In addition to the state's General Fund, there are a number of special funds. The Governor is closing the remaining gap by borrowing from some of these funds and deferring mandatory payments to future budget years. Doing so creates additional budget liabilities in future years.

In short, the state's long term fiscal health rides in part on whether the Governor or the LAO are correct about the size of our budget deficit. Building reserves and paying back revenue borrowed from special funds were major priorities of Governor Brown in his final two terms. If Governor Newsom miscalculates the size of the deficit while drawing

down reserves, borrowing from special funds, and deferring payments, the state will continue to face a deficit and have fewer resources to draw from in order to close it.

**Funding for PFAS Clean-up**

President Green, senior staff and lobbyists had a productive meeting with the Chair of the State Water Board and key senior State Water Board staff regarding funding to assist OCWD in PFAS clean-up.

**BUDGET IMPACT ON WATER**

As previously mentioned, the Governor's proposed budget relays on a mix of reserves, cuts, and delays to many programs. Turning to cuts specifically focused on water, the three areas highlighted last year as receiving substantial cuts received even more substantial cuts this year:

Watershed Resilience Programs:

- $88.4 million reversion this year and $350 million reduction over the next two years
- $56 million budget

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS) Clean Up:

- $71.6 million reversion and $30 million reduction
- $53 million budget

Water Recycling:

- $174.4 million reversion and $100 million shift
- $348 million budget

Other notable reductions to water projects include a $50 million reversion in dam safety and a $175 million delay for the Department of Toxic Substances Control's Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative Program.

However, as last year, the budget also includes some good news for water programs, as they were among as limited number to receive new funding, including:

Flood Protection – $93.9 million

- $33 million to continue working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- $31.3 million for Central Valley projects
- $29.6 million to address storm damage from 2023, including in the Delta

Salton Sea Management Program – $65.2 million

Protection for former Waters of the United States – $6.1 million Waste Discharge Permit Fund and $7 million ongoing

**AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL**

**Meeting Date**: February 8, 2024

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte
Board of Directors

**From:** John C. Kennedy

**Staff Contact:** G. Ayala/A. Harasty

**Budgeted:** N/A
**Budgeted Amount:** N/A
**Cost Estimate:** N/A
**Funding Source:** N/A
**Program/Line-Item No.:** N/A
**General Counsel Approval:** N/A
**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A
**CEQA Compliance**: N/A

**Subject: FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

## SUMMARY

The Orange County Water District (OCWD) federal advocate and staff will provide an update on progress towards an exemption for water entities from PFAS liability and funding for PFAS cleanup.

Attachment:

- ENS Resources February Update

## RECOMMENDATION

Agendize for February 21 Board meeting: Take action as appropriate.

## ACTIVITIES

January 25 Staff of U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler, Chesna Foord, toured the GWRS and was briefed by Alicia Harasty

TO: Alicia Dunkin

FROM: Eric Sapirstein

DATE: January 31, 2024

SUBJECT: Washington Update

Congress returned to work, kicking off the second and final session of the 118th Congress. Most of Congress' attention focused on legislative hearings on the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, cybersecurity, and the water sector, and, of course, finalizing fiscal year 2024 spending bills to avoid a shut-down or a year-long Continuing Resolution come March.

- ***Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Back On Track***
  When Congress and the White House agreed to fund governmental programs through March 1 and 8, the agreement represented the first step in a process to finalize FY 2024 spending before the Fiscal Responsibility Act's (FRA), mandates are triggered in April. These mandates would require a full-year Continuing Resolution, along with an across-the-board spending cut of one percent. However, the reduction would be more significant, approaching ten percent, because federal agencies have obligated higher spending under the existing Continuing Resolution, compared to the prescribed FY 24 levels dictated under FRA. This means increased cuts to account for the higher spending to meet the lower spending levels mandate. If FRA is triggered, it would require the Office of Management and Budget to decide which programs to cut and the decisions would be transmitted to Congress as a "Sequester" that Congress could override. But an override would be unlikely.

  The House and Senate Committees on Appropriations reached agreement on FY 24 spending allocations (302b). These 302 b's establish spending levels for each subcommittee. In turn, the subcommittees will decide how much each agency and its programs would receive. The agreement is important because final congressional spending negotiations can now proceed relying on a common spending baseline. In a promising sign that negotiations may avoid becoming bogged down over spending levels, congressional appropriators have signaled that while some spending reductions are likely, most programs should remain funded at FY 2023 spending levels.

ENS Resources, Inc.
1990 K Street, N.W./Suite 605
Washington, D.C. 20006 / Telephone (202) 466-3755
Telefax: (202) 466-3787
www.ensresources.com

Given the limited time between today and March 1, when the first stopgap spending deadline is triggered, it appears probable that another stopgap measure will be necessary to allow Congress time to finalize an agreement. Speculation centers on a limited extension, perhaps until the end of March.

**Fiscal Year 2024 Negotiations is Important to OCWD to Secure Community Project Assistance for PFAS Clean-up**
The agreement on spending levels for the twelve spending bills breathes new life into a final overall spending agreement for FY 2024 that began on October 1. Assuming that the House and Senate agree on a spending bill, it would mean that adoption of Community Projects assistance, including OCWD's request for PFAS clean-up assistance, could be included.

- ***Senate PFAS Legislation Remains Stalled***
  The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works staff continue to work to develop PFAS treatment and clean-up legislation. At this writing, committee staff remain committed to develop legislation. However, as has been the constant in the debate, designing liability protection for passive receivers, including water agencies, remains an obstacle to reaching an overall agreement that can garner bipartisan support. Continued strong and unyielding opposition to any compromise on liability protections from the environmental community has blocked efforts to develop consensus language that would protect water agencies from potential liability under the law.

  **What the Current Senate Committee Schedule Holds for OCWD Priority**
  OCWD's priority to ensure it is not exposed to unwarranted liability or frivolous litigation remains a priority for many committee members. This includes all Republican members. It now seems increasingly likely that resolution of potential liability protection language will be delayed until the Lame Duck Session later this fall. At the same time, should USEPA issue a final rule to designate PFAS chemicals as hazardous substances, it would likely trigger immediate litigation that the agency overstepped its Superfund authority and failed to consider public input in designing the rule. It would also be expected that a full throated call from all passive receivers for Congress to use its Congressional Review Act authority to veto the rulemaking would occur. For OCWD, the situation means that the ongoing advocacy to protect water agencies will need to be maintained for the coming months leading into the fall.

- ***Low Income Household Water Assistance Program***
  Efforts to address low-income ratepayers' water and wastewater service needs are expected to be addressed in the coming weeks when Senator Alex Padilla is expected to introduce his Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Establishment Act (LIHWAP). The bill would authorize a permanent ratepayer assistance program. This would be similar to the current low income heating and energy assistance program. Each state would receive a block grant of assistance. If enacted, the bill would be established within the Department of Health and Human Services. Once USEPA implements a pilot program authorized under prior legislation, the program would be transferred to the

agency for long-term management. The bill does not include an authorization for the program.

**Value to OCWD Indirect**
The soon to be introduced legislation would not directly impact OCWD. However, it would support the needs of OCWD's producers.

- ***Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (WRDA)***
  Both the House and Senate committees with jurisdiction over WRDA continue internal committee discussions over the parameters of any WRDA bill that could be approved by their respective chambers. At this writing, it is likely that both committees will consider legislation not earlier than mid to late Spring. This would allow for Senate and House floor debate in the summer. A final compromise bill for passage and subsequent enactment would then be likely in the fall.

  **Importance of WRDA to OCWD**
  WRDA 2024 will be a tightly focused USACE policy and projects bill. As such, the key policy matters for OCWD will likely be language to strengthen congressional support of FIRO and to make water supply and water conservation core missions (H.R. 7065/Napolitano), alongside flood protection and navigation.

- ***U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regulatory Agenda and PFAS***
  USEPA continues to move forward on its PFAS rulemakings. As reported last month, the agency intends to issue rules impacting water treatment and PFAS designation of PFAS under Superfund. The key changes are delays in the issuance of rules. EPA is expected to now issue final rules:

  - PFAS drinking water MCL of 4 PPT in February;
  - Designate PFAS as a hazardous substance under CERCLA in March 2024 (rule currently at Office of Management and Budget for final approval);

  **Importance of USEPA Schedule**
  As noted in the above review of PFAS legislative developments, if USEPA issues a final rule on the designation of PFAS chemicals under Superfund, it could serve as a catalyst for stakeholders to seek congressional action to review and revoke the rule under the Congressional Review Act. Regardless, we expect that litigation would be initiated challenging the rulemaking.

# AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL

**Meeting Date**: February 8, 2024

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte.
Board of Directors

**From:** John Kennedy

**Staff Contacts:** G. Ayala/D. Berch

**Budgeted:** Yes
**Budgeted Amount:** $265,000
**Cost Estimate:** $265,000
**Funding Source:** 1012.51112
**Program/Line Item No.:** 1206
**General Counsel Approval:** N/A
**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A
**CEQA Compliance**: N/A

**Subject: CHILDREN'S WATER EDUCATION FESTIVAL UPDATE**

## SUMMARY

The 27th annual Children's Water Education Festival (Festival) will take place on March 27-28, 2024, at UC Irvine. Staff will provide a verbal update of the event.

## RECOMMENDATION

Informational

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The Children's Water Education Festival is an annual, successful program started in 1997 to educate Orange County's youngest stakeholders about the importance of water. Since inception, nearly 150,000 students have experienced the Festival and all it has to offer. The 2024 Festival will take place March 27-28, 2024, at UC Irvine. The free event is open to third, fourth and fifth grade students in Orange County, Calif.

As of January 31, nearly 6,000 students, 40 presenters and over 40 volunteers are registered to attend. Staff will provide a verbal update on event planning.

**PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION(S)** N/A

**AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTAL**

**Meeting Date**: February 8, 2024

**To:** Communications/Leg. Liaison Cte
Board of Directors

**From:** John Kennedy

**Staff Contact:** G. Ayala/C. Nettles

**Budgeted:** N/A
**Budgeted Amount:** N/A
**Cost Estimate:** N/A
**Funding Source:** N/A
**Program/Line Item No.:** N/A
**General Counsel Approval:** N/A
**Engineers/Feasibility Report:** N/A
**CEQA Compliance**: N/A

**Subject**: **PUBLIC AFFAIRS OUTREACH REPORT (January 2024)**

## SUMMARY

Outreach for the Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) and its programs and projects continue in an in-person and virtual format.

Attachment(s):
- January 2024 Media Clips Report

## RECOMMENDATION

Informational

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

### Tours

Three hundred thirty-two people attended tours in January.

January tours:

- January 5 – Public Tour (virtual)
- January 8 – Seoul University
- January 11 – American Association of University Women
- January 15 – Blue-White
- January 16 – Santa Fe Water Systems
- January 16 – Dana Hills High School
- January 17 – Brown & Caldwell, Idaho
- January 17 – NWRI
- January 18 – Pure Water San Diego Operations
- January 19 – Public Tour (in-person)
- January 19 – UCI Engineers for a Sustainable Year
- January 23 – Tetra Tech
- January 23 – Dana Hills High School

- January 25 – Hana Resources
- January 30 – Dana Hills High School
- January 31 – Godinez High School

Upcoming tours:

- February 2 – Virtual Public Tour
- February 2 – Coastkeepers in association with Godinez High School
- February 8 - Enhanced Cultural Learning Center
- February 10 – Saddleback College Natural History (Prado Wetlands)
- February 16 – Girl Scouts
- February 20 – OC Health Agency
- February 22 – ACWA JPIA
- February 22 – METAWATER, Japan (PFAS Treatment Facility)

A 30-minute on-demand technical virtual tour is available on the District's social media channels. The tour, in all forms, has been viewed more than 8,700 times. A 10-minute on-demand general virtual tour has been viewed more than 4,300 times. A virtual tour of OCWD's surface recharge operations has garnered nearly 300 views.

**Speakers Bureau/Media**

As part of OCWD's standard to forge and maintain long-term, positive, and proactive relationships with members of the community and be transparent about its operations and programs, OCWD board members and staff participate, regularly, at conferences and events and speak before civic groups.

January Speakers Bureau:

- January 8 – Director of Recharge and Wetland Operations Ben Smith provided a presentation on stormwater capture to the South Coast Geological Society
- January 22 – Executive Director of Planning and Natural Resources Lisa Haney was a panelist on OC Forum's panel, "Critical Conversations: AI"
- January 31 – General Manager John Kennedy spoke during the MWDOC Policy Dinner, where we was joined by several new water general managers in providing insights, perspectives and strategies

Upcoming Speakers Bureau:

- WACO
- World Wetlands Day Symposium
- WEF/AWWA Utility Management Conference
- Water Issues Study Group
- GRA of SoCal Branch
- Multi-State Salinity Coalition Conference

- GRACast
- Watermark Associates

## Media Clips

In January, there were 39 global news hits for OCWD, the GWRS and other District programs and projects with a total reach of 157 million. The media clip report for January is attached.

## Social Media

The District engages 17,609 followers on its social media channels. Below are statistics for OCWD's social media for January (as of January 30).

OCWD's X (formally Twitter) page

- Followers: 5,506
- Posts: 14
- Impressions: 3,700

OCWD's Facebook

- Followers: 1,964
- Posts: 11
- Engagement: 392
- Reach: 906

OCWD's LinkedIn

- Followers: 7,604
- Posts: 10
- Engagement: 721
- Impressions: 10,561

OCWD's Instagram

- Followers: 1,793
- Posts/Reels: 8
- Stories 19
- Engagement: 110
- Reach: 1,039

OCWD's TikTok

- Followers: 21
- Views: 336

OCWD's Threads

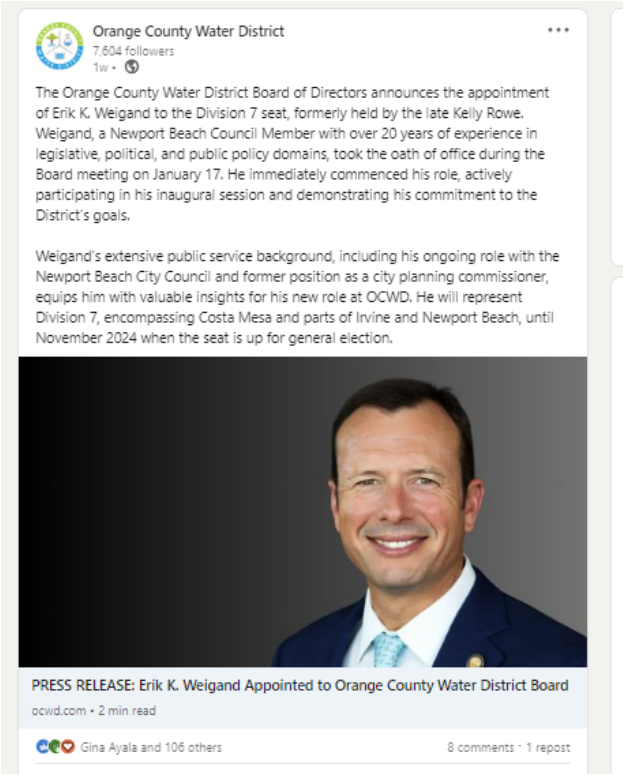
- Followers: 201

OCWD's YouTube

- Subscribers: 520
- Views: 1,326
- Hours watched: 105

A sampling of top performing social media posts:




## Website Analytics

Below are January analytics for OCWD's website (as of January 30).

- Users: 6,553
- Page views: 23,541
- Top five pages:
  - Home: 3,762
  - GWRS: 1,069
  - Careers: 824
  - Meeting agenda minutes: 788
  - About: 682

## Electronic Publications and Videos

Staff wrote and distributed the January issue of Hydrospectives, OCWD's monthly e-newsletter.

Staff wrote and distributed the PFAS quarterly newsletter.

Staff wrote and distributed one press release:

- Erik K. Weigand Appointed to Orange County Water District Board

## Construction Notifications

A construction alert was created and distributed to Tustin residents regarding Tustin PFAS Treatment Facility construction.

| | Date | Media Outlet | Title | Country | Link | Total Readership |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1/31/2024 | OCDE Newsroom | Children's Water Education Festival to promote lessons of environmental conservancy | United States | https://newsroom.ocde.us/childrens-water-education-festival-to-promote-lessons-of-environmental-conservancy/ | 11,043 |
| 2 | 1/28/2024 | Orange Juice Blog | RIP Kelly Rowe: a Water Board Director who Stood Out from the Herd. | United States | https://www.orangejuiceblog.com/2024/01/rip-kelly-rowe-a-water-board-director-who-stood-out-from-the-herd/ | 9,263 |
| 3 | 1/27/2024 | SurabayaPostKota.net | Life on the farm: HB School holds an environmental exhibition | United States | https://www.surabayapostkota.net/2024/01/27/kehidupan-di-pertanian-sekolah-hb-mengadakan-pameran-lingkungan-hidup | 721 |
| 4 | 1/26/2024 | ACWA | New Report Confirms Benefits of FIRO Strategy at Prado Dam | United States | https://www.acwa.com/news/new-report-confirms-benefits-of-firo-strategy-in-enhancing-water-management-at-prado-dam/ | 2,600 |
| 5 | 1/26/2024 | Environmental News Bits | From flush to faucet: More places look to turn sewage into tap water | United States | https://envnewsbits.info/2024/01/26/from-flush-to-faucet-more-places-look-to-turn-sewage-into-tap-water/ | 1,129 |
| 6 | 1/26/2024 | Los Angeles Times | Life on the farm: H.B. school hosts environmental showcase - Los Angeles Times | United States | https://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/news/story/2024-01-26/life-on-the-farm-h-b-school-hosts-environmental-showcase | 25,685,600 |
| 7 | 1/23/2024 | ACWA | Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Receives Grant for Regional Climate Resilience Program | United States | https://www.acwa.com/news/santa-ana-watershed-project-authority-receives-grant-for-regional-climate-resilience-program/ | 2,600 |
| 8 | 1/22/2024 | ACWA | Moulton Niguel Signs Historic Global Knowledge-Sharing Partnership with Denmark | United States | https://www.acwa.com/news/moulton-niguel-water-district-signs-historic-global-knowledge-sharing-partnership-with-denmark/ | 2,600 |
| 9 | 1/21/2024 | Los Angeles Times | Southland cloud-seeding program hopes to make it rain | United States | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/52900234484 | 25,685,600 |
| 10 | 1/20/2024 | ACWA | John Kennedy Named General Manager of Orange County Water District | United States | https://www.acwa.com/news/john-kennedy-named-general-manager-of-orange-county-water-district/ | 2,600 |
| 11 | 1/19/2024 | ACWA | Erik K. Weigand Appointed to Orange County Water District Board | United States | https://www.acwa.com/news/erik-k-weigand-appointed-to-orange-county-water-district-board/ | 2,600 |
| 12 | 1/19/2024 | nomadtreneur.com | The 15 Best Water Parks in Southern California - NomadTreneur | United States | https://nomadtreneur.com/the-15-best-water-parks-in-southern-california | 1,491 |
| 13 | 1/16/2024 | Blue-White Industries | Blue-White® Leadership Tours Orange County Water District for Insightful Day | United States | https://www.blue-white.com/company-news/blue-white-leadership-tours-orange-county-water-district-for-insightful-day/ | 7,534 |
| 14 | 1/16/2024 | www.watereducation.org | Tuesday Top of the Scroll: New 4-year cloud-seeding pilot program hopes to make it rain in Santa Ana River watershed | United States | https://www.watereducation.org/aquafornia-news/tuesday-top-scroll-new-4-year-cloud-seeding-pilot-program-hopes-make-it-rain-santa | 41,994 |
| 15 | 1/16/2024 | Cerritos Community News. | Cancer causing PFAS cleanup continues for the Navy around MCAS Tustin | United States | http://www.loscerritosnews.net/2024/01/15/cancer-causing-pfas-cleanup-continues-for-the-navy-around-mcas-tustin/ | 12,907 |
| 16 | 1/14/2024 | Newstral | LA Times: «New 4-year cloud-seeding pilot program hopes to make it rain in Santa Ana River watershed» | France | https://newstral.com/en/article/en/1248326582/new-4-year-cloud-seeding-pilot-program-hopes-to-make-it-rain-in-santa-ana-river-watershed | 110,232 |

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| 17 | 1/13/2024 | Los Angeles Times | Officials turn to cloud seeding to make it rain in Santa Ana - Los Angeles Times | United States | https://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/news/story/2024-01-13/new-4-year-cloud-seeding-pilot-program-hopes-to-make-it-rain-in-santa-ana-river-watershed | 25,685,600 |
| 18 | 1/10/2024 | GreenCitizen | California Regulators Approve Rules for Converting Sewage Waste to Drinking Water - GreenCitizen | United States | https://greencitizen.com/news/california-regulators-approve-rules-for-converting-sewage-waste-to-drinking-water/ | 68,008 |
| 19 | 1/10/2024 | Lloyd's Environmental Reporter | SANMINA CORP: Liable for Probe Costs in Orange County Groundwater | United States | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/52805420234 | |
| 20 | 1/9/2024 | abes-dn.org.br | Comentário sobre Com apoio da ABES, Concasan 2018 recebe palestrantes de seis países em Florianópolis por Almanya Medyum Haluk | Brazil | https://abes-dn.org.br/com-apoio-da-abes-concasan-2018-recebe-palestrantes-de-seis-paises-em-florianopolis | 5,437 |
| 21 | 1/9/2024 | Nation World News | California Environmental Law And Policy Update 1.05.24 \| Alan Matkins | India | https://nationworldnews.com/california-environmental-law-and policy-update-1-05-24-alan-matkins/ | 91,289 |
| 22 | 1/8/2024 | The Louisiana Weekly | From flush to faucet: More places look to turn sewage into tap water | United States | http://www.louisianaweekly.com/from-flush-to-faucet-more-places-look-to-turn-sewage-into-tap-water/ | 1,663 |
| 23 | 1/8/2024 | www.californiaconstructionnews.com | Anaheim introduces stormwater capture credit program | United States | https://www.californiaconstructionnews.com/2024/01/08/8302/ | 870 |
| 24 | 1/8/2024 | CTV Calgary (CFCN) | Live With Kelly and Mark | Canada | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/150001782790165 | 6,550 |
| 25 | 1/8/2024 | CTV Edmonton (CFRN) | Live With Kelly and Mark | Canada | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/150001782789915 | 9,815 |
| 26 | 1/8/2024 | CTV Vancouver (CIVT) | Live With Kelly and Mark | Canada | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/150001782789907 | 25,211 |
| 27 | 1/6/2024 | aguasresiduales.info | Nuevas visiones de la reutilización potable en California, Colorado, Texas y más allá | Colombia | https://www.aguasresiduales.info/revista/noticias/nuevas-visiones-de-la-reutilizacion-potable-en-cal-lsyOb | 12,857 |
| 28 | 1/6/2024 | The Sacramento Bee | 'We need new ideas.' Rep. Katie Porter discusses immigration, Israel, housing, Trump | United States | https://www.sacbee.com/opinion/article283794193.html | 2,347,639 |
| 29 | 1/6/2024 | Yahoo News | "We need new ideas." Rep. Katie Porter discusses immigration, Israel, housing, Trump \| Opinion | United States | https://news.yahoo.com/ideas-rep-katie-porter-discusses-140000392.html | 58,768,090 |
| 30 | 1/6/2024 | Politico | Sorry, New York, it's always sunny in California | United States | https://www.politico.com/newsletters/california-climate/2024/01/05/sorry-new-york-its-always-sunny-in-california-00134148 | 17,192,861 |
| 31 | 1/5/2024 | Federal Reserve | ANAHEIM STORMWATER CAPTURE CREDITS PROTECT WATERWAYS, OCEANS AS CITY GROWS | United States | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/52786710863 | 1,164,265 |
| 32 | 1/5/2024 | Indian eGov Newswire | ANAHEIM STORMWATER CAPTURE CREDITS PROTECT WATERWAYS, OCEANS AS CITY GROWS | United States | https://app2.cision.com/#/articles/52787454454 | |
| 33 | 1/5/2024 | Storm Water Solutions | How to filter stormwater | | https://www.stormwater.com/stormwater-management/article/53081821/how-to-filter-stormwater | 5,005 |
| 34 | 1/4/2024 | vietbao.com | TP Garden Grove điều chỉnh giá biểu, phí nước | Viet Nam | https://vietbao.com/a317892/tp-garden-grove-dieu-chinh-gia-bieu-phi-nuoc | 49,361 |
| 35 | 1/4/2024 | waterwrights.net | California's Water Future January 4, 2024 - Water Wrights | United States | https://waterwrights.net/californias-water-future-january-4-2024 | 802 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 36 | 1/3/2024 | Impeller.net | U.S. Water Utilities Deploy PFAS Treatment Technologies to Safeguard Drinking Water for Communities | Germany | https://impeller.net/magazin/u-s-water-utilities-deploy-pfas-treatment-technologies-to-safeguard-drinking-water-for-communities/ | 5,853 |
| 37 | 1/3/2024 | Treatment Plant Operator | These Cities Are Testing Small-Scale… \| Treatment Plant Operator | United States | https://www.tpomag.com/online_exclusives/2024/01/these-cities-are-testing-small-scale-treatment-systems-and-wastewater-recycling | 22,027 |
| 38 | 1/2/2024 | My Climate Change Website | Flush to faucet | Canada | https://myclimatechange.home.blog/2024/01/01/flush-to-faucet/ | 595 |
| 39 | 1/2/2024 | Filtration + Separation magazine | Filtration and Separation - US water utilities deploy Xylem PFAS treatment technologies to safeguard drinking water | United Kingdom | https://www.filtsep.com/content/news/us-water-utilities-deploy-xylem-pfas-treatment-technologies-to-safeguard-drinking-water | 5,119 |
| | | | | | **TOTAL READERSHIP** | **157,046,443** |