



Government Affairs Update – December 1, 2022

Please contact Assistant General Manager Brad Sherwood with any questions at brad.sherwood@scwa.ca.gov

Welcome New Interns:

Please welcome interns Robert Rogers and Lindsey Cain to the Sonoma Water government affairs team as interns. Both Robert and Lindsey will be assisting with a variety of government affairs related tasks including monitoring legislation for our overall legislative program. Robert is graduating from Sonoma State University with a political science degree this month and Lindsey is a graduate student at UCLA studying public policy.

Tours:

Sonoma Water's government affairs team has helped coordinate tours for our water contractors. We recently conducted tours for the Valley of the Moon Water District and North Marin Water District. Up next is Santa Rosa Water with scheduling underway for the Town of Windsor. We are also organizing a tour for the Alliance's water committee membership. To coordinate a tour, please contact Brad Sherwood.

Legislative Strategy Session:

Sonoma Water held a strategy session with its Sacramento advocacy team this fall to prioritize issues for 2023. A review of that strategy will be made available at the next WAC/TAC meeting. Key priorities include funding for aging infrastructure, climate resiliency, ongoing funding support for precipitation forecasting projects (Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations, Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information Project, general atmospheric river research initiatives) and wastewater facilities funding.

CA State Budget:

Sonoma Water's state advocacy team is diligently reviewing and updating state budget projections for FY 23/24. According to the Legislative Analyst Office, the ***State Faces \$24 Billion Budget Problem and Ongoing Deficits***. Under the LAO outlook, the Legislature would face a budget problem of \$24 billion in 2023-24. (A budget problem—also called a deficit—occurs when resources for the upcoming fiscal year are insufficient to cover the costs of currently authorized services.) The budget problem is mainly attributable to lower revenue estimates, which are lower than budget act projections from 2021-22 through 2023-24 by \$41 billion. Revenue losses are offset by lower spending in certain areas. Over the

subsequent years of the forecast, annual deficits would decline from \$17 billion to \$8 billion. [Read the full LAO budget outlook report here.](#)

Federal Affairs Focusing on Appropriations

Sonoma Water's federal affairs advocacy team remains focused on ensuring funding goals are signed into law by the President – these include:

Wastewater

Occidental County Sanitation District: \$1.45M

Summary: STAG/Clean Water State Revolving Fund. This funding is sufficient to complete all preconstruction activities on a wastewater pipeline that will convey wastewater from Occidental to a treatment plant in Graton, eliminating the need to truck the material about 20 miles to a treatment plant in northern Santa Rosa.

Water Supply

Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information: \$1M

Summary: \$1M within the U.S. Weather Research Program for a regional radar array demonstration project to enable better forecasting of extreme West Coast precipitation events, like atmospheric rivers. Next Generation Phased Array Weather Radars.

Forecast Information Reservoir Operations: \$10.5M (House mark \$7.5m)

Summary: The Committee is pleased with the results of FIRO Phases 1 and 2 and eagerly anticipates the expansion of the program into regions where different storm types, in addition to Atmospheric Rivers, are key to heavy rain and flooding (e.g., tropical storms/hurricanes, large thunderstorm systems), and where longer forecast lead times may be required. Additional funding is recommended to complete Phase 2, start Phase 3 efforts, and perform necessary updates to the CWMS Ensemble Tool.

FIRO Water Control Manual updates: Increase of \$6M, FY23 request included \$29M for Water Control Manual Updates, including \$15.4M for California projects.

Summary: The Committee recommends additional funding of \$6,000,000 in Other Authorized Project Purposes for water control manual updates for non-Corps owned high hazard dams where: (1) the Corps has a responsibility for flood control operations under section 7 of the Flood Control Act of 1944; (2) the dam requires coordination of water releases with one or more other high-hazard dams for flood control purposes; and (3) the dam owner is actively investigating the feasibility of applying forecast informed reservoir operations technology. Additional funding is provided for a comprehensive list of water control manuals at Corps-owned projects located in States where a Reclamation project is also located, including a prioritized list of needed updates of those manuals no later than 180 days following enactment of this act.

Seasonal-to-Sub Seasonal Forecasting Pilot Program: \$1M

Summary: Within funding for the U.S. Weather Research Program, the Committee provides \$1,000,000 above the fiscal year 2022 enacted level for a subseasonal to seasonal research program to seed innovative research testbeds. Such efforts shall include a pilot project for subseasonal to seasonal precipitation forecasts for water management in the 50 western United States recommended in NOAA's report to Congress pursuant to section 201 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–25). The pilot project should be carried out in coordination with the National Weather Service and should be focused on achieving measurable objectives for operational forecast improvement, including forecasts of seasonal mountain snowpack accumulation and total seasonal precipitation.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund: \$65M

Summary: The Committee's recommendation provides \$65M for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund [PCSRF]. The recommendation is equal to both the fiscal year 2022 enacted level and the budget request. Funds are to be used for conservation and restoration of Pacific salmon populations. State and local recipients of this funding will provide matching contributions of at least 33 percent of Federal funds. In addition, funds will be available to Tribes without a matching requirement.

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