



Government Affairs Update – July 2023

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

June 27 Denmark Water Workshop:

Thank you to those that attended the June 27 Denmark water distribution innovation workshop. A Memorandum of Understanding between Sonoma Water and Denmark is being drafted and water contractors are encouraged to sign on as well. A draft MOU has been e-mailed to TAC members. Deadline to join the MOU is August 31.

State Update:

AB 1567 - Water/Climate Resilience Bond: Sonoma Water successfully increased the amount of IRWM funding in Asm. Garcia's bond from \$200M to \$350M. The bill has yet to be scheduled for a hearing in the Senate and it appears that the Senate bond vehicle, SB 867 (Allen), will be the bill that carries forward the bond proposal for 2023.

SB 867 - Water/Climate Resilience Bond: Sonoma Water is working with the Water Bond Coalition to advocate for an increase to the integrated regional water management funding to \$350M to match the amount in AB 1567. Sonoma Water has submitted letters to the author's office and voiced our comments in committee hearings.

AB 30: Sonoma Water's co-sponsored bill AB 30 - Atmospheric Rivers: Research, Mitigation, and Climate Forecasting Program is currently on the Senate Floor, meaning it is one step from completing the legislative process.

Several bills Sonoma Water has been monitoring were also heard in the suspense file hearing and the following outcomes are:

- * **AB 277 Extreme Weather Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center** - Passed the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee and will be heard next in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

- * **Water rights bills** - AB 460 (Bauer-Kahan) has been made into a two year bill. The other bills, AB 1337 (Wicks) and SB 389 (Allen) are scheduled for hearings in policy committees next week.

- * **AB 1572 forbidding potable water use on nonfunctional turf** - Passed the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee, Sonoma Water voiced support during this hearing.

- * **SB 659 requiring a strategy for greater recharge across the state** - Scheduled for hearing on July 11 in the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee

Budget - Most notable outcome from the budget negotiations is the policy proposal contained in SB 122, the Resources Trailer Bill, that will allow for the diversion of flows for recharge purposes without an appropriative right if the flows being diverted would cause flooding or inundation.

Gov. Executive Order N-8-23

On Thursday May 18th Governor Newsom signed an executive order that will convene an Infrastructure Strike Team (Strike Team) to work across State agencies to maximize federal and state funding opportunities for California innovation and infrastructure projects.

Federal Update

- The House has committed to moving all appropriations bills by the end of the Fiscal Year (September 30, 2023).
- We have not seen the Senate appropriations bills yet that would cover our earmarks so we do not know if they made it in the bills.
- Senator Feinstein reintroduced her STREAM Act (S. 2162) which has new authorizations for Desal and Title XVI projects.
- House Energy and Water Report was released two weeks ago and the relevant line items include:
 - \$0 for the WaterSMART Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program (FY23 enacted = \$5 million)
 - \$13.6 million for WaterSMART Grants (FY23 enacted = \$65 million)
 - \$2.25 million for WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management (FY23 enacted = \$5 million)
 - \$24 million for WaterSMART Drought Response (FY23 enacted = \$38 million)
 - \$19 million for Desal and Water Purification (FY23 enacted = \$17 million)
 - \$134 million for the WIIN Act Storage Account (FY23 enacted = \$134 million)
- Subseasonal to Seasonal (S2S) Forecasting: To support ongoing efforts to promote federal support for precipitation forecasting to better manage reservoir operations, Sonoma Water continues to lead a broad coalition of water users, water management agencies, and a diverse group of local, state, regional, and national organizations committed to advancing improved subseasonal to seasonal (S2S) forecasting in the west and throughout the U.S. On June 6th, the House Science, Space and Technology Subcommittee on the Environment held a hearing regarding the reauthorization of the Weather Act. Due to Sonoma Water's efforts, Jeanine Jones, Interstate Resources Manager at the California Department of Water Resources, was invited to testify on the significant disparity between water agency needs and applications for S2S precipitation forecasts and the skill of presently available operational products. Sonoma Water continues to work with policymakers on Capitol Hill to advance a \$15 million authorization and appropriation for the U.S. Weather Research Program under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research to support a pilot project in the western U.S. to enhance S2S precipitation forecasting to improve water management.

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