



### Government Affairs Update – August 2023

Please contact Assistant General Manager Brad Sherwood with any questions at [brad.sherwood@scwa.ca.gov](mailto:brad.sherwood@scwa.ca.gov)

#### State Update:

1. Asm. Leadership Changes
  - Aguiar-Curry now part of the leadership team
2. Bond Update
  - Governor has signaled he wants climate bond to be 50% water, 30% fire resilience, and remaining 20% for whatever else.
  - On timing, everything will be determined by viability of mental health bond on March ballot. Polling and strategy need to show climate bond can go alongside on March ballot without compromising mental health bond, otherwise it'll be November and remains to be seen if they pass climate this session or next.
3. AB 30 (Ward) - FIRO on Sen. Floor
4. AB 277 (Rodriguez) - Extreme Weather Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center in Sen. Approps
5. AB 1572 (Friedman) - Nonfunctional Turf in Sen. Approps
6. Water Rights Bills Update
  - AB 460 and AB 1337 pulled

#### Federal Update

- The Senate Appropriations Committee approved all 12 of its FY2024 appropriations bills before departing for the August Congressional recess. Those bills are expected to begin moving to the full Senate for consideration in September.
  - Senate Committee report includes Russian River basin, along with the Columbia River, Upper Missouri, and Upper Colorado, for \$13 million in funding for watercraft inspection stations.
  - Senate Committee report includes our language regarding Wildfire Resiliency at Corps facilities: "Wildfire Resiliency.—The Committee is increasingly concerned by the threat of wildfire to Corps projects and encourages the Corps to continue and expand efforts to implement wildfire mitigation projects at its facilities to protect Federal property and neighboring communities. The Committee encourages the Corps to consider vegetation control and other resiliency measures to protect against the increasing threat of wildfires."
- \$65 million in both, House and Senate bills for PCSRF

- Senate Appropriations bill includes \$463.5 million for STAG grants, of which were \$5.3 million for four projects in the State of California. This did not include those requested by the Agency.
- Big picture Appropriations process likely to be a total quagmire. Senate bills contain substantially more funding than House bill, and House Freedom Caucus is threatening to shut the government down on September 30 at the end of the federal fiscal year if they don't secure cuts that are even deeper.
- The House Appropriations Committee has approved 10 of its 12 FY2024 appropriations bills. Among those measures of interest still awaiting full committee consideration is the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2024. The full House of Representatives approved just one bill, the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024, prior to the recess.
- 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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