

July 2019

Building Alliances in Northern California

MISSION

To serve and represent regional water supply interests and assist Regional Water Authority members with protecting and enhancing the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.



RWA and SGA Welcome James Peifer as Executive Director

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) and Sacramento Groundwater Authority (SGA) in June welcomed lauded water industry professional James Peifer as the new Executive Director after a months-long, exhaustive search.

Peifer comes to RWA and SGA from the City of Sacramento Department of Utilities, where he has served as Policy and Legislation Manager since 2012.

During his 25-year career, Peifer has held numerous leadership and advocacy roles at the state, regional and local levels. He is currently serving as a negotiator for the Sacramento region in the state's Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan update and as vice chair of the Federal Affairs Committee for the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA).

In 2017, RWA recognized Peifer and Andy Fecko of PCWA as the region's Water Statesperson of the Year for leadership and work on legislative and regulatory issues that impact the Sacramento region.

During his 16 years at the Sacramento Department of Utilities, Peifer filled numerous roles, including managing the Government Affairs and Sustainability sections, and engineering planning services. Peifer was instrumental in updating the city's outdoor water conservation ordinance to be among the state's most stringent. He also served as chair of ACWA's Urban Water Conservation Subcommittee during the development of AB 1668 and SB 606 (Water Conservation and Drought Planning legislation) and played a significant advocacy role in that process.

RWA and SGA Board Chairs Paul Schubert and Pam Tobin thanked Interim Executive Director and Technical Services Manager Rob Swartz for serving in a dual role during the search and the RWA Executive Committee for working seamlessly to review the many qualified applicants.

"RWA was in truly capable hands with former Executive Director John Woodling, and now we are looking forward to achieving the next level under Jim's leadership," Tobin said.

"Jim brings an incredible mix of industry experience, negotiating skill and finesse. We considered many qualified candidates for the position, but Jim is clearly the right person at the right time to lead RWA and SGA."

RWA Board Chair Paul Schubert of Golden State Water Company

"Over the years, Jim has worked hard to cultivate excellent relationships with our federal, state and local partners, including the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, as well as the environmental community. The significance and skill of that accomplishment cannot be overstated and will be crucial in the coming years as we continue working to ensure reliable water supplies while protecting our environmental resources."

SGA Board Chair Pam Tobin of the San Juan Water District



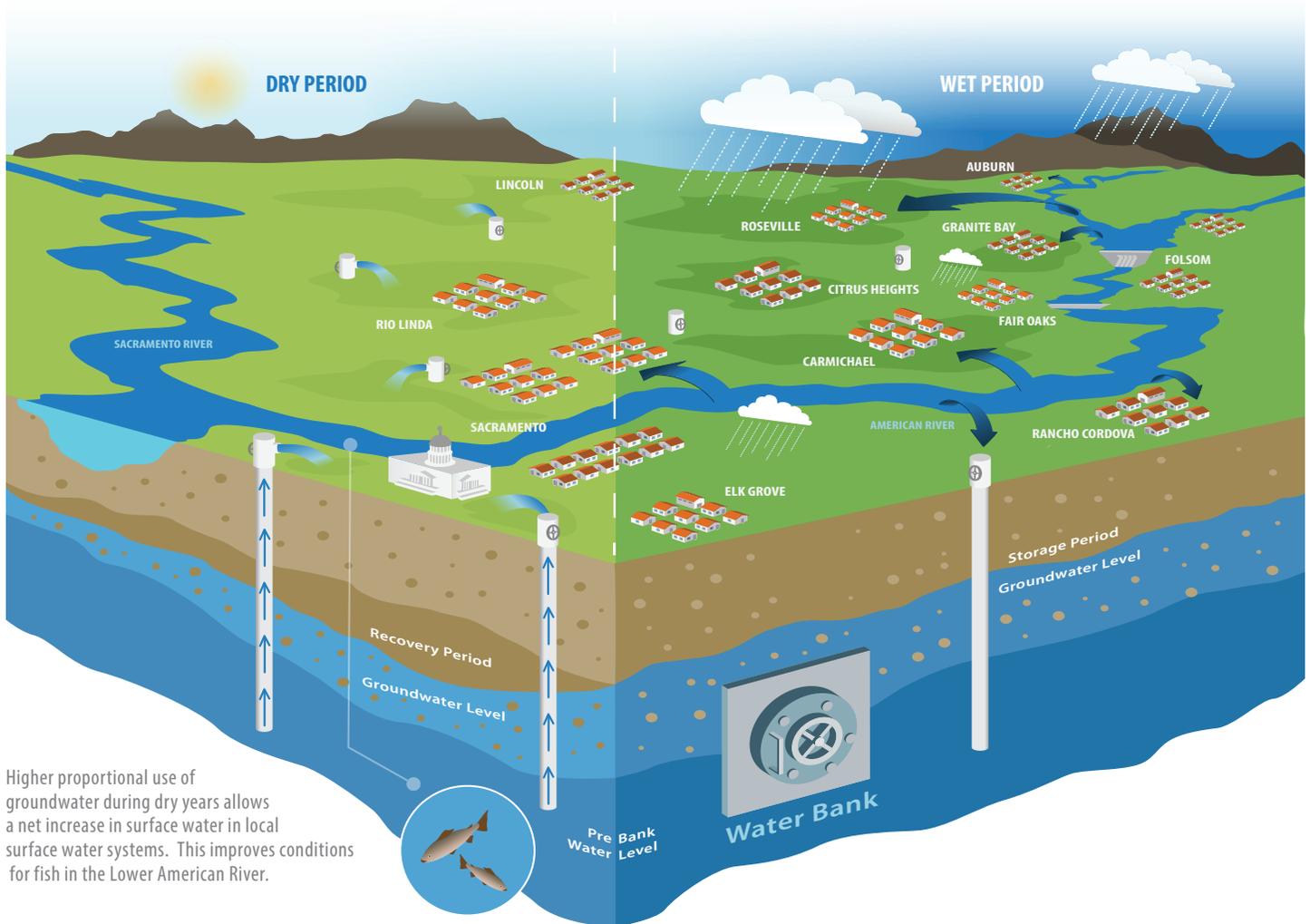
Sacramento Regional Water Bank Moves Into New Development Phase



With the Regional Water Reliability Plan now complete, the Sacramento Regional Water Bank is moving into a new phase focused on developing technical tools that explore how the bank could be implemented in the Sacramento region. A major task will be to prepare modeling tools to inform the Water Bank's development and operations.

Other tasks planned for this development phase, slated to occur through June 2020, include:

- Evaluating water markets and exploring potential partnerships; developing Water Bank financial model and scenarios.
- Determining potential physical, operational, legal, and environmental constraints; assessing infrastructure needs.
- Exploring options for Water Bank governance and implementation; initiating development of monitoring plan; developing Phase 2 implementation plan.
- Developing Water Bank informational materials and conducting outreach to key stakeholders.



New Water Bank Informational Materials Available

RWA has launched a new section of its website and produced materials that describe the region's vision for the Sacramento Regional Water Bank. Materials include an overview that illustrates how the bank works, its storage and recovery potential, and projected benefits for people, the economy and environment, as well as fact sheets that outline planning underway and projected through 2022, and needed investments to make the bank a reality. **You can find the materials on RWA's website at rwah2o.org.**



Legislative Update



Safe Drinking Water and a Water Tax

The issue of how to pay for safe drinking water in California’s disadvantaged communities has been under discussion by the Legislature for more than two years with many funding proposals focused on taxing drinking water. In June, the Legislative Budget Conference Committee adopted a long-term funding proposal for safe drinking water (through at least 2030) that would take \$130 million annually from Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds (climate change funds, also known as a carbon tax). Additional funding would come from the state’s General Fund and an anticipated budget trailer bill. These proposals are expected to continue evolving in the coming months.

In addition to the Water Tax, RWA is focusing on three additional bills as the Legislative session begins to wind down. These include:

- **Assembly Bill 402 (Quirk):** Would establish a funding stabilization program for Local Primacy Agencies (LPAs), which oversee small (15-199) connection water systems at the county level. This bill would restructure existing fees on these systems and hand authority to collect them to the State Water Board. Of great significance, the bill designates drinking water fees as the funding source for the stabilization program, raising questions about the limitations on the Water Board’s authority to assess drinking water fees. RWA’s current position is Oppose Unless Amended.
- **Assembly Bill 756 (C. Garcia):** Allows the State Water Board to require monitoring of two common chemicals in the PFAS family, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). This bill would create a new, separate process for monitoring and notification specific for PFAS/PFOS. A better option would be to pursue and aid in implementation of the “polluter pays principle” for PFAS/PFOS. RWA’s current position is Oppose.
- **Senate Bill 134 (Hertzberg):** Intended to address “double jeopardy” for water loss under the SB 555 standalone standard and water use efficiency under AB 1668/SB 606, this bill could limit flexibility for water suppliers to comply with water loss and conservation standards and establishes an unacceptable path for enforcement. RWA’s current position is Support and Amend.

For the latest information as the issues continue to evolve, visit RWA’s website at rwah2o.org or contact RWA Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Program Manager Ryan Ojakian at (916) 967-7692 or at rojakian@rwa.org.

RWA Applauds Newsom’s Water Resilience Portfolio Executive Order

RWA issued a statement in April supporting Gov. Newsom’s new initiative to build a climate-resilient water system and ensure healthy waterways. An executive order directed state agencies to prepare a Water Resilience Portfolio that identifies and assesses a suite of complementary actions to ensure safe and dependable water supplies, flood protection and healthy waterways for the state’s communities, economy, and environment.

“We are especially pleased that his administration will place premium on encouraging regional approaches for building resilience and strengthening partnerships with local water agencies,” RWA’s statement said. “We also appreciate that the order also calls for integrating investments, policies and programs across state government, which we believe has been a significant barrier to achieving resilient water supplies in the past.”

RWA’s entire statement is available at rwah2o.org.





Water Efficiency Program News

Water Providers Make the Rounds on Local Media

The RWA Water Efficiency Program summer media outreach and advertising campaign is in full swing with local water providers appearing on several news programs to promote efficient tree watering, wise watering tips for summer and other key themes. Recent highlights included:

- Sacramento Suburban Water District's Greg Bundesen in April promoted regional Mulch Mayhem events and provided efficient tree watering tips for Arbor Day in partnership with the Sacramento Tree Foundation on Fox 40 Live.
- Placer County Water Agency's Ross Branch in May presented Water Spots awards to students from Rocklin's Whitney High School live on Good Day Sacramento.
- RWA's Amy Talbot in June promoted efficient landscape watering tips for summer on local radio public affairs shows, which were broadcast on 18 different stations.
- PCWA's Linda Higgins and SSWD's Greg Bundesen in June provided tips for sprucing up sprinklers on Fox 40 Live.



2018 Water Efficiency Program Annual Report Available

The 2018 Annual Report for the Water Efficiency Program is now available online. The report describes trends in the region's per-capita water use, the number of high-efficiency fixtures and appliances installed, grant funding received, results from advertising and more. You can find the report on RWA's website at rwah2o.org.

"Recent media attention is especially notable given the very wet winter and spring," Talbot said. "This indicates that our outreach strategy, which connects efficient watering to healthy plants, is resonating with the media and public."

New Videos Promote Efficient Watering, Expert Tips

RWA is producing several new videos as part of its series focused on helping customers solve common landscape watering problems.

New for 2019 are brief "how to" videos on programming sprinkler timers to cycle and soak and the benefits of weather-based sprinkler timers. These complement three videos produced last year that encourage viewers to check soil moisture before turning on sprinklers, efficiently water mature trees and replace older sprinklers with efficient rotators.

In addition, RWA is developing new "Ask the Expert" videos on tree watering, efficient irrigation and fall planting. Videos feature experts from the Sacramento Tree Foundation and Green Acres, as well as "The Plant Lady" Marlene Simon.



Videos, which are used in social media advertising, are available at BeWaterSmart.info.



5620 Birdcage Street, Suite 180
Citrus Heights, CA 95610
(916) 967-7692

www.rwah2o.org