

REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY
SPECIAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE AGENDA
December 21, 2022; 10:00 a.m.

AGENDA

The public shall have the opportunity to directly address the Board on any item of interest before or during the Board's consideration of that item. Public comment on items within the jurisdiction of the Board is welcomed, subject to reasonable time limitations for each speaker. Public documents relating to any open session item listed on this agenda that are distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Board of Directors less than 72 hours before the meeting are available for public inspection in the customer service area of the Authority's Administrative Office at the address listed above. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you have a disability and need a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact the Executive Director of the Authority at (916) 967-7692. Requests must be made as early as possible, and at least one full business day before the start of the meeting. The Executive Committee may consider any agenda item at any time during the meeting.

Notice: The Committee meeting will be held virtually.

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- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Members of the public who wish to address the committee may do so at this time. Please keep your comments to less than three minutes.
- 3. SPONSOR LEGISLATION TO INCREASE GROUNDWATER STORAGE IN CALIFORNIA**
Discussion: Ryan Ojakian, Legislative and Regulatory Program Manager
Action: Authorize the RWA to sponsor or jointly sponsor legislation

establishing a goal to increase groundwater storage in California.

ADJOURNMENT

The RWA Board Meeting electronic packet is available on the RWA website at <https://rwah2o.org/meetings/board-meetings/> to access and print the packet

AGENDA ITEM 3: SPONSOR LEGISLATION TO INCREASE GROUNDWATER STORAGE IN CALIFORNIA

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this item is to seek the Executive Committee's approval for the RWA to sponsor legislation that aims to increase groundwater storage in California. RWA staff believe there is an opportunity to advance the RWA members' interest by sponsoring or co-sponsoring a bill improving statewide groundwater storage.

Given the challenging state of water supplies in California, including the persistent drought conditions, there is a strong indication that there will be several pieces of legislation directed at expanding water supplies in the 2023 legislative session. On the first day of the legislative session, two bills were introduced to address water supply which include ACA 2 (Alanis R- Modesto) and AB 62 (Mathis R- Visalia). ACA 2 would require 3% of the state General fund to be appropriated to address wildfire and water supply. AB 62 would establish a statewide goal to achieve 4 million acre-feet of above and below ground storage as laid out in the Administration's August 2022 Water Supply Strategy.

In addition to both ACA 2 and AB 62 there is a sense there will be at least two other pieces of legislation related to expanding water supplies. In general, there are political headwinds with expanding water supplies, however expanding groundwater replenishment and recovery can stand up to these headwinds if it is presented accurately and in a manner that is responsive to the reasons for the headwinds. Those headwinds can be summarized as distrust of water supply projects from an environmental and social equity perspective. RWA staff is confident that the RWA can make a compelling case for legislation that would potentially gain the broad support of various interests to advance a bill.

The RWA policy principles adopted by the Board of Directors on January 13, 2022 included provisions that support the Executive Committee's approval to authorize the RWA to sponsor legislation, including:

- Ensure a Diverse, Resilient, and Reliable Water Supply
- Protect the Water Rights and Entitlements of RWA Member Agencies
- Maximize Funding Opportunities Beneficial to RWA Member Agencies
- Ensure The Region Has Tools To Adapt To Climate Change
- Promote Balanced Statewide Water Management Solutions Beneficial to the Greater Sacramento Region

Additionally, it is in the RWA strategic plan to advance the Water Bank, and for the RWA to be recognized as a statewide leader.

Taken together and with the political climate it makes sense for the RWA to look to sponsor or co-sponsor legislation related to establishing a goal for groundwater

recharge in the state. Taking this action is consistent with the adopted policy principles and goals of the strategic plan.

Information and Presentation: Ryan Ojakian Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Program Manager

Action: Authorize the RWA to sponsor or jointly sponsor legislation establishing a goal to increase groundwater storage in California.