

OUTREACH AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

(Directors Molinelli Jr. and Farrington)

March 22, 2022

10:00 a.m.

AGENDA

PUBLIC NOTICE: Members of the public will have the opportunity to directly address the Committee members concerning any item within the Committee's jurisdiction.

In order to accommodate the social distancing practices required to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and provide for the safety of the public, our employees and Board of Directors, the Agency will conduct its public meetings via teleconference until further notice. Members of the public may participate in the meeting by using the dial in information below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86558317835>

888 788 0099 US Toll-free

833 548 0276 US Toll-free

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- a. Remote meeting authorized by prior Board of Directors action.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. No action may be taken. Please note there is a three (3) minute time limit per person.

3. LEGISLATION

- a. Legislative Session Update
- b. MCWRA Legislative Committee 3-18-22

4. OUTREACH PLANNING

- a. Open House Event
- b. Newsletter
- c. County Fair Display – "Around the World in Four Days"
- d. Grants-related Outreach

5. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you are a disabled person and you need a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, then please contact Karen Gish at (209) 257-5234. Requests must be made as early as possible, and at least two-full business days before the start of the meeting.



www.mountaincountieswater.com

Board of Directors and Officials
Barbara Balen (TUD) – Secretary
Randy Fletcher (YWA) – Director
Jim Holmes (County of Placer) – Director
Mike Lee (PCWA) – President
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Paul Molinelli, Jr., (AWA) – Treasurer
Scott Ratterman (CCWD) – Vice President
Vacant – Director
Vacant – Director
Dave Breninger, retired (PCWA) – Gov Affairs
Justin Caporusso – Executive Director

AGENDA

Legislative Committee Meeting

March 18, 2022

10:00AM

[Zoom](#)

- Updated Water Policy Principles**
 - Review and Discuss
 - Finalize for 04/01 Board of Directors meeting
- Review/Consider Legislation**
 - AB 267 (Valladares)
 - HR # (McClintock)
- Advocacy Partners**
 - Identify
 - Assign Representation



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Dave Breninger, retired (PCWA) – Governmental Affairs Official
Tom Cumpston, Legal Counsel

Justin Caporusso – Executive Director

Mission Statement

Unite agencies, groups and individuals whose interests include protecting and enhancing Mountain County water resources.

Vision Statement

To strengthen members' regional leadership, collaboration, information sharing, issue awareness, education, advocacy, and potential legislative action or legal support.

Statewide Benefits of Healthy Headwaters:

California's headwaters account for the majority of the state's overall water supply, yet the region is woefully under-resourced to support funding proper forest management alone. MCWRA will continue to educate target audiences on recognizing the statewide responsibility of funding projects to protect California's forested watersheds and the water we all enjoy.

- Improved water quality and quantity
- Enhanced habitats, ecosystems and watersheds
- Lower risks to rural communities, public safety, and infrastructure
- Reduced impacts of wildfire and climate change
- Creation of resilient forests and communities
- Increased carbon sequestration

Key Priorities

The health of California's forested watershed and its water resources is of critical importance to all Californians. MCWRA is committed to working to advance the following priorities on behalf of MCWRA Members:

1. Protection of Water Rights
2. Increased Investment in California's Headwaters to Proactively Address Ongoing Megafires
3. Science-Based Forest Management Plans and Actions
4. Increased Statewide Collaboration on Statewide Solutions
5. Additional Water Storage Capacity and Protection of Groundwater Resources

Water Policy Principles

1. MCWRA supports legislation and regulation that protect its members' existing water rights, water-rights priority, area-of-origin rights, and local agencies' ability to use water resources for their present and future economic, social, and environmental well-being.

- ~~In particular,~~ MCWRA opposes any legislative or regulatory actions that could violate or weaken county of origin and watershed of origin laws (e.g., Water Code Sections 10505 and 11460), or reallocate water supplies subject to those laws, or deny areas of origin sufficient water supplies reasonably necessary to meet present and future beneficial uses.

4. This includes any diminution of water rights resulting from conservation efforts, recycled water development, conjunctive uses, and/or water transfers (e.g. Water Code Sections 1011, 1011.5, 1014).

2. MCWRA supports robust State and federal investment in the watershed and headwaters of the Sierra Nevada.

- Resilient forests are vital to maintain adequate quality and quantity of source water supply for local, regional, and statewide needs.
- Ongoing drought and catastrophic wildfires continue to threaten California's headwaters. Immediate action is needed to address these threats, including improved forestry, land management, and protection to better serve multiple ecological and water supply objectives.
- Watershed health, watershed resources (including adequate water and financial resources for fire suppression), and sustainable watershed management should be priorities to achieve statewide goals to reduce fuels and enhance watershed protection.

3. MCWRA supports State, federal and local legislation, regulation, and policies that acknowledge that the Mountain Counties MCWRA members are uniquely positioned to help develop and implement significant regional and statewide solutions critical to California's water supply, water quality, flood management, and drought resiliency needs.

- Fostering local, regional, and statewide cooperation can only exist when participants have certainty that such cooperation will not expose them to increased risks of their own resources.

4. MCWRA supports new surface water storage in appropriate locations and as regionally determined necessary for the reliability of water supplies.

- Surface storage is an essential element of comprehensive water supply management.

5. MCWRA supports water-use efficiency legislation and regulation that respects and acknowledges existing and ongoing efforts, including: prior investment in water supply, regional diversity and conditions, gives credit for existing local and regional water efficiency efforts, including recycled water use and conservation achieved on

raw water conveyance systems, appropriately accounts for unique local circumstances, and appropriately analyzes and considers the cost-benefits of the legislation and/or regulation at the local and regional level.

- ~~1.~~ The imposition of inflexible state-wide, “one size fits all” approaches is not reasonable or practical for regulating urban water use throughout California.
- ~~2.~~ Requiring a uniform reduction in use by all water suppliers will have the unfair result of penalizing suppliers (and their customers) who may be already meeting or exceeding conservation goals under existing programs.

6. MCWRA opposes any legislation or regulation that is inconsistent with locally or regionally developed projects or plans that may result in a conflict in regional cooperation.

- ~~3.~~ Fostering local, regional, and statewide cooperation can only exist when participants have certainty that such cooperation will not expose them to increased risks of their own resources.

7. MCWRA opposes any legislation or regulation that levies Delta-related fees ~~levied on diverters of water upstream of the Statutory Delta.~~

- ~~1.~~ MCWRA opposes any legislation or regulation that attempts to define upstream areas, including the Mountain Counties overlay region, as beneficiaries of Bay-Delta water conveyance facilities.
- ~~4.~~ Only those users who receive water from conveyance facilities constructed in the statutory Delta should be subject to operational regulations or costs related to such facilities.

8. MCWRA supports legislation and regulation that is consistent with and coordinated with the California Water Plan (CWP), the Public Water Coalition of California report, and the Water Resilience Portfolio.

- ~~5.~~ ~~In addition, a~~Any proposed legislation or regulation should be consistent with the CWP Mountain Counties Regional Report that will create more resilient, reliable water systems, and that will restore critical ecosystems in the watersheds within the Mountain Counties Overlay area.

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- ~~7.~~ Local jurisdictions and their communities are best positioned to weigh environmental, economic and quality-of-life considerations within their boundaries.

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10. MCWRA supports an integrated approach to water management that addresses costs and benefits and uses the best available science to prioritize and balance water supply and demand for people, agriculture, and the environment.

9.● The State should always adhere to the water right priority system and the Co-Equal goals set forth in the Delta Reform Act of 2009 to provide a more reliable water supply for all uses and sustain watershed ecosystems for the long-term.

10.11. MCWRA supports legislation and regulation that reward water suppliers who demonstrate:

- a) Reduced reliance on water supplies conveyed through the Delta
- b) Investment in local and regional water supplies
- c) Improved regional self-reliance for water supplies
- d) Investment in conservation and water use efficiency
- e) Investment in advanced water technologies

MCWRA opposes legislation and regulation that ignores or disincentivizes these activities.

~~11.1. MCWRA supports State, federal and local legislation, regulation, and policies that acknowledge that the Mountain Counties members are uniquely positioned to help develop and implement significant regional and statewide solutions critical to California's water supply, water quality, flood management, and drought resiliency needs.~~

12. MCWRA supports statewide greenhouse gas reductions climate change initiatives and renewable energy expansion, such as bio-mass and hydropower generation.

● The Mountain Counties MCWRA region has more the most hydropower generation facilities than any other of any region in the State.

12.● MCWRA supports legislation, regulation, and funding to make better use of the Mountain Counties' region's potential for alternative energy production.

Adopted: 01/27/2010

Revised: 10/29/2019

Revised: 03/18/2022



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Adopted: 01/27/2010

Revised: 10/29/2019

Revised: 03/18/2022

DRAFT May 2022 Open House Outline

AWA Informational Open House & Customer Service Afternoon

Tuesday, May 17 from 3:30 to 6:30 pm

AWA Headquarters Parking Lot, Board Room (if available), Engineering (if needed)

AWA Directors, AWA staff available to meet with the public

TOPICS:

- AWA Infrastructure: Problems and Progress
- Agency's Finances
- Drought Update: Where we are going into the summer
- AWA participation on FireSafe Council and UMRWA and efforts to reduce/prevent impacts of wildfire on water quality

DISPLAYS:

- Photos of recent repairs at Lift Station 2 and GSL
- Map of projects with grants or grant applications pending
- DWR precipitation graphs
- Map of UMRWA Forest Projects Plan activities

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Offer water conservation giveaways from supplies on hand.

Customer service reps prepared to help with accounts etc.

Map of AWA pump stations and lift stations, and a 7.5-gallon water lift.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Press invited to attend. Press release to newspaper and radio.

Social media announcements on AWA FB, Next Door, and regional announcements pages.

Announcements in April bills.

DRAFT BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT:

Amador Water Agency Directors and staff are inviting AWA customers to an informational Open House on DATE/TIME.

Members of the public may learn more and ask questions of staff and Directors about the Agency's work to improve water and wastewater infrastructure, get updates on the current drought situation, and learn about the AWA efforts to reduce impacts of wildfire on water quality.

The Open House will be held at the AWA office at 12800 Ridge Rd, Sutter Creek, CA 95685. (COVID social distancing message as needed).



Narrative Summary of Amador Water Agency and Its Capital Improvement Plan

March 18, 2022

Prepared for:

Amador Water Agency

Prepared by:

Kim Pugel
North America Funding Program
Policy & Funding Specialist

Amy Broughton
North America Funding Program
US West Lead

Mike Antos
Senior Associate

NARRATIVE BACKGROUND OF AMADOR WATER AGENCY AND ITS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Where the rolling Sierra Nevada foothills climb beyond dense forests and rise into 9,000-foot alpine meadows, the expansive Amador County has boasted rich and bountiful natural resources for thousands of years. Before the 19th century, the Miwok people thrived on the plentiful plant and animal food sources, from Valley oak acorns and balsam root to antelope and salmon. A testament to generations of living and managing the region's natural wealth, the Miwok community in the region reached nearly 20,000 people by some estimates.

Even though gold was discovered in 1848, it was the deep, rich Shenandoah Valley soil that continued to define the area's modern history. Gold mining would experience a roller coaster of expansions and decommissions over the next hundred years, while agriculture, viticulture, and cattle ranching would steadily grow. When its last mine closed in 1953, Amador County's first winery was just opening. For years, Amador's population and agriculture continued to rise – to the point where the county is now renowned throughout the state of California for its wine grapes, walnuts, and beef. Yet, water stresses rose in tandem with population and agriculture, further complicated in Amador by flooding events, droughts, mine tailing spills, and a disparate jumble of infrastructure. Recognizing Amador County's 'peculiar' circumstances, in 1959, the California State Legislature formed the Amador Water Agency (AWA), tasked with providing water, wastewater, and storm drain services throughout the county as a part of a state-wide effort to localize water management.¹

AWA grew as the county grew, slowly inheriting and upgrading disparate infrastructure. This process started slowly, first with the construction of the Central Amador Water Project and Buckhorn Water Treatment Plant to provide water to residents with dried up wells in the upcountry communities in the late 1970's. In the 1980's as water insecurity continued to rise, the Agency expanded their service area, obtaining 15,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of pre-1914 water rights, two canals, the Tanner and Lone Water Treatment Plans from Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)¹. Through the 90's and early 2000's, AWA continued to incorporate smaller systems into its service, upgrade the aging infrastructure it inherited, and expand treatment capabilities to meet new regulatory requirements. Today, its services have evolved into an intricate patchwork of services tailored to meet the diverse needs of the distinct and remote population centers of the county.

The AWA water system now comprises four separate distribution systems serving more than 15,000 people (Table 1).^{1,2} Two separate, unincorporated communities of Camanche Village and La Mel Heights are provided water services via six groundwater wells fitted with wellhead treatment systems.¹ Wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal services are provided to 10 unincorporated communities through two wastewater treatment plants, leach fields, 33 miles of sewer pipes, and 15 lift stations.¹ In addition, AWA provides emergency water supplies to Jackson Valley Irrigation District and provides wholesale water to two incorporated cities, retail water to three incorporated cities, one unincorporated community, and a nearby youth camp.^{1 AI}

Amador County's complicated, mountainous topography ranging from 200 feet to 9100 feet elevation, dispersed population at 72 people per square mile,¹ and near-constant threats from wildfire mean that water management has proven no small challenge for the interdependent communities across the county. This

increasingly complex water management environment necessitated adaptation and, as such, AWA has been and is today pursuing sustainable water management. Not only has the agency formed and joined multiple collaborative committees and bodies to ensure integrated solutions are pursued that protect the environment and economy in the Mokelumne watershed, but it also has plans to develop a regional recycled reuse system for irrigation.¹

Today, AWA is following water and wastewater master plans to renew the aging infrastructure, some dating back to the gold rush era, and to meet the growth planned by the County and cities. Through ongoing operations and management, and using these plans, Amador is focused on reliably meeting current demands and needs, and being responsive to the needs of current customers, landowners, and the other agencies which depend on AWA.

AWA demonstrates a commitment to ensuring the delivery of affordable water and wastewater service for low-income residents in the seven disadvantaged unincorporated communities within its service area.^{1,4} Affordability issues are particularly important to AWA, as the median household income (MHI) consistently falls 10 points below the California MHI. In many areas of the county, more than 30% of the population are over the age of 64 (95th percentile in the U.S.), and this population group often has fixed incomes.⁵ One strategy AWA used to help manage affordability was to reduce outside power costs by implementing two hydroelectric plants that provide over 2 million kWh of power internally each year.¹ AWA also recognizes that issues from outside the county can have an impact, and therefore has joined the California Special Districts Association and the Association of California Water Agencies to join with and benefit from advocacy for California water agencies at the state and federal levels.¹

To the envy of many California water providers, AWA has secured sufficient water rights (16,150 AFY) to meet its 2040 surface water demands (approximately 14,400 AFY). Yet, aging, dis-integrated, and undersized infrastructure will prevent AWA from benefitting from those secured water rights. Decades of underinvestment have left AWA with the capacity of the WTPs, pump stations, and storage tanks all falling below the forecasted demand.² These deficits reverberate into the broader economy, and negatively impact the county's economic development.^{5,6} Adding to the challenge, Amador County is at increasingly high risk for wildfire and only becomes more vulnerable with each passing fire season and drought year.⁷ AWA's existing infrastructure struggles to provide enough pressure to meet needed fire flows,² which would be necessary in the case of a fire like 2021's Caldor Fire that engulfed 220,000 acres and destroyed structures less than 10 miles from AWA's service area.

As the people of Amador County have in the past, AWA will rise to the challenges that lie ahead. To protect county residents, the county's economy, and the environment from the intertwined impacts of climate change and wildfires, AWA is now creating reliability in its system. More specifically, AWA is connecting the dispersed WTPs via backup pipelines, reducing water needs beyond conservation efforts by reusing WTP backwash water, reusing treated wastewater for irrigation, and building fire flow capacity into its water budget.^{2,3} A recent comprehensive Master Plan has identified priority retrofits and updates that use a phased approach to gradually address Amador County's greatest needs (Table 2). Phase 1A projects fix the most critical infrastructure, expand storage, and provide minimum pressures to customers. Phase 1B projects tackle deficits in the WTPs and replace failing tank storage. With the most critical work complete, Phase 2 will consolidate the Tanner and Lone WTPs into a single, higher capacity WTP, and will address fire needs by expanding emergency and fire storage (2A) and bumping up fire flows to a minimum of 500 gallons per minute (gpm) (2B). Phase 3 then focuses on further improving fire flows in specific fire corridors. By 2040, AWA's intricate and tailored system will fully meet the complex needs of its growing community and will be sustainable over the long term.

Outcomes and Benefits

The rich history, rustic charm, and bountiful natural resources of Amador County drive its tourism, which provides 82% of employment in the county.⁵ Tourism, however, relies on lodging, water infrastructure, and a healthy environment. Amador County’s Economic Development Strategy cites physical infrastructure deficiencies as a major limitation constraining economic development.⁵ Renewal and improvement of water and wastewater infrastructure will reliably meet current demands and support the growth planned by the County and cities. This renewal could result in significant catalytic for community-supported economic development (still unquantified), avoidance of up to \$7.18 billion in damages from wildfire,⁷ and non-economic impacts, such as improved quality of life for the people of Amador County.

Table 1. Water System Overview

Name	Sub-system
AWS	Amador Water System (AWS) provides water to the “down-country” areas that largely cover the incorporated towns of Jackson, Martell, Sutter Creek, Sutter Hill, Lone, Amador City, and Drytown. ⁸ The largest system of the four, it is often separated into two sub-systems, the AWS-Tanner (estimated service population of 3,448 in 2020), served by the 6.1 million gallon per day (MGD) Tanner WTP, and the AWS-lone, served by the 4.0 MGD lone WTP (estimated service population of 4,098 in 2020). In 2040, this service area will have a demand of 17.2 MGD, leaving a deficit of 7.1 MGD. ^{1,2}
CAWP	Central Amador Water Project System (CAWP) serves the “upcountry” areas that consist of mostly mountainous, unincorporated communities higher in elevation and more forested than the rest of the county. ⁸ Served by the 3.4 MGD Buckhorn WTP, its service area population was estimated at 6,253 in 2020. It is expandable to 5.0 MGD and will sufficiently provide water for its 2040 demand. ^{1,2}
CAM	The Lake Camanche Village (CAM) system serves the unincorporated sub-division (estimated at 1,747 people in 2020) via groundwater. ^{1,2,8}
La Mel	The La Mel Heights system (La Mel) serves the smallest population (estimated at 127 people in 2020) via groundwater. ^{1,2,8}

Table 2. Infrastructure Retrofits and Updates to Increase Water System Reliability²

Group	Years	Amount	Needs Addressed
1A	2021-2025	\$33M	Poor infrastructure condition, existing storage deficits, inadequate pressures
1B	2025-2030	\$69M	WTP deficits, tank replacement
2A	2030-2035	\$82M	Emergency and fire storage, WTP consolidation
2B	2030-2035	\$56M	Improve fire flows to greater than 500 gpm
3	2035-2040	\$43M	Expanding fire flow corridors to greater than 500 gpm
TOTAL		\$283M	

Sources:

- (1) AWA Agency overview (n.d.), 42 pages: [637338782851030000 \(amadorgov.org\)](https://www.amadorgov.org/637338782851030000)
- (2) AWA Master Plan Study, January 2021, Keller Associates, 152 pages: <https://amadorwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/AWA-Water-Master-Plan-FINAL-2021-01-28.pdf>
- (3) PowerPoint deck for Public Workshop (30 slides, internal, shared by Mike Antos)
- (4) State Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities map: [CALAFCO Statewide DUC Map](#)
- (5) Amador County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 48 pages: [637528846141830000 \(amadorgov.org\)](https://www.amadorgov.org/637528846141830000)
- (6) Amador County General Plan FEIR, AECOM: [Current General Plan \(2016\) | Amador County \(amadorgov.org\)](#)
- (7) Amador County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, May 2020, Foster Morrison Consulting, 1,265 pages
- (8) AWA website: [About - Amador Water Agency](#)

DRAFT