

Amador Water Agency
Outreach & Legislation Committee

February 28, 2023

AGENDA PACKET SUPPLEMENT

Due to weather rendering travel unsafe, this meeting will be conducted only via Zoom. Log in information was provided previously on the posted agenda.

Supplemental materials provided:

Agenda Item 3A Additional information regarding stakeholder positions regarding HR 215

Your attention is invited to:

<https://www.friendsoftheriver.org/our-work/rivers-under-threat/sacramento-threat-shasta/>

<https://www.friendsoftheriver.org/our-work/wild-and-scenic/>

<https://www.nrdc.org/experts/doug-obegi/fighting-flood-misinformation-about-ca-water>

Agenda Item 3C Draft Legislative Policy Principles (attached)

Agenda Item 5 Draft Elected Officials Reception Invitation (attached)

DRAFT

Legislative Policy Principles

Purpose and use. These principles identify issues for which the Board of Directors is stating categorical positions on which staff can act without further specific Board action. These principles do not preclude any specific Board action, which may depart from these principles under the circumstances of that action. Staff will keep the Board informed of statements and advocacy made per these principles.

These principles reflect Board policy priorities, including:

Local Decision-Making. Local agencies have the greatest connection to the communities they serve and the greatest understanding of the project and services that will best meet the needs of those communities. Special districts are particularly focused on the services within their jurisdiction.

Investment in Water and Wastewater Service Reliability. Amador County is one of the oldest communities in the State of California and relies on water and wastewater infrastructure that is aging and often in failing condition, as documented by recent comprehensive studies. Major investment is needed to address deficiencies threatening services to existing customers. To meet this need, the Agency is prioritizing costs, increasing rate revenue, and aggressively seeking grants and favorable loan terms from every potential source.

Reduce Financial Risk. Regulations always create costs. But regulations that are unclear or that allow opportunities for post facto challenges create severe risks to the financial health of smaller agencies.

Policy Principles. With regard to legislative or administrative actions, AWA:

Supports actions that protect 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. AWA opposes actions to the contrary, including any diminution of its ability to transfer water conserved through demand reduction, loss reduction, or recycling.

Supports the human right to water and clean drinking water for all. AWA opposes actions that impose or tighten water quality regulations and are not founded scientifically on health risks or do not consider costs relative to such risks.

Supports actions to provide funding for AWA projects or projects in which AWA is a partner, including as a member of a JPA, or for other projects in Amador County consistent with AWA goals.

Supports actions that provide funding for water and wastewater infrastructure rehabilitation, replacement or improvement, demand management, leak-loss reduction, and water quality protection when such proposed actions provide an equitable opportunity for AWA to secure such funding.

Supports State general obligation bond measures that include equitable funding opportunities for the Mountain Counties region including Amador County.

Supports actions to expedite project approval and reporting processes and prevent or reduce State and federal funding and financing backlogs.

Supports measures that facilitate voluntary water transfers as a means to address water supply resilience and reduce the impacts of drought.

Oppose actions that reduce or restrict opportunities to transfer conserved water supplies through a market transaction.

Supports measures that acknowledge that local water agencies 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.

Supports water-use efficiency, but opposes actions that do not account for impacts to other regulatory mandates such as water quality standards, that are not cost effective, or for which there is no pathway to compliance without violating other existing standards.

Opposes measures that impose costs disproportionately to benefits or inequitably among water service customers.

Opposes actions that mischaracterize reserve funds as "cash on hand" or that interfere with the use of reserves or mandate a shift of financial resources.

Opposes any action that further constrains the Agency's ability to set and collect rates, charges, and fees to recover the full cost of services, or that expands or extends the ability to challenge rates, charges, or fees, or that creates uncertainty regarding the legal standards applicable to rate setting and fees.

Supports ratepayer assistance funded by sources other than water agencies and administered by the State.

Opposes measures that make water and wastewater service less affordable.

Opposes imposition of affordability standards by the State or federal government without financial support to meet the standards while achieving the Agency's mission and strategic goals.

Supports regional and statewide climate resilience initiatives and renewable energy expansion that does not endanger AWA's ability to operate under all conditions and in emergencies.

Supports an integrated approach to water management that takes a statewide view of necessary investments, addresses costs and benefits of regulations, and uses the best available science to prioritize and balance water supply and demand for people, agriculture, and the environment.

Supports proactive, science-based forest management practices, and robust State and federal investment in the watershed and headwaters of the Sierra Nevada.

Opposes legislation or regulations that add to the cost or the necessary time to implement fuel management or fire risk reduction actions.

Opposes actions that unreasonably impose restrictions on uses, or levies fees, on diverters of water upstream of the Statutory Delta.

Opposes actions that attempt to define upstream areas, including the Mountain Counties overlay region, as beneficiaries of Bay-Delta water conveyance facilities.

Supports actions and funding to enhance watershed management in the Mokelumne River watershed and surrounding Foothills that provide broad public benefits, including water quality and supply reliability, reduced wildfire risks, or greater scientific understanding.

Supports actions and funding that assist water agencies in transitioning to zero emission vehicles and equipment.

Supports actions that allow for carve-outs in the Advanced Clean Fleet Rule extending the public safety vehicle exemption to water and wastewater service providers.

Supports actions that assist the water industry to address the effects of wildfires and power outages, including the impacts of public safety power shutoffs.

Supports actions that provide funds or reimbursement for enhanced physical security and cybersecurity for water, wastewater, and power infrastructure.

Supports actions to improve supply chain reliability, access, and affordability of water treatment chemicals.

Supports actions that extend the inventory compliance deadline for the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements to allow additional time to incorporate customer-owned service lines into required inventories.

Supports actions that allow elected officials to participate virtually in public meetings without arbitrary restrictions while protecting public oversight and involvement.

Supports actions that develop pathways for people to enter water and wastewater service careers.



AMADOR COUNTY
WATER INFRASTRUCTURE
GOVERNMENT LEADERS
MIXER



Wednesday, March 22, 2023
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Sutter Creek Historic Grammar School

110 Broad Street, Sutter Creek (Access Fullen or Cole Street)

AWA recognizes the need to address the county-wide water infrastructure limitations that currently hinder wanted improvements in our city and county communities.

This effort will require communication and collaboration between county leaders if we are to move forward and work together to solve what is a serious challenge for California rural counties.

Now that we can gather in person,
you are cordially invited
to meet and network with fellow Amador County
government leaders at a casual social mixer.

Appetizers, wine and beer will be served.

For planning purposes, please RSVP
to Apryl Des Voignes, Executive Assistant
(209) 257-5217
adesvoignes@amadorwater.org