2021-22 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The legislative priorities document will help guide staff and district lobbyists when analyzing legislation or administrative actions at both the federal and state levels. Maintaining updated legislative priorities provides for directed action and strategy development to address the most critical issues facing the organization.

State Priorities – Energy

Renewable Energy Development

- Monitor modifications to the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), including enforcement penalties and long-term procurement regulations.
- Monitor legislative efforts that would increase renewable procurement mandates for publicly owned utilities (POUs).
- Monitor and engage in legislative efforts that would increase renewable energy development within the district’s boundaries.
- Participate in and monitor the California Energy Commission’s (CEC) SB 100 Joint Agency Report and proceedings related to the Integrated Resource Plan.

Electric Grid

- Oppose legislation that would transform the California Independent Systems Operator (CAISO) into a multistate transmission system organization.
- Monitor legislative and regulatory efforts related de-energization, physical and cybersecurity of the electric grid.
- Monitor legislative and regulatory efforts related to grid reliability and resiliency.
- Monitor legislative related to microgrids, distributed energy resources and identify impacts to publicly owned utilities, such as interconnection requirements, cost shifts and tariffs.

Regional Planning

- Monitor legislative and regulatory efforts related to resource adequacy and wildfire mitigation plans.
- Monitor legislation to expand community choice aggregation and oppose if it negatively affects publicly owned utilities.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Monitor regulatory actions related to the California Air Resources Board’s (CARB) Cap-and-Trade program and Scoping Plan.
- Monitor legislative and regulatory efforts to retire gas generation power plants and proposals that would modify or add new requirements on publicly owned utilities for energy storage systems.
- Monitor legislation related to vehicle electrification and building decarbonization that would add new requirements to publicly owned utilities, including Advanced Clean Trucks and Advanced Clean Cars Rulemakings and Tile 24 building standard updates.
- Monitor efforts that would increase electric utility data reporting requirements.
- Monitor legislative and regulatory efforts related to environmental justice communities and AB 617 emission reduction programs, including the Department of Toxics Control, CARB, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District and Cal-Recycle.

**Net Energy Metering (NEM)**

- Monitor legislative changes to the current Net Energy Metering requirement for publicly owned utilities.

**Governance and Local Control**

- Oppose legislation that usurps local control, violates voting rights and impacts contractual obligations of the district.

**Infrastructure funding**

- Identify funding opportunities for energy projects that improve the delivery of energy to customers and help comply with legislative and regulatory requirements.

**State Priorities – Water**

**Colorado River**

- Monitor and engage in state agency coordination and administrative actions related to the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA), including with the Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea Policy.
- Monitor legislative and administrative proposals that would make changes to water efficiency standards for both irrigation delivery systems and on-farm conservation.
- Monitor State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) proceedings on drought, recycling, re-use, recharge anti-degradation, storm water and overall conservation.
- Monitor implementation of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Water Resiliency Portfolio and assess impacts to the district.

**Taxes and Fees**

- Oppose legislative or administrative efforts to establish a statewide tax on water sales and/or the agriculture industry.
- Monitor State Water Resources Control Board proceedings on water rights fees and oppose proposals that disproportionately burden irrigation districts and monitor proceedings.

**New River**

- Monitor and support efforts by the Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board to advance New River project goals.
- Monitor legislative and administrative efforts to support implementation and funding of the New River Improvement Project.

**Infrastructure funding**

- Identify funding opportunities for water storage and conveyance projects that improve the delivery of water to customers and help achieve multi-benefits including compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.
Other State priorities:

COVID-19
- Monitor legislation, regulations and executive orders related to utility disconnect moratoriums affecting publicly owned utilities.
- Monitor and identify COVID relief funding and advocate for direct assistance for publicly owned utilities and their customers.

Salton Sea
- Monitor the Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California established by AB 1657 (E. Garcia).
- Support legislation or administrative actions to prioritize geothermal procurement and lithium mining from the Salton Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area (SSKGRA).
- Monitor implementation of the 10-year Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP) and related funding efforts.

Real Estate
- Monitor legislative efforts related to the sale of surplus land and assess impacts to the district’s real estate policies.

State Budget
- Monitor the Fiscal Year 2021-22 state budget for proposals that may have an impact on the district.

Federal Priorities - Energy

Renewable Energy Development
- Support legislative efforts to facilitate the development of renewable energy resources such as geothermal and small hydroelectric.
- Monitor activities or changes to the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP).

Electric Grid
- Monitor legislation and executive orders related to physical and cyber security of the grid, such as “Prohibition Order Securing Critical Defense Facilities” that prohibits bulk power system electric equipment or programmable components from China.
- Monitor legislative and regulatory efforts related to grid reliability and resiliency, including Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and National Energy Regulatory Commission Reliability Standards.
- Monitor efforts to transform the California Independent Systems Operator (CAISO) into a multistate regional transmission system organization.

Telecommunications
- Oppose legislative and regulatory efforts to weaken or eliminate the exemption afforded to publicly owned utilities from federal pole attachment regulations.
- Oppose legislative and regulatory efforts to allow unmitigated unlicensed operation in the 6 GHz band.

Infrastructure Funding
- Continue to research and identify new funding opportunities for energy infrastructure projects that meet specified criteria.
Federal Priorities – Water

**Colorado River**
- Monitor priority issues related to the Colorado River Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) and the 2007 Interim Guidelines.
- Monitor the International Boundary and Water Commission’s (IBWC) Minute 319 and Minute 323 planning and implementation.
- Oppose legislation or administrative actions that would direct Colorado River operations traditionally addressed through cooperation among Basin States.

**Clean Water Act (CWA)**
- Monitor legislative or administrative actions that may lead to increased regulation of water quality standards of irrigation water supplies.

**Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)**
- Monitor legislation and implementation of the Water Resources Development Act that authorizes the Army Corps of Engineers to investigate and construct water infrastructure projects, including those with environmental benefits.

**Infrastructure Funding**
- Support legislation that creates funding opportunities for projects that improve water delivery systems, conservation programs and storage reservoirs.

**Other Federal Priorities:**

**Omnibus Appropriations and COVID-19 Relief**
- Support COVID-19 direct relief funding for utilities, direct assistance for customers and programs that help address utility bills in arrears.
- Monitor proposals that affect employee medical and family leave benefits under the current pandemic.

**Salton Sea**
- Support legislation or administrative actions to facilitate the development of renewable energy at the Salton Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area, including lithium mining.
- Advocate for federal appropriations from the Department of Agriculture to fund watershed-based conservation, mitigation and restoration programs to benefit the Salton Sea, per the authorities expanded under the 2018 Farm Bill.

**New River**
- Monitor and support legislative efforts to advance New River project goals.

**Municipal Bonds**
- Oppose efforts to eliminate tax-exempt status or cap municipal bonds and support efforts to reinstate advanced refunding bonds.