

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

External Affairs' biennial budget is \$17.7 million in FY 2016/17 and \$18.0 million in FY 2017/18 or a decrease of 6.9% and an increase of 2.0%, respectively from the prior budget years. In an effort to achieve budget savings, advertising and outreach efforts have been reexamined with the following impacts:

- Advertising: In FY 2014/15 and 2015/16, the board authorized a \$5.5 million multi-media and multi-lingual advertising and outreach campaign to promote greater awareness of water conditions and conservation activities. With the currently proposed funding for the next two fiscal years, a limited advertising campaign using social and digital media, radio and some outdoor advertising could be implemented. To run a full-scale advertising campaign on drought response or other important water management issues, board authorization and additional funding will be necessary in FY 2016/17 and FY 2017/18.
- Capital Projects Outreach: Communications and public outreach support for capital improvements and other major operational and policy initiatives, including the Regional Recycled Water Supply program and refurbishment of existing infrastructure such as the Second Lower Feeder and other pipe rehabilitation projects will require funding from the capital projects.
- Diamond Valley Lake: External Affairs inherited the responsibility for the exhibits and education materials at the DVL Visitors Center without an O&M budget and the exhibits have fallen into disrepair. To update and maintain the exhibits at DVL Visitors Center at a level of quality consistent with Metropolitan's standards and provide information that engages audiences to discover more about the history and future of water management in Southern California, new funding will be required in future budgets for the visitor center and activities in the community.

The following are the significant changes by budget year:

FY 2016/17

Personnel-related issues

The number of authorized positions in the External Affairs office will remain at 48, maintaining staffing reductions made since 2008/09 when the group was budgeted for 55 positions. The budget for Salary and Benefits reflects anticipated vacancies from retirements and unfilled positions.

Other

The budget reflects reductions in funding for sponsorship, materials and supplies, advertising, non-professional and graphics to achieve budget savings. These changes have been carefully evaluated to ensure External Affairs will be able to successfully carry out its core mission and objectives in these areas effectively and efficiently.

The budget identifies and redirects existing funding for new research and related activities

that provide accurate and timely information on public opinions, consumer/customer attitudes and awareness to help inform future outreach activities with member agencies, stakeholders and the public.

FY2017/18

Personnel-related issues

The budget for Salary and Benefits reflects merit increases and an increase in retirement-related benefits.