



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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METROPOLITAN GENERAL MANAGER ISSUES STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF FINAL CALIFORNIA WATERFIX ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS

Jeffrey Kightlinger, general manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, issues the following statement on today's release of the final environmental impact report/statement for the ongoing California WaterFix process.

“This historic milestone completes the process of identifying the preferred project to modernize the state water system, reduce environmental conflicts and increase water supply reliability for California. After more than 10 years of planning, analysis and debate, the time for decisions is finally in sight. The pending transmittal of draft biological opinions to the state Independent Science Board will start the review process to produce state and federal permits detailing how California WaterFix will operate in compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

“We need a future water system that can capture sufficient supplies when storms reach Northern California. This critical mission cannot be performed by anything smaller than what is proposed. This final proposal reflects a project downsizing of 40 percent from what public water agencies had originally identified, a tough but necessary compromise with the wildlife regulatory agencies.

“Once we have more information about proposed operations and financial cost sharing among the participating agencies in hand, Metropolitan next year will be ready to make an investment decision on California WaterFix. We are grateful for all the efforts by Gov. Brown's administration to get to this critical junction. We look forward to continuing to work with top career staffers of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service, who are making progress on the permit applications for the incoming federal administration.”

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving nearly 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.