ENERGY, WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

ENERGY, WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL

1. WELCOME & SELF-INTRODUCTIONS:

2. PRESENTATION(S):
   - L.A. River Revitalization
     *Omar Brownson, Executive Director LA River Revitalization Corporation*
     Update on the development efforts to revitalize the L.A. River for a 21st century Los Angeles; LA River Corp. will share the work they are undergoing with Gehry Partners and others to reimagine the 51-mile river stretch as a multi-functional water reclamation project and civic space.
     Twitter: @larivercorp
   
   - SoCal Gas' action plan
     *Gillian Wright, Vice President Customer Services Southern California Gas Company*
     Background on the Aliso Canyon Storage Facility, one of the largest natural gas facilities in the nation that plays a vital role in maintaining reliable natural gas supplies for energy providers and businesses in Southern California. Also, an update on the leak at one of the facility's remote injection wells from Oct. 23, 2015.
     Twitter: @socalgas
     @SoCalGasNews

3. ACTION ITEM(S):
   - 2016 Advocacy agenda
   - Legislation- CA Drought Initiative Implementation- Ron Gastelum

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:
   - February 3rd, special meeting and beefing with DWP @9am
   - Upcoming relevant meetings/events

Upcoming Chamber Events:
   - Inaugural Dinner: February 11th
   - ACCESS DC: April 26th- April 28th @ JW Marriott
   - ACCESS Sacramento: June 7th-8th @ Citizen Hotel

Omar Brownson
Executive Director
LA River Revitalization Corporation

As an Angeleno, Omar is inspired by the way the LA River brings our region together. He is amazed to to wake up every day and love what he does – working to make LA a better place for all. When he first visited the LA River, he fell in love with its possibilities. It offers open space, recreation, and a continuous greenway for 51 miles that extends through the heart of our city.

As Executive Director of the LA River Corp, Omar leads our strategic vision, champions the organization externally, and oversees our operations. His job involves building a broad coalition across the public, private, and philanthropic sectors to champion the LA River. The River Corp acts as a hub to drive forward tangible change along the river.

Omar was hired in January 2011 with a background in purpose-driven real estate finance, project development and community investment. His track record is entrepreneurial, rooted in scaling transformational initiatives. He completed a joint Masters in Public Policy and Urban Planning from the Harvard Kennedy School and Graduate School of Design where his team won the ULI/Hines Urban Design Competition. He was recognized as an Americorps Public Ally and then Coro Fellow after graduating from the University of California, Davis. Among other leadership roles and recognitions, he has served as Chair of the Board of the Liberty Hill Foundation; Southern California Leadership Network California Connections Fellow; Member of the Mayor’s Los Angeles Food Policy Council; the Advisory Council of the venture philanthropy group REDF; Advisory Board of the forprofit social enterprise Isidore Recycling; and Stanton Fellowship of the Durfee Foundation (201415).

He is training for his second marathon LA, of course.
Gillian Wright
Vice President
Southern California Gas Company

Gillian Wright was promoted to vice president, customer services for Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) in 2014. In this role, Wright is responsible for overseeing the many ways SoCalGas employees interact with customers, from the field and call centers, to printing bills and processing payments. This work is done by approximately 3,000 workers, and she is inspired by their dedication to delivering quality service to SoCalGas customers.

Previously, as director of customer programs and assistance, she was responsible for managing SoCalGas’ $200 million annual budget for energy efficiency and low income customer assistance programs. She also oversaw the formation of a historic partnership between SoCalGas and the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (LADWP) to provide energy efficiency programs to the two utilities’ shared customers.

Wright joined SoCalGas as a regulatory analyst in 1999, and was promoted to director in 2002. She has served a variety of roles in the regulatory affairs and customer service areas for SoCalGas and its sister utility San Diego Gas & Electric.

Wright is a member of the board of the Los Angeles Business Council, and the California State University Foundation, and she serves on the Customer Service Committee for the American Gas Association. She is past chair and former member of the board for the Energy Solutions Center, a trade association of North American gas utilities, and graduate of Leadership California. She holds a master’s degree in public policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and a bachelor’s degree in economics from Reed College.

Wright enjoys spending time hiking Los Angeles’ many trails. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband and three children.
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Background

After four years of drought with reservoir levels at historic lows, farmland and communities having to make drastic cuts in water use, domestic wells drying up, and salmon populations on the brink of extinction, the state recognizes that our current water management system is woefully unprepared to manage to extreme events like prolonged drought and severe flooding.

The need to account for our water is essential, yet water managers must make decisions about our water resources while relying on outdated and incomplete information.

California has a number of databases containing information on hydrology, biology, water quality, the physical environment, and water rights and use. The passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act will result in more data on groundwater use and availability. Unfortunately, water managers have been unable to harness the growing amount of information to make timely and science-based decisions that will lead us to a more sustainable water future. Therefore, California needs a statewide water data policy framework that sets out goals to achieve water data integration, consistency in data reporting and real-time reporting, and to identify gaps in water data and how to fill them.

The California Water Action Plan recognizes the need to take bold action to transfer our state’s water management system to face the challenges of the 21st century. Climate change, population growth, and vulnerable ecosystems create greater uncertainty in future water availability. To address these challenges we need to:

1) invest in a 21st century water management system that can adapt to wide variations in rainfall, and
2) safeguard and restore our freshwater ecosystems so they can withstand variations in climate and competing demands for water.

In support of these overarching goals, California needs a real-time, accessible water data information system so that water managers operate our water system more effectively and water users make informed decisions about our state’s water resources.

Discussion

Establish a statewide water information system and public benefit corporation

Currently, water data is often challenging to obtain, outdated, and not always readily available to the water managers and the public due to its collection by numerous entities and storage in disparate databases, often relying on expensive proprietary tools that don’t keep pace with technological advances of the digital age.

The state will establish a water information accounting system to improve the ability of the state to meet the growing demand for water supply reliability and healthy ecosystems. The federated database system would integrate existing water data information from multiple autonomous databases managed by federal, state and local agencies and academia using consistent and standardized formats.

Types of datasets that should be integrated include: Department of Water Resources information on state water project reservoir operations, groundwater use, groundwater levels (CASGEM), urban water use, and land use; State Water Resources Control Board data on water rights, water diversions, and water quality (CEDEN); Department of Fish and Wildlife fish abundance and distribution; US Geological Survey streamflow conditions (National Water Information System); US Bureau of Reclamation Central Valley Project operations; and US Fish and Wildlife, US Forest Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries fish abundance.

The water information system should be created in collaboration with state and federal agencies, water data users and experts, and housed by a new public benefit corporation. It should adhere to data standards developed through the standards/quality control plan developed by the state (described below), and seek strategic alliance with national and global initiatives. The public benefit corporation should identify a data information platform that can receive both spatial and time series data from various sources and allows custom dashboards, visualizations, graphing, and analysis.

Develop “open data” standards for data sharing, transparency, documentation, and quality control

Standards for transparent access to data have changed, with the public demanding real-time information on demand. However, the demand for available data currently outstrips the ability to deliver information to water managers and the public. The water information system described above should be web-based, easy to use, publicly available, and include the ability to share data stored by or collected from state, federal, or local agencies, universities, or non-governmental organizations.

The state (DWR, SWRCB, DFW) will develop an open, transparent process to develop standards and protocols for data sharing, documentation, quality control, public access, and promotion of open source platforms and decision support tools. Clear standards help to promote compatibility among datasets, allowing for sharing, aggregation, and analysis by multiple groups. A report describing the process,
standards, and protocols will be developed prior to the establishment of a statewide public information system.

Data sharing efforts must incorporate clear and careful documentation of data quality and data formats through metadata, which is data that describes the data. Metadata summarizes basic information about data, which can make finding and working with particular data easier. Clear documentation of metadata avoids misunderstandings, reduces disputes, and increases the effectiveness of management decisions.

**Improve quality and availability of water data**

The ability to measure stream flow is hampered for some streams that lack gages. DWR, SWRCB, and DFW shall prepare a report for the legislature that identifies priority basins and sub-basins that need additional stream gages, evaluate the feasibility of creating a better stream gaged network, estimate the cost and provide options for funding a new network.

The State Water Resources Control Board will:

- develop a consistent and documented approach for estimating wet, average, and dry year water availability based on existing water use data collected from all surface water right holders that are required to file statements of diversion and use, including riparian and pre-1914 appropriative rights, and where available groundwater use information.
- require surface water right holders to electronically report return flow quantities and develop criteria for the reporting frequency that is required for different water rights holders.
  - It may be impractical for the Board to solicit discharge data from all water right-holders and to process that volume of information and share in a water information system. Therefore, the Board may choose to adopt a policy of requiring information from all right-holders, but focus more frequent monitoring and reporting efforts on a subset of rights that likely affect water availability most. For example, SB 88 emergency regulations under consideration by the Board require weekly monitoring for diversions greater than 10 acre-feet/year reported once a year, and hourly monitoring for diversions greater than 1,000 acre-feet/year.
- set and make public other water allocation priorities and quantities for wet, average, and dry periods for the environment and public health and safety. Categories of environmental flows would include:
  - Biological opinions pursuant to the Endangered Species Act,
  - Clean Water Act flows for water quality,
  - Migratory Bird Treaty requirements for wetlands, and
  - Fish and Game Code 5937, requiring fish flows downstream of dams.

The Department of Water Resources will:

- develop a consistent method for estimating groundwater use.
- develop a system for forecasting water supply availability and sub-basin flows during wet, average, and dry periods.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife will:

- share fish and stream habitat data for inclusion in the statewide water data information system.
Support financing for water information system and water data management

Establish a continuously appropriated water information system administration fund. All money in the fund could be used to establish and operate the public benefit corporation, maintain and update the water information and management system, including the cost to verify data, install gages, maintain gage networks, and modernize water databases. Initial funding for the fund would come from a general fund appropriation.

Give the public benefit corporation the authority to receive gifts, grants, or donations of moneys from any agency of the United States, any agency of the state, or any municipality, county, or other political subdivision thereof, or from any individual, association, foundation, or corporation for achieving any of the purposes of the act.

Enable state to operate water information system by a third party and engage services of private consultants, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations

Give the public benefit corporation the authority to:
- create a web-based water information system that shall not be subject to otherwise applicable provision of the Government Code or Public Contract code, and therefore the web-based system could be designed and operated by a third party.
- engage the services of private consultants and NGOs to render professional and technical assistance and advice in carrying out the creation and management of an online and public water information and management system.

Require that grantees and consultants that receive state funding for water data projects adhere to the same standards and guidelines developed by the state

Water data and research that is gathered using state funds should be made publicly-accessible. State delegation of data management to contractors should not result in the public losing access to its own information. Likewise, grant recipients for research or projects that receive state funds should adhere to the same standards and guidelines developed by the state for data sharing, transparency, documentation, and quality control.
The Energy, Water & Environmental Sustainability Council focuses on advancing cost-effective policies and programs that ensure reliable and affordable water and energy delivery, improve air quality, and promote economic growth in Los Angeles through the local development of technologies, businesses and jobs.

Secure safe, reliable and affordable water supplies for Southern California
The Chamber acknowledges that securing a safe, reliable and affordable water supply is critical to the continued success of Los Angeles’ economy. The Chamber supports the State’s Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta co-equal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and restoring the Delta ecosystem by advocating for implementation of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan. The Chamber will also identify feasible and cost-effective augmentations to imported water, such as remediation of the San Fernando Groundwater Basin, in order to secure the long-term water quality and supply of the region, taking into account existing infrastructure investments and the LADWP and MWD shared objectives of maintaining existing infrastructure and enhancing the diversity of the region’s water supply resources. Also, the proposed implementation and allocation of funds from Prop 1 passed in 2015 to address California’s drought.

Promote affordable, reliable and diverse energy on both supply and demand
The Chamber recognizes that businesses must have an affordable and reliable energy supply for the regional economy to remain productive and competitive. The Chamber will work with its members and policymakers to understand the options, feasibility and costs for investments in alternative energy supply, including the related infrastructure and operational costs of integrating alternatives into the existing power systems of LADWP and SCE. Energy goals and priorities include improving resilience and assure supply. The Chamber will also support domestic energy production and the maintenance of the region’s existing energy systems and supplies, including the integrity and safety of our regional pipeline infrastructure.

Review cost impacts of and responsibly implement air quality regulations
The Chamber will work with local, state and federal environmental agencies and the Chamber’s Transportation & Goods Movement Council to understand the availability, cost-effectiveness and feasibility of alternative fuels for commercial and personal vehicle use in order to help meet anticipated air quality standards in the region.

Strengthen Los Angeles’ position as a global leader of clean technology innovation
California is a global leader of clean technology innovation and sustainable business practices. The Chamber will advocate for economic strategies that will continue to help Los Angeles’ clean technology sector grow. This includes pursuing state and federal funding opportunities, streamlining government processes, and working in conjunction with organizations such as CleanTech LA, the LA CleanTech Incubator, PortTechLA and the Chamber’s Bixel Exchange to increase collaboration among the private, public and academic sectors.

Modernize California’s Environmental Quality Act
The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) must be modernized to preserve the law’s original intent while preventing abuse for purposes unrelated to environmental protection. The Chamber supports substantive improvements and will continue to engage in a statewide coalition effort advocating for a “standards approach,” which will integrate California’s strongest-in-the-nation environmental laws and planning documents into the CEQA process, streamline the project approval and challenge processes, and reduce the risk of lawsuits that abuse the intent of CEQA and delay development, jobs and economic recovery. The Chamber will also continue to spearhead a local CEQA reform effort with our Land Use, Construction & Housing Council and other business community partners.
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THE 128TH ANNUAL
INAUGURAL
DINNER
PRESENTED BY DELTA
THURSDAY, FEB. 11
JW MARRIOTT at L.A. LIVE
200 W. OLYMPIC BLVD. LOS ANGELES 90015
5:30 p.m. | Cocktail Reception
6 p.m. | Program & Dinner
Individual Ticket: $500
Table for eight: $5,000
THOMAS S. SAILES
SVP FOR UNIVERSITY RELATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
CIVIC MEDAL OF HONOR
ANTONIA HERNANDEZ
PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS LEADER
PETER S. LOWT
CO-CEO
WESTFIELD CORPORATION INC
CORPORATE LEADERSHIP AWARD
MICHAEL BURKE
CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
LIVESTRONG
THE NIGHT'S EMCEE
HON. HERB J. WESSON
PRESIDENT
LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL
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Join us as we travel to our nation's capitol.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with local government officials, business groups and chambers of commerce, leads an annual delegation of more than 200 business leaders and public officials to Washington, D.C. to advocate for Southern California. Participants meet with members of congress and the president's administration on key issues. The trip includes two breakfasts with high ranking congressional or administration leaders, a marquee reception and a delegation dinner.

Early bird registration is $750 per person until March 18. After that date, registration increases to $850 per person.

This fee includes all of the trip's scheduled events, as well as costs associated with meeting planning and delegate materials. Participants are responsible for their own travel and hotel arrangements.

The JW Marriott Washington, D.C. is the conference hotel and is offering a group rate of $369 per night. Space is limited, and the group rate expires March 1. Please contact the JW Marriott directly at 202.626.2605. Group name: “ACCESS DC.”

Scenes from ACCESS Washington, D.C. 2015:

2015 ACCESS D.C. Delegation

Sen. Dianne Feinstein addressed the delegation.

Delegates had the opportunity to meet with Sen. Barbara Boxer.

Delegates participated in one of 15 teams advocating for 36 priority issues.