

INFORMATION ITEM

Delta Watermaster Update

Summary: Delta Watermaster Michael Patrick George will report on his office's activities related to the Delta Plan, with a focus on efforts to address the current drought.

BACKGROUND

The Office of the Delta Watermaster was created as part of the Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Water Code §85230). The Watermaster is an independent officer of the State, appointed to a four-year term by the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board), and reports jointly to the Water Board and the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) (Water Code §85230(d)).

As Watermaster, Mr. George is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day administration of water rights and, when necessary, taking enforcement action related to water diversions in the Delta. The Watermaster also confers with and assists the Water Board and the Council as they carry out legislative mandates to enhance the Delta ecosystem and improve statewide water supply reliability.

TODAY'S PRESENTATION

At today's meeting, the Council will hear how the Watermaster is addressing the ongoing drought.

First, Mr. George will provide an overview of the emergency drought regulations and their impacts on the Delta, including those curtailing water rights and impacting reporting. In a similar vein, the Council will also hear how his office is investigating exporters' complaints of alleged unlawful water diversions in the Delta.

Other drought topics the Watermaster will touch on include the emergence of a Delta voluntary dry-year response program, continued planning for drought (including salinity management challenges), and the public launch of OpenET, which will interface with the Delta Alternative Compliance Program (meeting the requirements of the Water Board's diversion measurement regulations).

FISCAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

None

CONTACT

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