

Water Committee Report

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File ID: 2019-00903

June 25, 2019

Discussion Item 03

Title: Federal and State Issues Update [Oral Report]

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Receive and file a presentation on Federal and State Issues Update.

Contact: Anne Sanger, Policy & Legislative Specialist, (916) 808-1635, Jim Peifer, Principal Engineer, (916) 808-1416; Bill Busath, Director, (916) 808-1434, Department of Utilities.

Presenter: Anne Sanger, Policy & Legislative Specialist, (916) 808-1635, Department of Utilities.

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

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Issue Detail: The City of Sacramento has requested funding for two projects that are important to the Department of Utilities. The first funding request is for federal support of the City's combined sewer system (CSS) upgrades. The Water Resources Development Act of 2018 includes a title authorizing grant funding to assist municipalities improve their CSS. The Water Resources Development Act also includes grant funding for community water systems to improve the resiliency and security of their water resource systems. The City's request for funding under this program would provide better security for the City's water system from both natural hazards and malevolent acts.

Once Congress passes the federal Fiscal Year 2020 budget and the President signs the bill, both of these grant programs will be administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Currently the House of Representatives is expected to pass EPA's spending bill that will include \$90 million in competitive grant assistance for these priorities, but the Senate has yet to take any action on the bill.

The second federal funding request that the City supports, due to our membership in the Regional Water Authority, is to fund planning of the Sacramento Regional Groundwater Bank project. Once completed, this project will greatly assist the Sacramento region to manage its water resources by optimizing use of surface water from the rivers in wet years and groundwater in dry years.

In terms of state water policy this year, there has been considerable attention on the effort to provide healthy drinking water to the one million Californians who do not have access to clean drinking water. The Governor and leaders in the legislature have been adamant about funding this priority and after much negotiation have reached a tentative agreement.

Policy Considerations: This item is relevant to General Plan policy U 3.1.1, titled "Sufficient Service," which states that "The City shall provide sufficient wastewater conveyance, storage, and pumping capacity for peak sanitary sewer flows and infiltration".

This item is also relevant to General Plan policy U 2.1.2, titled "Increase Water Supply Sustainability," which states that "The City shall maintain a surface water/groundwater conjunctive use program, which uses more surface water when it is available and more groundwater when surface water is limited."

Economic Impacts: Not applicable.

Environmental Considerations: Not Applicable.

Sustainability: Not Applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: Not applicable.

Rationale for Recommendation: Not Applicable.

Financial Considerations: Not Applicable.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

Background: The City needs approximately \$400 million to fund improvements under the 2018 Long-Term Control Plan for our CSS National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. In the downtown and other older parts of the City, the CSS serves more than 200,000 people and conveys both wastewater and storm water runoff. This single pipe system conveys its combined contents for treatment to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant.

During moderate to heavy rain events the combined flows can exceed the system's capacity for storage and conveyance. When this occurs two wastewater treatment facilities (Pioneer Reservoir and the Combined Wastewater Treatment Plant) provide primary sewer treatment at a rate of 440 million gallons per day. Treated water from these plants is then dechlorinated and released to the Sacramento River. If the flows exceed treatment and conveyance capacity, the NPDES Permit allows untreated wastewater to be released directly to the Sacramento River. During heavy rain events, the system can also outflow from the collection pipes onto streets and residential properties. The City is working diligently to improve its CSS to minimize these untreated discharges into the river and outflows into the street, and will continue to do so, and federal assistance in the funding of this program will help accelerate the process.