



AGENDA REQUEST
Regular Meeting, August 14, 2024

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Rebecca Guo, P.E., General Manager RG

DATE: August 9, 2024

SUBJECT: **Progress Update on the Water Resources Development and Management Plan 2024 Update**

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

The Water Resources Development and Management Plan (WRDMP) is the cornerstone document for the Agency's actions and investment and is subject to a 5-year update per Board Policy E-1001. The WRDMP was formulated to be a policy document with durable policies and guidance for long-term implementation to support sustainable and responsible water resources planning and economic prosperity in El Dorado County pursuant to the Agency's 1959 authorizing Act. It is also the countywide water plan that satisfies the requirements of Ordinance 5096 adopted by the County of El Dorado consistent with a Memorandum of Understanding with the County.

(continued)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board receive and file presentation.

ACTION OF AGENCY ON:

VOTE:

Unanimous _____ or

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstentions:

Absent:

Date _____

Attest:

By _____

Clerk of the Agency

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION (continued):

The Water Resources Development and Management Plan (WRDMP) 2024 update will follow the same goals and principles set forth in the development of the WRDMP 2019 update. The WRDMP 2019 refocused the Agency's actions and investments to be consistent with the charges provided by the 1959 El Dorado County Water Agency Act (Act) and assisted the County of El Dorado (County) in realizing the vision of its General Plan in terms of economic development, environmental protection, and the preferred rural-agricultural way of life. At the same time, the Agency facilitates regional collaboration and transparency to create countywide benefits and respect the role and responsibilities of each partner during implementation.

The focus of the WRDMP 2024 update is to evaluate the needs for updating its resource management strategies and management actions to address any changed conditions. El Dorado County experienced many changes after the WRDMP 2019 update including the COVID-19 pandemic, severe droughts and associated emergency regulations including mandatory water conservation and curtailments of senior water rights, the 2021 Caldor Fire and 2022 Mosquito Fire and their severely impacted communities and environmental resources, and new law and regulatory changes in response to continued impacts from climate change.

Progress has also been made collectively to advance the resource management strategies identified in the WRDMP 2019 update, including the Agency's signing of the Central Valley Project Water Service Contract with U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) after 19 years of delay; the completion of the American River Basin Study and Upper American River Watershed Regional Drought Contingency Plan with Reclamation and regional partners; and many on-the-ground projects facilitated by funding from the American Recovery Plan Act, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and State of California for needed water infrastructure recovery and improvement. The Agency has also taken purposeful and coordinated efforts among partners in El Dorado County and Sacramento and Tahoe regions to make progress in federal and state advocacy.

One important consideration for the WRDMP 2024 update is to incorporate resources management strategies and management actions identified in 2023 Programmatic Watershed Plan (PWP) for the upper American River watershed. The PWP was completed by a watershed group convened by the Agency to develop this important supporting element for WRDMP implementation and expanded collaboration with federal, state, tribes, and interested parties for promoting watershed health and community resilience.

The Agency established a Plan Advisory Group to collaborate in the WRDMP 2024, extending the same successful approach used in the WRDMP 2019 update and continued in the Countywide Plenary for Water hosted by the Agency pursuant to Board policy E-1001 adopted for implementing the WRDMP 2019. The Plan Advisory Group consists of representatives from multiple departments of the County, Agricultural Commissioner, public water purveyors, business interests, environmental interests, and other interested parties. This presentation is to provide progress to date on the WRDMP 2024 update, observations and findings, and anticipated outcomes, as well as the tentative schedule for Board workshop and considerations of policy adoption in late 2024.

Policy

Board Policy E-1001 sets policies and guidance that affirm the purposes of the WRDMP and associated adaptive management for its long-term implementation. Policy WRDMP-05 provides

that “the WRDMP shall be updated every 5 years by June 30 in years ending in 4 and 9 to address changed conditions, assess progress of implementation, and realign priorities of the Agency’s actions.” The Board approved extension of the update schedule to December 31, 2024 at the March 13, 2024 Water Agency Board meeting.