



August 21, 2014

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Edward C. Starr, City Manager 

SUBJECT: WEEKLY REPORT: August 15-21, 2014

➤ ***CITY MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENTS***

- Last week, the state Legislature agreed to a \$7.5 billion water bond package to be placed on the November 4, 2014 General Election Ballot. With California in a prolonged, historic drought, legislators were driven to action to offer voters a plan. If approved, the measure marks the largest investment in decades in the state's water infrastructure and is designed to build reservoirs, clean up contaminated groundwater, and promote water-saving technologies.

The water plan includes \$7.1 billion in new borrowing and \$425 million from previous bonds that would be redirected to address water priorities. Both the bond and the redirected funds require voter approval. Governor Brown signed the legislation, AB 1471, shortly after the Legislature approved the bill with widespread bipartisan support.

The measure replaces an existing water bond that was approved by a previous Legislature but was widely considered too costly and too bloated with pork-barrel projects to win favor with voters. The \$11.1 billion 2009 ballot measure had been delayed from statewide votes twice, and gained momentum as the worst drought in a generation intensified throughout the state.

The drought has forced farmers to fallow fields, led to double-digit unemployment in many rural areas, turned large expanses of reservoirs into mud flats, and prompted local governments to mandate water-use restrictions. California has a population that exceeds 38 million, and an

agricultural industry that feeds the nation; but in recent years, the state has struggled to meet increasing demands for water after three dry winters.

To facilitate understanding of the water package, the following details, by the dollars, are provided:

- ✓ \$7.1 billion will be new borrowing, and the total repayment cost is projected to be \$14.7 billion over 30 years
- ✓ \$2.7 billion for water storage projects, with criteria that are designed to encourage building the Sites Reservoir in Colusa County, north of Sacramento; and the Temperance Flat dam, northeast of Fresno
- ✓ \$1.5 billion for ecosystem and watershed projects to restore the environment to natural conditions, improve river parkways, and protect wildlife
 - Roughly a third of the money would support projects that have been contentious, including removal of obsolete power dams on the Klamath River, restoration of the Salton Sea, and an environmental protection plan at Lake Tahoe
- ✓ \$900 million for projects that clean up groundwater contamination, prioritizing communities that would have a more reliable local water supply as a result—a top priority for Los Angeles lawmakers
- ✓ \$810 million for "integrated regional water management plans" designed to help regions meet their own water needs—includes \$100 million for water conservation and \$200 million for storm water management
- ✓ \$725 million for water recycling and advanced water treatment technology, such as desalination
- ✓ \$520 million for projects that improve water quality or promote clean drinking water. Half the money would be set aside for wastewater treatment, with priority for low-income communities. The other half is for projects improving safe drinking water standards, with priority for small communities with polluted water sources
- ✓ \$395 million for statewide flood management projects and activities, with the majority available for the Sacramento delta region.

- California officials have allocated five times more water rights than nature can deliver, according to a new study published by University of California researchers.

The study confirms prior estimates of the disparity, but goes further by describing the degree of over allocation in individual watersheds across California. It also reinforces the position that the problem may be much larger since the study only looked at a subset of California water rights—those allocated after 1914 and considered junior rights.

California's system of water rights, overseen by the state Water Resources Control Board, is the primary means by which the state distributes its natural runoff to provide water for cities, farms, and industry. In most cases, a property owner or government agency applies to the state for a water right or permit. If granted, it allows them to divert a certain amount of water directly from a river or stream.

Such rights, for example, account for all the water stored behind dams in the state, which is the primary source of drinking water for most Californians and irrigation water for crops.

According to the study, California's total freshwater runoff in an average year is about 70 million acre-feet. But the state has handed out water rights totaling 370 million acre-feet. One acre-foot is enough to meet the needs of two average households for a year.

The rivers under the most strain, the research indicates, are virtually all that drain into the Central Valley.

In dry years like the current one, the disparity can increase dramatically. For example, this summer the state water board imposed curtailments on about 10,000 water rights, requiring diversions to be halted completely because there isn't enough water to go around.

However, there is no way to know if these curtailments are necessary, or even effective, because the state has so little data on actual water diversions. Diverters are not required to report their water use in real time. They are only required to file periodic reports of water diversion, which are not verified for accuracy. Particularly in times of drought, there is much uncertainty in how water rights are being exercised, resulting in a system that is practically impossible to manage.

It has long been assumed that correcting the excessive allocation of water would be incredibly complex because there are so many water rights, each with unique historical and legal complications. Furthermore, limited oversight power and budgetary cuts have constrained the ability of the State Water Resources Control Board to effectively manage the water rights system. Without an increased budget and additional powers granted by the Legislature, the board lacks authority to impose more rigid controls.

➤ **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- Captains Roger Mora and Sergio Mejia and Engineer James Colby were deployed Monday night to the Way fire in Wofford Heights, which is in Kern County. The fire has grown to over 3,300 acres with 5 percent containment, and predictions are of it becoming a significant incident. There are 455 firefighters on scene, in addition to air tankers and helicopters dropping water on the fire. The crew is on a 12-hour structure protection assignment; however, it is anticipated they will move to a 24-hour detail.

Over 200 homes have been evacuated so far with 8 structures and 10 outbuildings destroyed. Currently, there are over 50 fires burning in Kern County and numerous road closures.

Governor Brown secured Fire Management Assistance Grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to enable the availability of vital firefighting cost reimbursement for local, state, and tribal agencies responding to the fires. The grant, which is provided through the President's Disaster Relief Fund on a cost-share basis, will assist local, state, and tribal agencies responding to the fire to apply for 75 percent reimbursement of their fire suppression costs. The agencies are responsible for the remaining 25 percent of their costs.

Additional information, a slideshow of photos, and videos of the Way fire can be seen at www.turnto23.com.

➤ **HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

- The L.A. County Fair opens on Friday, August 29 at Fairplex in Pomona and will run through Sunday, September 28. The Fair will be open on Monday, September 1 for Labor Day, but will be closed subsequent Mondays and Tuesdays and Wednesday, September 3.

City employees and community members may again purchase discounted Fair tickets at the Recreation facility and the Senior Center. Tickets are good any day the Fair is open. Adult tickets are \$11 and child tickets (6 to 12 years of age) are \$6. Children 5 years of age and under are free. Tickets must be purchased with cash only.

Montclair Day at the Fair is Wednesday, September 10. The day will include a parade featuring Montclair groups and a special ceremony for Montclair's Community Heroes.

Coupons good for a \$5 admission to the Fair on Montclair Day are available at the Senior Center, Recreation facility, and City Hall. These tickets must be purchased online, in advance.

On Montclair day only, beginning at 11 a.m., the Montclair Golden Express will provide free transportation for fairgoers 18 years of age and older. To make reservations, call the Senior Center at (909) 625-9483.

For more information on discounted tickets, call the Recreation facility at (909) 625-9479.

➤ **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- Last Thursday, the Police Department reluctantly bid farewell to Officer Julleen Potts who separated from employment last month with an Industrial Disability Retirement.

Julleen was hired by the City of Montclair in 2005 as a Police Officer Trainee. She became a Police Officer in March 2006 and excelled in her duties. In 2008, she was assigned to the San Bernardino County West End Narcotic Enforcement Team and served four years as an Investigator.

As a Police Officer, Julleen provided excellent service to the community. She served the Police Department honorably and displayed professionalism, compassion, and proficiency as a peace officer.

Co-workers, friends, and Julleen's mom and dad attended the informal gathering at the Police Department on August 14, where Julleen accepted a plaque from Chief Mike deMoet for her exceptional service to the City of Montclair. Julleen emotionally spoke about how much she loved her brief yet fulfilling years spent as a Police Officer and that she had fully intended on a long and prosperous career with the Montclair Police Department. She spoke very highly of the City, its employees, and the lifelong friends she has made. We are confident that Julleen will find a new career that she loves just as much as the one she regrettably leaves behind.

The photo below was taken in 2006 when Julleen graduated from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Academy. She is pictured on the right, with fellow academy graduates Amanda Holloway and Verron Shimoaka.



➤ **SUCCESSOR REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY/MONTCLAIR HOUSING CORPORATION**

- On July 29, 2014, Dollar Tree announced it would buy Family Dollar, a chain that is in the process of closing hundreds of stores and terminating workers. Other discount stores have been struggling as well, writes Heidi Moore at *The Guardian.com*. Fashion discounter Loehmann's filed for bankruptcy, while Wal-Mart's sales have declined for the past five quarters. "There's just not enough money deployed by American families to keep all the discount chains in business," Moore writes.

In general, dollar stores saw their heyday during the recession, when middle-class shoppers came to buy smaller, cheaper packages of household necessities, like toilet paper. While upper middle class shoppers have enjoyed some degree of economic recovery, America's poorest consumers have not, writes Paul Ziobro and Shelly Banjo at *The Wall Street Journal*. Money spent by households earning less than \$30,000 has been flat since 2008, according to the newspaper, citing the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Total income for that group fell 1 percent between 2004 and 2012.

The merger of Dollar Tree and Family Dollar could further crunch Wal-Mart, according to *The Wall Street Journal*. With 13,000 stores between them, the new dollar store will be in a better position to negotiate lower prices from suppliers. This could challenge Wal-Mart, which is already more expensive than dollar chains.

But it's possible that no amount of discounting will win back these struggling shoppers. "A cash-strapped consumer can't keep buying forever, no matter how low prices go," Moore writes.

ECS:spa

Nothing gives me quite so much joy as when people tell me they've had their pets spayed or neutered.

~ Bob Barker

AUGUST 2014

		
21	Public Works Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	2:00 p.m.
25	Planning Commission Meeting - Canceled	
26	City Manager's Staff Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 2014



01	Labor Day – City Hall Closed	
02	City Council Workshop – Monte Vista Water District Presentation, Council Chambers	5:45 p.m.
02	City Council Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
03	Community Action Committee Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
08	Planning Commission Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
09	City Manager’s Staff Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.
10	Montclair Day at the Fair	
10	Oversight Board Meeting Council Chambers	6:00 p.m.
15	Code Enforcement Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	6:00 p.m.
15	City Council Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
18	Safety Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.
18	Public Works Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	2:00 p.m.
22	Planning Commission Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
23	Autumn Begins	
30	City Manager’s Staff Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.