**DRAFT SPEAKER SUMMARY**

**May 2024**

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**SUMMARY OF 2024 WATER SUPPLY SYMPOSIUM**

The Water Supply Symposium is an annual meeting to define the plan for operations for the upcoming 2024/25 runoff year (April – March). Contributors include appropriate organizations within the Water Resources, Water Operations, and Water Quality Divisions of the Department of Water & Power (DWP).

For 2024, water supply conditions of the three surface water sources for Los Angeles are slightly better than average. The State Water Project (SWP) has a snowpack 123% of normal, the LA Aqueduct (LAA) snowpack is 101% of normal, and the Colorado River snowpack is 115% of normal (April 1st average).

The forecasted runoff from the LAA watershed is 103% of normal, which will yield approximately 290,000 Acre-Feet (AF) of flow to Los Angeles for the runoff year. This amount is slightly greater than last year’s 280,000 AF, which was constrained by numerous turbidity events due to the record precipitation and flooding.

On the SWP, the state’s Department of Water Resources (DWR) recently increased its allocation for the upcoming year to 40% of the contracted amount. At 30% allocation from the SWP, MWD’s supply-demand balance is at the break-even point. Allocations greater than 30% will result in increased storage in MWD’s water system, thus storage is expected to increase this year. MWD’s system-wide total storage at the end of 2023 was 3.4 million AF which is the all-time high. Storage increased significantly in 2023 because of the record precipitation that year. Total storage today is remarkably triple the amount it was in 2000 despite the severe drought conditions since that time. Not all of the storage is available, however, because of extraction limitations, contamination of some groundwater sources, and distribution system limitations.

Locally, precipitation in the 22/23 runoff year was the 15th wettest on record and despite the persistent drought conditions that prevailed since 2000, the 10-year average precipitation at 14.8 inches per annum is now the same as the long-term average. This is due to the occurrence of a few years of exceptional precipitation among the many years of below-average precipitation during that period.

DWP’s efforts to capture stormwater are now paying dividends. Water year 23/24 is the second-best year for local stormwater capture recorded to date. Those efforts resulted in a total capture and storage (in groundwater) of almost 100,000 AF of stormwater so far this year that will be available for future extraction.

Groundwater extractions from the three local basins (San Fernando, Sylmar, and Central) have historically averaged 61,000 AF/yr. but have declined recently because of contamination in those sources. Pumping in the last seven years has been particularly low, averaging much less than the long-term average. Pumping in Runoff Year 2023-24 totaled only 4,700 AF. Current year extractions are expected to increase to about 40,000 AF, boosted by the three groundwater treatment facilities in the San Fernando basin that will come online later this year. Subsequently, future yields from groundwater are expected to approach the annual water rights limitation of 107,000 AF.

Recycled water deliveries for non-potable uses has averaged about 12,000 AF/yr. recently and that amount is expected to grow slowly as new customers come online in the next few years. In 2027/28, the Groundwater Replenishment Project will come online and will add 21,000 AF/yr. to local groundwater basins. The total volume of recycled water delivered in 2027/28 will thus increase to 42,500 AF/yr.

Water supply planning is intended to provide the water needed to meet demands. On the demand side of the equation, DWP has significantly reduced customer demand through its many conservation efforts over the years. Customer water use per capita as recently as 1986/87 was 187 gallons per day. Water use declined to 156 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) in 2006/07, and to 133 gpcd in 2013/14. During a severe drought year in 2017, water use further declined to 106 gpcd. Since then, despite the relaxation of water conservation measures, especially in 2023, water consumption has not rebounded and remains at about 103 gpcd this year. The long-term goal under the Sustainable City pLAn is to reduce that number to 100 gpcd by 2035.

The actual city-wide total demand in runoff year 2023/24 of 444,500 AF was more than 27,000 AF less than the forecast, further demonstrating the lack of water use rebound especially after lawn irrigation restrictions were changed from 2 days per week to 3 days per week in June 2023. Furthermore, total water use in runoff year 2023/24 was less than total water use in the extreme drought year of 2022/23. Forecasted demand in runoff year 2024/25 is 446,185 AF which represents the lowest forecast since the 1970s. The steady reduction in water use over the last 20 years has created new challenges for DWP in balancing supply against demand. Purchases of water from MWD are necessarily reduced, and that reduces the flexibility in choosing which sources to increase or reduce to satisfy demand while minimizing the cost of service to DWP’s customers.

New state regulations for water conservation are expected to be implemented this year in June. The new regulations will establish regional water budgets that vary depending on location. Performance standards will also be imposed for residential indoor use, residential outdoor use, commercial and institutional landscaping, and system leakage rates. The regulations highlight the residential sector and establish a goal of reducing sector water use by 16% by 2040.

The water supply mix for the upcoming runoff year of 2024/25 will be comprised of 65% LAA, 23% MWD, 9% groundwater, and 3% recycled water. The historic record precipitation of 2023 enables higher LAA use than normal and operations for the year will attempt to maximize its use.

MWD’s 10-year financial projection incorporates significant rate increases and property tax rate increases to cover the costs of their future programs. For the upcoming runoff year, treated water rates will increase 11% and in the following year, they will increase another 10%. DWP will consider those added costs in its planning for the next two years and beyond. For the last 10 years, DWP has been using Purchase Order Agreements with MWD which establish a minimum level of purchases for the year to help MWD with their operational planning. DWP has maintained its purchases above the minimum during that time. This process will be eliminated after this calendar year pending completion of MWD’s business model plan.