Beyond Drought
Reliable water in an era of change
The Water Authority produces a fully interactive annual report microsite. The microsite allows readers to go directly to the content that interests them most. Please go to sdcwa.org/annualreport/2015 to get the complete experience including videos, animated graphics and links to more in-depth information.
From the Board Officers and General Manager

From start to finish, drought dominated fiscal year 2015. Record-breaking hot and dry conditions coupled with unprecedented emergency state regulations changed the landscape of the water world in profound ways. While attending to the drought, we didn’t let up on our long-term priorities: the development of the Carlsbad Desalination Project, our efforts to secure legal rates at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, our leadership role in advancing a strong water conservation ethic statewide through legislation, and all of the critical maintenance, repair and replacement work that our crews undertake to ensure reliable and uninterrupted water service 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Despite a myriad of challenges, the Water Authority remained committed to our core values as a leader on regional water supply issues, a partner supporting our member agencies and communities, and the operator of the region’s large-scale water supply infrastructure. Staff responded in remarkable ways: creating and expanding an array of conservation and outreach tools to help ratepayers; completing upgrades to the Water Authority’s infrastructure for utilizing water from the landmark desalination project; helping secure state grants for regional water projects; and launching partnerships across the region to reduce water waste. We also were among the foremost voices calling for state water-use regulators to properly recognize investments local agencies have made to develop drought-resilient sources of supply.

The results were extraordinary. The most significant accomplishment of the year was proving the value of our region’s long-term strategy to develop a diversified water portfolio. While some areas of the state suffered serious water supply shortages after four years of drought, the Water Authority and its member agencies had enough water to meet demands. In fact, we had enough to start storing water behind the raised San Vicente Dam, which we completed in fiscal year 2014 and feted at the start of fiscal year 2015 with a top-flight celebration on the shores of the reservoir.

Through it all, we never lost track of the big picture: our purpose is to provide a safe and reliable water supply – whether conditions are wet or dry – to support 3.2 million residents and a $218 billion economy – an essential role that helps ensure the same opportunities we have today are available to future generations. To that end, we promoted long-term solutions, such as helping our member agencies lay the foundation for potable reuse to help meet our region’s water needs. We continued to explore the possibility of hydropower facilities at San Vicente Reservoir with the ultimate goal of benefitting ratepayers, and the potential for a seawater desalination project at Camp Pendleton. We retired more than $50 million in debt, and followed that with a two-year budget that will help maintain our excellent credit ratings that save money for every ratepayer in the region. We also made good on our commitments to sustain the landmark Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement of 2003, the cornerstone of our supply diversification strategy.

We conclude 2015 on a hopeful and determined note. Despite a changing climate and changing regulations, we stand resolute – ready to provide a safe and reliable water supply through this drought and far beyond.
Diversification strategy shines during drought

Water content in the Sierra Nevada snowpack on April 1 fell to just 5 percent of its historical average, and the statewide snowpack was the lowest for any April since snowpack record-keeping began in 1950. But as water supply conditions worsened throughout the winter and spring, the Water Authority was ready. For more than two decades, the region has prepared for drought with investments in new water supplies, conservation programs and infrastructure.

The Water Authority’s strategic plan included the nation’s largest farm-to-urban water conservation-and-transfer deal along with canal-lining projects that are the foundation of the 2003 Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement. Together, those sources delivered 180,000 acre-feet in 2015, enough for 360,000 typical homes, and the volume will continue to ramp up in coming years.

The Water Authority also heavily promoted conservation, helping to drive down per capita potable water use in the region by 39 percent compared to 1990 and 32 percent since just 2007. Regional potable water use in 2015 was 21 percent lower than it was in 1990, despite adding 800,000 people to the county. Over that period, more than 300,000 jobs were added to the local economy, and the county’s annual gross domestic product nearly doubled.

The value of regional investments was highlighted in April when the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California announced that it would cut supplies to the Water Authority by 15 percent starting in July 2015. Even with that reduction, the Water Authority projected being able to meet 99 percent of normal demand – a significant accomplishment after four years of drought.

In fact, before the fiscal year ended, the Water Authority was able to do something virtually unheard of in California during 2015 – increase its water reserves by storing water behind the newly raised San Vicente Dam. This gave the region added water security in case drought conditions worsen in 2016 or beyond. It was a defining moment that validated decades of planning and implementation of the Water Authority’s diversification strategy.

84% of county residents support the region’s water supply diversification strategy.*

*From a Water Authority countywide public opinion survey conducted in spring 2015.

To view the full animation showing the region’s progress in water supply diversification, go to sdcwa.org/annualreport/2015/charts/water-supply-diversification.
Board responds to drought with strong actions

The Water Authority’s Board of Directors took a series of actions during the fiscal year to stay ahead of worsening drought conditions and unprecedented state water-use reduction mandates.

In July, the Board unanimously activated the second stage of the region’s drought response plan and declared a Drought Alert condition calling for mandatory water conservation measures to keep as much water as possible in storage. The Drought Alert condition made the Drought Watch voluntary conservation measures that had been adopted earlier mandatory, and it added outdoor watering restrictions such as limiting landscape irrigation to no more than three days per week during the summer.

In May, the State Water Resources Control Board approved emergency statewide regulations that set water-use reduction targets for local water agencies from June 1 through February 2016. State mandates required the Water Authority’s 24 member agencies to each reduce water use by 12 to 36 percent compared to their 2013 water-use levels, with a regional average reduction of 20 percent.

Following the state’s adoption of those unprecedented mandates, the Board moved swiftly to help local water agencies meet state targets by restricting irrigation of ornamental landscapes to no more than two days a week across the region and immediately boosting regional conservation and outreach efforts by $1 million. In addition, the Board established local urban and agricultural water supply cutbacks based on reduced water deliveries from the Metropolitan Water District and set penalties for local agencies that exceed their supply allocations.

The combined efforts worked: In June, the first month with state mandates in effect, the San Diego region reduced water use by 26 percent compared to June 2013. That followed a decrease of 30 percent in May compared to May 2013. The water savings were significant: per capita water use decreased from 161 gallons per day in 2014 to 143 gallons per day in 2015. Total regional water use also dropped, from 595,000 acre-feet in 2014 to 533,000 acre-feet in 2015. http://www.sdcwa.org/drought-state-restrictions

Water Authority advocates for more equitable state rules

When state officials proposed an emergency water-use regulation in April, the Water Authority jumped into action and quickly became the leading voice statewide seeking to refine the draft rules so they could achieve water savings with the least possible impact on the region’s economy and quality of life.

Those efforts paid dividends; the final regulations adopted in May provided protection for the San Diego region’s $1.9 billion farm sector, a critical concern. However, the State Water Resources Control Board ultimately adopted regulations that didn’t give credit to regions that had prudently planned for dry periods by investing in drought-resilient water supplies such as the Carlsbad Desalination Project. Left unchanged, that approach will have a chilling effect on the development of drought-proof water supplies statewide because regions won’t be able to benefit from their investments.

State officials pledged to revisit the issues with the Water Authority and other stakeholders during a review process before regulations were scheduled to expire in February 2016.
When in Drought message expands

As drought conditions intensified, the Water Authority expanded its When in Drought conservation campaign to encourage increased water-saving efforts “every day, every way.” The Board in May approved $1 million for expanded conservation and outreach by: funding the creation of a sophisticated smartphone app so users can report water waste across the region; increasing customer assistance by funding more indoor and outdoor water-use evaluations; creating a web-based, step-by-step guide for homeowners to convert to water-efficient landscaping; and training landscaping professionals on water-use efficiency. The funding also paid for the development of an aggressive multi-media advertising campaign focused on the summer months when water use is highest.

A key component of the When in Drought campaign involved securing community partners to help spread the message. Leading institutions and associations joined the cause, including San Diego Zoo Global, which updated signs throughout its two internationally known parks to reflect the need for enhanced water conservation. The zoo also provided conservation reminders for visitors during bus and tram tours, made social media posts encouraging WaterSmart lifestyles, and created a video about efforts to conserve water at its parks.

In addition, the Water Authority was joined by the local chapter of the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association to help residents and businesses save water and money during national Fix a Leak Week in March. The San Diego Brewers Guild promoted increased water conservation and the When in Drought campaign in its comprehensive Craft Beer Map & Guide, while Westfield North County added a When in Drought ad to its regular rotation of displays on one of the region’s most prominent freeway electronic billboards.

Numerous other partners also joined the cause, such as the San Diego Regional Airport Authority, the Food and Beverage Association of San Diego and many others. The team effort delivered the When in Drought campaign to hundreds of thousands of residents, an extraordinary contribution to the cause of water conservation.

*From a Water Authority countywide public opinion survey conducted in spring 2015.
Carlsbad Desalination Project 90 percent complete

The Water Authority remained on track to reach a historic water supply milestone with the $1 billion Carlsbad Desalination Project reaching 90 percent completion at the end of June. Commercial operations are scheduled to start in late 2015.

The project includes the largest, most technologically advanced and energy-efficient seawater desalination plant in the nation; a 10-mile pipeline to connect with the Water Authority’s regional distribution system; and about $80 million in upgrades to Water Authority facilities for distributing desalinated water throughout the region.

At the end of June, the pipeline had been completed, as were upgrades to Water Authority facilities, including the relining of Pipeline 3. In addition, the Twin Oaks Valley Water Treatment Plant north of San Marcos successfully completed testing for accepting water from the desalination plant.

The project is the result of a 30-year Water Purchase Agreement between the Water Authority and Poseidon Water for the purchase of between 48,000 and 56,000 acre-feet per year of desalinated seawater. The plant will produce about one-third of all the water generated in San Diego County in 2020, helping reduce reliance on imported water at a time when hot and dry conditions are depleting water supplies statewide.

After 30 years, the Water Authority has the right, but not the obligation, to purchase the desalination plant for $1.

Potable reuse committee charts regional course

The Water Authority redoubled its efforts to support the development of potable water reuse as the next major increment of local supply by forming the Potable Reuse Coordinating Committee with its member agencies. The committee encourages sharing information and aligning efforts in three key areas: public outreach, the pursuit of grant funding and the state’s development of regulatory criteria.

In conjunction with the committee, the Water Authority developed educational materials that explain the process of water purification and its role in the regional water supply diversification strategy. Water Authority staff also joined member agencies’ staff to attend state expert panel and advisory group meetings about potable reuse and track potential impacts on planned local projects. In addition, the Water Authority supported member agencies’ efforts to secure grant money for potable reuse projects by providing comments on state funding criteria and coordinating on legislation to provide federal financial support.
As part of its commitment to the Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement of 2003, the Water Authority supports environmental mitigation projects in the Salton Sea Basin, such as the completion of the Wister Sport Fishery Pond in Imperial County.

The project, completed in December, was designed to replace sport fishery resources lost when the All-American and Coachella canals were lined to reduce leakage and transfer 80,000 acre-feet of conserved water annually to San Diego County. The sport fishery pond is on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Wister Management Area north of Niland at the eastern shore of the Salton Sea.

Major components of Wister project include a 50-acre main pond stocked with fish, an adjacent five-acre sedimentation forebay, associated equipment for water supply and drainage, fish habitat structures, fishing peninsulas, and a boat ramp. The state will operate and maintain the pond in perpetuity through endowments provided by the Water Authority.

Meeting our environmental commitments

As part of its commitment to the Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement of 2003, the Water Authority supports environmental mitigation projects in the Salton Sea Basin, such as the completion of the Wister Sport Fishery Pond in Imperial County.

The project, completed in December, was designed to replace sport fishery resources lost when the All-American and Coachella canals were lined to reduce leakage and transfer 80,000 acre-feet of conserved water annually to San Diego County. The sport fishery pond is on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Wister Management Area north of Niland at the eastern shore of the Salton Sea.

Major components of Wister project include a 50-acre main pond stocked with fish, an adjacent five-acre sedimentation forebay, associated equipment for water supply and drainage, fish habitat structures, fishing peninsulas, and a boat ramp. The state will operate and maintain the pond in perpetuity through endowments provided by the Water Authority.

Lower Colorado conservation program celebrated

The Water Authority helped commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program in April during a tour of conservation sites along the lower Colorado River. The Water Authority is one of 57 partners in the program, which was created in 2005 to balance the use of the Colorado River resources with the conservation of native species and their habitats.

The program works toward the recovery of species protected by the Endangered Species Act. The 50-year program accommodates current water diversions and power production, and optimizes opportunities for future water and power development.

The program area extends along 400 miles of the lower Colorado River from Lake Mead to the Mexico border. It calls for the creation of more than 8,100 acres of habitat for fish and wildlife species and the production of more than 1.2 million native fish to augment existing populations. During the program’s first decade, 11 conservation areas covering more than 4,300 acres were established.
Residents and business across San Diego County stepped up to the conservation challenge by taking advantage of the Water Authority’s water-saving educational programs.

The Water Authority held 49 California Friendly Landscape Training classes during the year, educating nearly 2,000 participants – more than double the previous year. The Water Authority also hosted 13 WaterSmart Landscape Makeover Series for more than 250 homeowners. On average, makeover series participants reduced their household water use by 58 percent, or approximately 21,000 gallons per year, for a combined savings of more than 5.3 million gallons per year.

The Water Authority’s water-use checkups also proved popular. Residential assessments jumped by more than 17 percent to more than 2,500 participants. In addition, 72 commercial, industrial and institutional water users participated in irrigation checkups, an increase of 140 percent.

Popular turf program changes the landscape

Drought conditions highlighted the value of the Water Authority’s long-term water conservation efforts, including the grant-funded WaterSmart Turf Replacement Program launched in December 2012.

A surge in applications exhausted available grant funds in January, nearly three years ahead of schedule. The program will pay for nearly 800 turf replacement projects and directly account for the replacement of more than 1.1 million square feet of water-intensive turf grass with low water-use landscapes across the region. Those landscapes will save an estimated 1,500 acre-feet of water over 10 years.

The turf replacement program also helped to catalyze a market transformation in the region’s landscaping industry at a minimal cost to ratepayers. By the end of the year, low-water landscapes were becoming more prominent across the region.

Conservation education programs grow in popularity

Residents and business across San Diego County stepped up to the conservation challenge by taking advantage of the Water Authority’s water-saving educational programs.

The Water Authority held 49 California Friendly Landscape Training classes during the year, educating nearly 2,000 participants – more than double the previous year. The Water Authority also hosted 13 WaterSmart Landscape Makeover Series for more than 250 homeowners. On average, makeover series participants reduced their household water use by 58 percent, or approximately 21,000 gallons per year, for a combined savings of more than 5.3 million gallons per year.

The Water Authority’s water-use checkups also proved popular. Residential assessments jumped by more than 17 percent to more than 2,500 participants. In addition, 72 commercial, industrial and institutional water users participated in irrigation checkups, an increase of 140 percent.

**Monthly rainfall data collection began in Water Year 2015.**
Raised dam dedicated by state and regional leaders

Approximately 200 state and local water leaders, elected officials, civic and business leaders, and community stakeholders attended a dam raise dedication ceremony at San Vicente Dam in July to celebrate the largest water storage project in San Diego County history. It was, once again, proof that the San Diego region is committed to doing what it takes to maintain a safe and reliable water supply.

The San Vicente Dam Raise Project is the largest piece and final major element of the Water Authority’s $1.5 billion Emergency Storage Project, a system of reservoirs, interconnected pipelines, and pumping stations designed to ensure a six-month supply of water for the San Diego region in case imported water deliveries are interrupted – for instance, by an earthquake.

Started in 2009, it was the tallest dam raise in the nation and the tallest in the world using a construction technique called roller-compacted concrete. Roller-compacted concrete is just as strong as conventional concrete but takes less time and water. It is placed in layers, one on top of the other, in a process that resembles road construction. The dam now stands 337 feet tall, an increase of 117 feet.

San Vicente Dam Raise passes safety tests; re-filling begins

The San Vicente Dam Raise project added 152,000 acre-feet of water storage capacity to the reservoir – but before the expanded capacity could be used, the raised dam was required to satisfy state regulators. The California Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams provided oversight during design and construction, along with post-construction safety certification.

In October, the Water Authority and the City of San Diego successfully performed an emergency release of water as a test, and the state certified the emergency release system. The state also required drilling a series of 6-inch diameter “cores” to assess the strength of the new structure.

Based on the initial core assessment results, the Water Authority was allowed to fill the reservoir 30 feet above the dam’s original elevation starting in May. The final analysis of the coring test results was being prepared for the state’s review at year’s end, moving the Water Authority closer to final certification of the dam. By June, construction of the buildings, boat ramp and parking lot for the new and improved marina also were complete.

The storage volume added by the dam raise is greater than any reservoir in the county, a vital hedge against water shortages. About one-third of the reservoir’s added capacity – 52,000 acre-feet – is for stored for emergencies. The rest is “carryover” storage designed to be filled during wet years and tapped to meet demands in dry years.

To view the San Vicente Dam Raise Dedication video, go to sdcwa.org/annualreport/2015/video/svdr-dedication.
Water Authority and City of San Diego explore pumped storage project

As construction on the San Vicente Projects wound down, the Water Authority and the City of San Diego ramped up their coordinated assessment of a potential pumped storage energy project at the reservoir. The Water Authority and the City are co-permittees on a preliminary permit issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in May that allows the agencies to pursue development of a pumped storage facility at San Vicente Reservoir. The preliminary permit is an early step in the process of determining if and how the Water Authority and the City could develop the project during the next decade.

The potential pumped storage project could supplement the region’s energy needs with up to 500 megawatts of energy production during peak demand periods, enough to supply approximately 325,000 homes.

The San Vicente Pumped Storage Project would include construction of a small reservoir above San Vicente Reservoir, along with an underground powerhouse at San Vicente Reservoir and a tunnel and pipeline system to connect the two reservoirs. The powerhouse would contain reversible pump-turbines. During peak energy demand, water would flow downhill through the turbines to generate carbon-free power. During off-peak periods, water would be pumped to the upper reservoir.

Numerous steps involved in evaluating the project were completed during the year. In February, the Water Authority Board approved a partnership agreement with the City of San Diego and funding for technical and professional services to advance in the regulatory process. That was followed in May by Board approval for submitting the Preliminary Application Document/Notice of Intent to FERC, along with approval for starting the process of selecting an Owners’ Advisor Team to perform additional analyses of the project’s viability and recommend a business model for implementation of the project. Staff completed the FERC PAD/NOI in June for submission to FERC.

Pumped storage facility tops 97 percent ‘uptime’

Regular upkeep allowed the Lake Hodges Pumped Storage Facility to top 97 percent availability during the fiscal year, an important achievement for ensuring the facility continues to maximize revenues that offset the cost of providing a safe and reliable water supply.

As part of planned operations, the Lake Hodges facility was taken off-line in March and November for inspections and preventative maintenance. The shutdowns allowed the facility’s contract operator to cost-effectively perform annual maintenance while maximizing facility availability for pumped storage operations.
Collaboration ensures successful relining project in North County

Realignment of State Route 76 in North County and the associated relining of sections of Pipelines 3, 4 and 5 put Water Authority crews to the test during the winter and spring. Collaboration by several departments, member agencies, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and Caltrans ensured that all water demands by member agencies were met and all facilities operated as designed.

The complex, multi-stage relining resulted from the final phase of a Caltrans project to widen and realign State Route 76 between Interstate 15 and South Mission Road in Bonsall. The work directly impacted the three pipelines comprising the Water Authority’s Second Aqueduct.

Caltrans agreed to spend $6.1 million relining Pipelines 3, 4 and 5 within the Second Aqueduct right of way, extending the life of those sections by 75 years. However, the project included a series of shutdowns that severely limited water entering the county and required unique operational adjustments. Those accommodations included storing more than 35,000 acre-feet of water in San Vicente Reservoir for delivery when the pipelines were out of service, and using the San Vicente Pump Station for the first time to meet operational demands.

As a result of careful planning and execution, there were no water supply interruptions to the Water Authority’s member agencies. The project was completed in March.

Nob Hill Improvements

Project advances

Following certification of the final Environmental Impact Report for the Nob Hill Pipeline Improvements Project in June 2014, the Water Authority continued to hold numerous public meetings for residents in Scripps Ranch in preparation for the start of construction in late 2015.

The project includes replacing two existing pipelines with one pipeline at a lower elevation and a new access road for maintenance crews. Once completed in 2017, the work will improve aqueduct hydraulics in the area, reducing the potential for pipeline damage. In addition, the new road will mean that Water Authority vehicles won’t need to use Scripps Nob Hill roads for accessing agency facilities, a long-term benefit for the community.
In November, the Water Authority finished 10 miles of pipeline condition assessments using magnetic flux leakage – or MFL – technology. The high-tech tool confirmed the pipeline was in good condition overall and will continue to provide decades of service. It also identified four potentially problematic corrosion areas that were immediately repaired, proving the value of the Water Authority’s aggressive approach to asset management and facilities maintenance.

The Water Authority is one of only three public water agencies in the nation using MFL to locate potential weak spots in large-diameter steel pipelines. The Water Authority is the leading water agency in the world in terms of pipeline distance scanned using MFL, with more than 26 miles assessed.

As part of the Water Authority’s longstanding commitment to ensuring a safe and reliable water supply even under challenging conditions, staff conducted an exercise of the Incident Command System in September. The event simulated what might occur following a 7.1 earthquake on the Elsinore Fault, helping to practice the internal coordination necessary to recover from a long-term water supply outage.

The emergency exercise included events that might unfold over six weeks following an emergency to promote both immediate response measures and the planning necessary to return to normal conditions. It also included staff at multiple locations and three shift changes, allowing primary and alternate staff for each ICS position to practice leading and supporting the emergency response.
Internship program cultivates next generation

Twelve students from Palomar College and Cuyamaca College were selected for the 2014/15 Regional Water and Wastewater Intern Program run by the Water Authority in partnership with local water agencies, community colleges and private-sector partners. During the program’s tenth year, 10 host agencies volunteered to mentor interns during the 10-month, one-of-a-kind work experience.

Students in the San Diego region use the program to gain invaluable on-the-job experience that often leads to rewarding careers. Nearly half of the participants in the program over the past decade have secured jobs in the water/wastewater industry before their internships ended. The program also provides the water and wastewater industries with trained employees to fill entry-level positions as demand for qualified staff continues to grow.

Right-of-way team resolves encroachments

One of the major operational challenges for utilities is to ensure that easements can be readily accessed for routine maintenance and emergency response. Each week, Water Authority staff patrols nearly 160 miles of aqueduct rights-of-way looking for ways to remove existing encroachments and prevent new ones.

During 2015, the right-of-way team resolved 49 encroachment violations, including a deck on the Water Authority’s list of top right-of-way encroachments that was being rebuilt in the Los Peñasquitos area. Early detection and action were instrumental in removing the deck at no cost to the Water Authority – a textbook example of how to continue ensuring a safe and reliable water supply and protect essential infrastructure.
Budget for fiscal years 2016 & 2017 set at $1.5 billion

Careful budgeting and planning helped keep budget increases to a minimum despite numerous changing and growing demands. The Board of Directors in June adopted a $1.5 billion budget for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, up 2 percent from the prior two-year budget due largely to higher costs for the purchase and treatment of water. Water costs were projected to rise by 12 percent in fiscal years 2016 and 2017, partly because of increases in the cost of supplies from MWD and the purchase of highly reliable, drought-proof water from the Carlsbad Desalination Plant.

Expenses were held in check by lower spending on the Water Authority’s Capital Improvement Program, which decreased by 34 percent as major projects neared or reached completion. The lifetime cost of the CIP projects was reduced to $2.8 billion. In addition, the Water Authority continued to streamline the organization through the strategic reductions and reclassification of staff positions following a series of major cost-cutting moves in prior budgets.

The 2016 and 2017 budget for operating departments decreased 5 percent from the previous budget due to a combination of efforts to reduce expenses. Operating expenses comprise only 6 percent of the Water Authority’s $1.5 billion two-year budget.

In fiscal years 2016 and 2017, the Water Authority’s budget anticipated several major projects and initiatives. They included:

- Drought response – Helping the region meet state-mandated water-use reduction targets with outreach and conservation programs to assist customers and help member agencies avoid financial penalties by the state
- Carlsbad Desalination Project – Preparing to receive 50 million gallons of water a day from the plant for regional distribution
- Regulatory policy – Supporting a new program to address regulatory policy and planning, along with increased activities necessary to comply with various demands by regulatory agencies
- Dry-year modeling – Developing a model to assist in the prudent use of stored water reserves by accounting for variables such as weather, economic factors and evaporation
- Asset management – Maintaining the reliability of the Water Authority’s estimated $3.3 billion infrastructure
- Hydroelectric energy – Investigating the potential of new energy sources, such as a pumped storage project at San Vicente Reservoir
- Water supply planning – Forecasting changes in long-term water use by updating the Urban Water Management Plan

Outstanding safety record benefits ratepayers

The Water Authority ended the year with an excellent safety record that was nearly four times better than the industry average, indicating that the Water Authority had fewer work-related injuries and illnesses than most peer agencies.

The Water Authority also maintains a workers’ compensation “experience modifier” that is significantly below the industry standard, and it completed the fiscal year without a single property claim. The figures not only reflect the Water Authority’s commitment to workplace safety and risk management, they translate into savings on insurance premiums – a benefit for ratepayers.
Rate increases near low end of projections

In June, the Board also adopted rate increases of 6.6 percent for untreated water and 5.4 percent for treated water, starting Jan. 1, 2016.

The Water Authority will charge its 24 member agencies the municipal and industrial rate of $1,159 per acre-foot for untreated water in calendar year 2016, or $72 more than they paid in 2015. The Water Authority also will charge $1,439 per acre-foot for treated water, or $74 more than in 2015. Actual figures will vary by member agency, and each member agency will incorporate costs from the Water Authority into the retail rates it charges to residents, businesses and institutions.

The adopted rates were near the low end of projections made in 2011, and well below the double-digit increases during the last drought that were driven by steep price hikes from the Metropolitan Water District. To moderate rate increases, the Water Authority restructured its debt and planned a strategic draw from its Rate Stabilization Fund to minimize the impact on ratepayers.
Financial Statements
The Water Authority received its 15th consecutive award from the Government Finance Officers Association for financial reporting excellence. The Water Authority was also awarded a Distinguished Budget Presentation award for its Multi-Year Budget for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. The Water Authority has received this award every year since 1995.

Water Use in San Diego County
533,230 acre-feet

- Residential: 338,002 acre-feet (64%)
- Public & Other: 65,425 acre-feet (12%)
- Commercial & Industrial: 80,311 acre-feet (15%)
- Agriculture: 49,502 acre-feet (9%)

NOTES: Agriculture sector use is based on member agencies' reported sector splits. Sector percentages are rounded to total 100 percent.
### Statements of Net Position

**JUNE 30, 2015 AND 2014**

**Assets:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Assets</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and investments</td>
<td>$111,130,235</td>
<td>$1,609,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted cash and investments</td>
<td>170,873,233</td>
<td>337,066,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water receivables</td>
<td>90,113,890</td>
<td>115,790,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest receivable</td>
<td>1,222,552</td>
<td>1,317,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes receivable</td>
<td>1,159,303</td>
<td>1,364,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other receivables</td>
<td>15,697,438</td>
<td>9,761,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventories</td>
<td>52,428,622</td>
<td>27,589,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>4,636,815</td>
<td>4,637,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>447,262,088</strong></td>
<td><strong>499,138,671</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noncurrent Assets</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and investments</td>
<td>115,405,373</td>
<td>200,567,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted cash and investments</td>
<td>70,039,820</td>
<td>16,715,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advances to other agencies</td>
<td>278,977</td>
<td>343,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention receivable</td>
<td>1,724,761</td>
<td>1,021,168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term loan receivables</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net OPEB asset</td>
<td>2,157,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital assets:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-depreciable</td>
<td>640,109,515</td>
<td>633,109,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciable</td>
<td>2,617,179,700</td>
<td>2,580,689,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total noncurrent assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,466,895,146</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,452,447,600</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total assets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3,914,157,234</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,951,586,271</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Deferred outflows of resources:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deferred loss on refunding</td>
<td>52,891,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer contributions subsequent to measurement date</td>
<td>4,142,513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total deferred outflows of resources**

| 57,033,723       | 56,480,770     |
## Statements of Net Position

### JUNE 30, 2015 AND 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities:</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT LIABILITIES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and other liabilities</td>
<td>75,697,190</td>
<td>97,556,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest payable</td>
<td>18,448,486</td>
<td>19,312,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction deposits</td>
<td>451,123</td>
<td>315,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term liabilities</td>
<td>360,000,000</td>
<td>360,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current portion of long-term liabilities</td>
<td>39,205,400</td>
<td>44,267,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>493,802,199</strong></td>
<td><strong>521,451,352</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NONCURRENT LIABILITIES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term liabilities</td>
<td>1,913,161,795</td>
<td>2,015,008,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net pension liabilities</td>
<td>57,843,537</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total noncurrent assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,971,005,332</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,015,008,349</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,464,807,531</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,536,459,701</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deferred inflows of resources:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments</td>
<td>9,810,726</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET POSITION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Investment in capital assets</td>
<td>1,102,128,289</td>
<td>1,011,397,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted for construction projects</td>
<td>143,366,311</td>
<td>201,696,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted for debt service</td>
<td>113,537</td>
<td>549,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>250,964,563</td>
<td>257,965,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total net position</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,496,572,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,471,607,340</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Statements of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position

### JUNE 30, 2015 AND 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATING REVENUES:</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water sales</td>
<td>$584,172,839</td>
<td>$593,695,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revenues</td>
<td>4,567,285</td>
<td>3,935,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total operating revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>588,740,124</strong></td>
<td><strong>597,630,595</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATING EXPENSES:</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of sales</td>
<td>411,037,897</td>
<td>422,699,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations and maintenance</td>
<td>22,365,531</td>
<td>18,780,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>8,416,134</td>
<td>6,851,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and administrative</td>
<td>14,115,738</td>
<td>13,670,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation and amortization</td>
<td>57,751,284</td>
<td>56,589,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total operating expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>513,686,584</strong></td>
<td><strong>518,592,276</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Operating income   | 75,053,540 | 79,038,319 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NONOPERATING REVENUES (EXPENSES):</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Property taxes and in-lieu charges</td>
<td>11,475,607</td>
<td>11,142,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure access charges</td>
<td>29,895,726</td>
<td>29,205,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>2,905,952</td>
<td>3,674,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>7,786,392</td>
<td>10,570,654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental</td>
<td>11,148,139</td>
<td>10,645,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain on sale/retirement of capital assets</td>
<td>32,557</td>
<td>48,709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest expense</td>
<td>(81,792,704)</td>
<td>(77,791,397)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt issuance costs</td>
<td>(16,840)</td>
<td>(280,650)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenses</td>
<td>(10,909,171)</td>
<td>(10,434,146)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total nonoperating revenues (expenses)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(29,474,342)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(23,218,403)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Income before capital contributions | 45,579,198 | 55,819,916 |
## Statements of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity charges</td>
<td>22,559,844</td>
<td>13,815,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water standby availability charges</td>
<td>11,106,743</td>
<td>11,137,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions in aid of capital assets</td>
<td>6,897,528</td>
<td>230,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total capital contributions</strong></td>
<td>40,564,115</td>
<td>25,183,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changes in net position</strong></td>
<td>86,143,313</td>
<td>81,003,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net position, beginning of year, as previously reported</strong></td>
<td>1,471,607,340</td>
<td>1,390,604,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less: Cumulative effect of change in accounting principle</strong></td>
<td>(61,177,953)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net position at beginning of year, as restated</strong></td>
<td>1,410,429,387</td>
<td>1,390,604,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net position at end of year</strong></td>
<td>$1,496,572,700</td>
<td>$1,471,607,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See accompanying notes to the financial statements located in the San Diego County Water Authority’s 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
## Cash and Investments

### As of June 30, 2015 and 2014, restricted cash and investments balances were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$85,370,403</td>
<td>$135,551,448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Service Reserve</td>
<td>12,240,775</td>
<td>16,715,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay-As-You-Go</td>
<td>143,301,875</td>
<td>201,515,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$240,913,053</strong></td>
<td><strong>$353,782,393</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### As of June 30, 2015 and 2014, unrestricted cash and investments balances were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
<td>$8,150,206</td>
<td>$23,533,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated for Rate Stabilization</td>
<td>115,405,373</td>
<td>86,110,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated for Equipment Replacement</td>
<td>5,116,513</td>
<td>6,666,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated for Stored Water</td>
<td>97,863,516</td>
<td>85,866,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$226,535,608</strong></td>
<td><strong>$202,176,853</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Sources of Water in San Diego County

- **Colorado River**: 76%
- **State Water Project**: 15%
- **Local**: 9%
## Water Sources and Uses (Fiscal Year 2014 - 2015)

Compilation of data furnished by member agencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Water (acre-feet)</th>
<th>Type of Water Authority</th>
<th>Supply Water Use (acre-feet)</th>
<th>Gross Area (Acres)</th>
<th>Estimated Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LOCAL SUPPLY³</td>
<td>WATER AUTHORITY SUPPLY (IMPORTED)³</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>AGRICULTURAL USE³ M &amp; I USE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlsbad M.W.D.</td>
<td>4,206.3</td>
<td>16,402.5</td>
<td>20,608.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del Mar, City of</td>
<td>135.4</td>
<td>961.2</td>
<td>1,096.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escondido, City of</td>
<td>1,203.0</td>
<td>21,061.7</td>
<td>22,264.7</td>
<td>2,865.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallbrook P.U.D.</td>
<td>602.2</td>
<td>11,728.9</td>
<td>12,331.1</td>
<td>3,853.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helix W.D.</td>
<td>293.0</td>
<td>30,852.0</td>
<td>31,145.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside W.D.</td>
<td>880.4</td>
<td>2,858.3</td>
<td>3,738.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National City, City of</td>
<td>2,958.1</td>
<td>2,717.7</td>
<td>5,675.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceanside, City of</td>
<td>3,367.1</td>
<td>23,081.7</td>
<td>26,448.8</td>
<td>410.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivenhain M.W.D.</td>
<td>2,673.0</td>
<td>19,549.0</td>
<td>22,222.0</td>
<td>113.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otay W.D.</td>
<td>4,186.4</td>
<td>30,298.9</td>
<td>34,485.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padre Dam M.W.D.</td>
<td>885.9</td>
<td>10,436.5</td>
<td>11,322.4</td>
<td>288.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Pendleton 4⁴</td>
<td>7,806.3</td>
<td>219.6</td>
<td>8,025.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poway, City of</td>
<td>466.2</td>
<td>10,660.4</td>
<td>11,126.6</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow M.W.D.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20,173.4</td>
<td>20,173.4</td>
<td>9,687.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramona M.W.D.</td>
<td>650.6</td>
<td>5,491.5</td>
<td>6,142.1</td>
<td>1,337.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rincon Del Diablo M.W.D.</td>
<td>3,138.1</td>
<td>5,744.3</td>
<td>8,882.4</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, City of 5⁵</td>
<td>7,180.9</td>
<td>184,493.1</td>
<td>191,674.0</td>
<td>152.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Dieguito W.D.</td>
<td>1,361.3</td>
<td>5,748.7</td>
<td>7,110.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe I.D.</td>
<td>1,334.1</td>
<td>9,865.1</td>
<td>11,199.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bay I.D.</td>
<td>2,319.2</td>
<td>11,236.2</td>
<td>13,555.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallecitos W.D.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15,297.3</td>
<td>15,297.3</td>
<td>1,077.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Center M.W.D.</td>
<td>387.2</td>
<td>25,598.1</td>
<td>25,985.3</td>
<td>17,461.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vista I.D. 6⁶</td>
<td>1,617.8</td>
<td>16,215.5</td>
<td>17,833.3</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuima M.W.D.</td>
<td>424.0</td>
<td>4,470.0</td>
<td>4,894.0</td>
<td>3,671.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTALS 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Supply</th>
<th>Water Authority Supply (Imported)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Agricultural Use</th>
<th>M &amp; I Use</th>
<th>Gross Area (Acres)</th>
<th>Estimated Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48,076.5</td>
<td>485,161.6</td>
<td>533,238.1</td>
<td>41,054.7</td>
<td>444,106.9</td>
<td>946,211.8</td>
<td>3,146,771</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Includes surface, recycled and groundwater supplies; does not reflect conserved water.
2 Water use in a given year may differ from Water Authority water sales due to utilization of storage.
3 Includes only amounts certified through the Special Agricultural Water Rate discounted agricultural water use program. Water Authority supplies used by agricultural customers who do not participate in the SAWR program are included in the “M & I Use” category.
4 Includes Water Authority deliveries via South Coast Water District system.
5 Excludes City of San Diego local surface water use outside of Water Authority service area.
6 Excludes land outside of Water Authority service area.
7 Numbers may not total due to rounding.
Second phase of landmark rate trial concludes

The second phase of the San Diego County Water Authority’s landmark rate case against the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California was heard by a San Francisco Superior Court judge in April, but no ruling was issued before the end of the fiscal year.

A year earlier, the Water Authority prevailed in the first phase of the case, with Judge Curtis E. A. Karnow ruling that rates charged by MWD in 2011-2014 were illegal and violated several provisions of California law and the state constitution.

The Phase 2 ruling will determine the amount of damages the Water Authority should be awarded as a result of MWD’s breach of its contractual obligation to set legal rates. The Water Authority has calculated that MWD has overcharged San Diego County ratepayers tens of millions of dollars each year since 2011, and the Water Authority is seeking more than $180 million in damages. The Board of Directors has determined that the Water Authority will deduct litigation expenses from whatever damages it receives and return the remaining money to its 24 member agencies in proportion to their payment of MWD’s illegal overcharges over the four years in dispute.

Phase 2 also will decide whether MWD miscalculates the Water Authority’s preferential right to MWD water. Each MWD member agency has a preferential right – or legal entitlement – to a percentage of MWD’s available water supplies based on a provision in the MWD Act. The preferential rights issue is significant because MWD has understated the San Diego region’s right to purchase water by tens of thousands of acre-feet a year, more than the annual production capacity of the $1 billion Carlsbad Desalination Project.

Water Authority maintains leadership role in Bay-Delta

As proposals for fixing the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta ebbed and flowed in Sacramento, the Water Authority maintained its longstanding commitment to promote viable and cost-effective solutions.

The Water Authority has been among the most active water agencies in the state in seeking viable Bay-Delta solutions because financing any major project is particularly significant for San Diego County ratepayers. The Metropolitan Water District has said its share of the cost is about a quarter of the Bay-Delta fix project cost, although no cost allocation has been agreed upon. As MWD’s largest customer, the Water Authority would be expected to pay for a large share of those costs.

Guided by the Board of Directors, a multi-disciplinary staff team reviewed the proposed Bay Delta Conservation Plan in fiscal year 2014 and submitted a formal comment letter as part of the environmental review process. In July, the Water Authority submitted another formal comment letter on the BDCP Implementation Agreement. Central among the Water Authority’s concerns is the lack of legally binding financing commitments in the plan.

The following April, Gov. Jerry Brown announced that the state would take a different approach to address the Delta, decoupling the water conveyance and ecosystem restoration objectives into two distinct efforts. The Water Authority staff continued to monitor the situation in light of policy principles set by the Board.
Region secures $15 million in state IRWM grants

The San Diego region in November was awarded more than $15 million in fast-tracked funding by the California Department of Water Resources for a variety of projects aimed at increasing local water supplies and decreasing demands. The projects will produce or save more than 12,000 acre-feet of water annually.

The state grant from voter-approved Proposition 84 (2006) provided funds for projects identified in the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. The selected local projects will expand groundwater desalination and water recycling, improve water quality, and enhance water conservation initiatives such as the regional WaterSmart Turf Replacement Program.

All $15,074,938 identified for the San Diego region was set aside for the Water Authority or its member agencies – Carlsbad Municipal Water District, Fallbrook Public Utility District, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District, the City of San Diego and Sweetwater Authority.

Between 2007 and late 2014, the San Diego IRWM Program’s regional planning process identified 44 water-related projects that were selected for state grants of $59 million from two voter-approved state water bonds. The region also received a $1 million state grant to help pay for updating the IRWM Plan to comply with new state guidelines and requirements.

Almost $41 million of the funding is directed to seven projects sponsored by the Water Authority and 18 by Water Authority member agencies. The 44 projects included expanding the distribution system for recycled water, fostering conservation, acquiring lands for watershed habitat protection and reducing the amount of polluted runoff into local streams.

Dashboard improves transparency of information

The Water Authority launched an online Dashboard of Key Indicators in July to display important agency data at a single glance. It was an immediate hit, amassing more than 10,000 page views since its debut on sdcwa.org.

The dashboard displays 12 indicators divided into four agency-wide focus categories: Water Supply Reliability, Water Distribution and Facilities, Environmental Stewardship, and Financial Responsibility. The tool combines key information from across Water Authority departments into a single webpage for staff, member agencies and the public.
Outreach serves students K through college

Water Authority-sponsored theatrical shows reached nearly 65,000 elementary school students during the year with timely messages about water conservation, as part of the agency’s commitment to education. In addition, the Water Authority helped pay for 3,700 grade-schoolers to visit the Splash Lab, a mobile science laboratory that provided hands-on instruction about water issues at 24 schools.

The Water Authority also collaborated with the region’s universities to distribute thousands of refrigerator magnets to students as they stepped onto campuses for the fall semester. The magnets emphasized the need for everyone in San Diego County to conserve water with mandatory water-use restrictions in place.

Water Authority supports successful State Water Bond, hosts governor

Gov. Jerry Brown and Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins rallied support for the state water bond – Proposition 1 – at Water Authority headquarters in late October. Voters in San Diego County and statewide overwhelmingly supported the bond on Election Day, providing $7.5 billion for funding projects and initiatives across California.

The water bond was the product of negotiations led by Gov. Brown, Speaker Atkins and Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg. The Water Authority worked for months to advocate for the San Diego region’s policy priorities in Sacramento and supported the final version of the bond passed by the Legislature. Every member of the San Diego County delegation voted for the bond measure.

As passed by the voters, Proposition 1 provides money for water-use efficiency and recycling, desalination, groundwater cleanup and management, as well as $2.7 billion for additional water storage. It also invests in safe drinking water, particularly in disadvantaged communities, and funds watershed restoration and increased flows in some of California’s most important rivers and streams, including the San Diego River. In addition, the bond includes money to fulfill state obligations, including mitigation and restoration obligations at the Salton Sea as part of the Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement of 2003.

The water bond contains competitive funding opportunities for the San Diego region to advance local and regional water supply development. Of the bond money that was regionally allocated, the San Diego region was slated to receive nearly 11 percent of the total, an equitable amount proportional to the region’s share of the state’s population.
Citizens Water Academy a smashing success

With drought dominating the news, the Water Authority launched the Citizens Water Academy in fall 2014 to engage and educate up-and-coming leaders across the San Diego region on a range of water topics.

A diverse inaugural class of 50 graduates said the class series helped them understand the physical movement of water into and around the region, along with a range of critical water issues such as the importance of the region’s water supply diversification strategy, how large-scale water projects are built and maintained, and how water managers are preparing to meet future water supply needs.

The first class proved so popular that applications for the spring and summer classes skyrocketed; people lined up for a behind-the-scenes look at how the Water Authority helps to protect the region’s economy and quality of life through its plans, projects, operations and programs, along with information about regional drought response efforts. Each academy included a tour of world-class water facilities such as the Carlsbad Desalination Project, and participants in each class had the opportunity to interact with top Water Authority executives – enhancing the community dialogue about critical issues.

During its first year, the Citizens Water Academy graduated 134 people from more than 20 communities – and 99 percent of the participants said they would recommend the program to someone else.

Speakers Bureau shifts into high gear

Water Authority Board members and staff made nearly 200 presentations during the year – an average of one per workday – to civic groups, businesses and other organizations interested in learning more about water. March, April and May were particularly busy for the agency’s Speakers Bureau, with more than 80 presentations during that stretch as the Water Authority and its member agencies responded to unprecedented statewide emergency water-use regulations.
The Water Authority sponsored three bills in the 2015 legislative session, and all three were passed by the Legislature and signed into law.

Assembly Bill 349 by Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez of San Diego took an important step in expanding water conservation efforts by allowing homeowners in common interest developments to install synthetic grass as long as the installation is consistent with reasonable design and aesthetic standards adopted by the homeowners’ association.

Another significant advancement was Senate Bill 208 by Senator Ricardo Lara of Bell Gardens, which streamlines grant funding for disadvantaged communities and non-profit entities. It authorizes the state Department of Water Resources to provide up to half of an Integrated Regional Water Management grant award under $1 million as an advanced payment. The bill was designed to ensure adequate cash flow for those organizations to complete IRWM projects in a timely manner.

The Water Authority also sponsored Assembly Bill 149 by Assemblymember Rocky Chavez of Oceanside. It changes the date for water agencies to submit the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan to June 1, 2021, to allow for up-to-date reporting on water conservation targets for 2020 and population and other demographic data from the 2020 census.

In addition, the Water Authority advocated on nearly three dozen bills during the legislative session and also was actively involved in more than 15 budget trailer bills dealing with drought emergency funding and policy issues during state budget negotiations. The Water Authority was a leader in working with key legislators and the Brown Administration to create the Salton Sea Task Force for addressing state restoration efforts in the Salton Sea Basin.
Water Authority Awards

Throughout the year, the Water Authority won awards and distinctions for its projects and programs from local, state, national and international organizations. Awards and distinctions received include:

**American Public Works Association – San Diego and Imperial Counties Chapter:** Project of the Year Award for the San Marcos Vent Desalination Modifications project

**American Society of Civil Engineers – San Diego Section:** Outstanding Civil Engineering Project Award for the San Marcos Vent Desalination Modifications project

**American Society of Landscape Architects – San Diego Chapter:** 2014 Landscape Design Award of Merit for the WaterSmart Landscape Makeover Series

**Association of Public Treasurers of the United States & Canada:** Certificate of Excellence Award for the Water Authority’s Investment Policy


**International Association of Business Communicators:** 2015 Gold Quill Award of Excellence in the “digital communication vehicle” category for the eGuide to a WaterSmart Lifestyle

**International Association of Business Communicators – Pacific Plains Region:** 2014 Silver Quill Award of Merit for the 2013 Annual Report

**National Procurement Institute:** Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award for 2014

**2015 San Diego County Fair** – The Water Authority’s water-efficient landscape exhibit won the following awards: Environmental Award – First Place, for landscapes that benefit the environment; Pennsylvania Horticultural Society “Distinguished Garden” Award; Featured Theme Garden Winner – First Place; Unique Color Landscape Award – First Place; Cuyamaca College Botanical Society Award; Conceptual Landscape Plan Award – First Place; Bill Teague Well-Maintained Landscape Exhibit Award; and Award of Merit
1 Carlsbad Municipal Water District
5950 El Camino Real
Carlsbad CA 92008
Ph: 760-438-2722
carlsbadca.gov/water
DIRECTORS:
Matt Hall
Keith Lewinger

2 City of Del Mar
1050 Camino del Mar
Del Mar CA 92014
Ph: 858-755-1313
delmar.ca.us
DIRECTOR: Ken Olson

3 City of Escondido
201 North Broadway
Escondido CA 92025
Ph: 760-839-4682
escondido.org
DIRECTOR: Ed Gallo

4 Fallbrook Public Utility District
990 East Mission Road
Fallbrook CA 92028
Ph: 760-728-1125
fpud.com
DIRECTOR: Brian J. Brady

5 Helix Water District
7811 University Avenue
La Mesa CA 91942
Ph: 619-466-0585
hwid.com
DIRECTORS:
John Linden
DeAna Verbeke

6 Lakeside Water District
10375 Vine Street
Lakeside CA 92040
Ph: 619-443-3805
lakesidewater.org
DIRECTOR: Frank Hilliker

7 City of National City (Managed by Sweetwater Authority)
1243 National City Boulevard
National City CA 91950
Ph: 619-336-4241
cli.national-city.ca.us
sweetwater.org
DIRECTOR: Ron Morrison

8 City of Oceanside
300 North Coast Highway
Oceanside CA 92054
Ph: 760-435-5800
ci.oceanside.ca.us/gov/water
DIRECTOR: Brian Boyle

9 Olivenhain Municipal Water District
1966 Olivenhain Road
Encinitas CA 92024
Ph: 760-753-6466
olivenhain.com
DIRECTOR: Christy Guerin

10 Otay Water District
2554 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard
Spring Valley CA 91978
Ph: 619-670-2222
otaywater.gov
DIRECTORS:
Gary Croucher,
Mark Watton

11 Padre Dam Municipal Water District
9300 Fanita Parkway
Santee CA 92071
Ph: 619-448-3111
padredam.org
DIRECTOR: Doug Wilson

12 Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton
Water Resources, AC/S Facilities
MCB Camp Pendleton
CA 92055
Ph: 760-725-1059
marines.mil
DIRECTOR: John Simpson

13 City of Poway
13325 Civic Center Drive
Poway CA 92064
Ph: 858-668-4400
poway.org
DIRECTOR: Mark Weston

14 Rainbow Municipal Water District
3707 Old Highway 395
Fallbrook CA 92028
Ph: 760-728-1178
rainbowmwd.com
DIRECTOR: Tom Kennedy

15 Ramona Municipal Water District
105 Earlham Street
Ramona CA 92065
Ph: 760-789-1330
rmwd.org
DIRECTOR: David Barnum

16 Rincon Del Diablo Municipal Water District
1920 North Iris Lane
Escondido CA 92026
Ph: 760-745-5522
rinconwater.org
DIRECTOR: Jim Murtland

17 City of San Diego
525 B Street Suite 500
San Diego CA 92101
Ph: 619-515-3500
sandiego.gov/water
DIRECTORS:
Jimmy Ayala
Lois Fong-Sakai
Tony Heinrichs
Jim Madaffar
Halla Razak
Elsa Saxod
Fern Steiner
Yen Tu
Ken Williams
Thomas Wornham

18 San Dieguito Water District
160 Calle Magdalena
Encinitas CA 92024
Ph: 760-633-2650
sdwd.org
DIRECTOR: Mark Muir

19 Santa Fe Irrigation District
5920 Linea del Cielo
Rancho Santa Fe CA 92067
Ph: 858-756-2424
sfidwater.org
DIRECTOR: Michael T. Hogan
20 South Bay Irrigation District  
(Managed by Sweetwater Authority)  
505 Garrett Avenue  
Chula Vista CA 91910  
Ph: 619-427-0868  
sweetwater.org  
DIRECTOR: Jose Preciado

21 Vallecitos Water District  
201 Vallecitos de Oro  
San Marcos CA 92069  
Ph: 760-744-0460  
vwd.org  
DIRECTOR: Betty Evans

22 Valley Center Municipal Water District  
29300 Valley Center Road  
Valley Center CA 92082  
Ph: 760-735-4500  
vcmw.org  
DIRECTOR: Gary Arant

23 Vista Irrigation District  
1391 Engineer Street  
Vista CA 92081  
Ph: 760-597-3100  
vid-h2o.org  
DIRECTOR: Marty Miller

24 Yuima Municipal Water District  
34928 Valley Center Road  
Pauma Valley CA 92061  
Ph: 760-742-3704  
yuimamwd.com  
DIRECTOR: Ron Watkins

County of San Diego  
1600 Pacific Highway,  
Room 335  
San Diego CA 92101  
Ph: 619-531-5533  
sandiegocounty.gov  
REPRESENTATIVE:  
Dave Roberts  
A member of the San Diego County  
Board of Supervisors serves as a  
non-voting representative to the  
Water Authority Board of Directors.