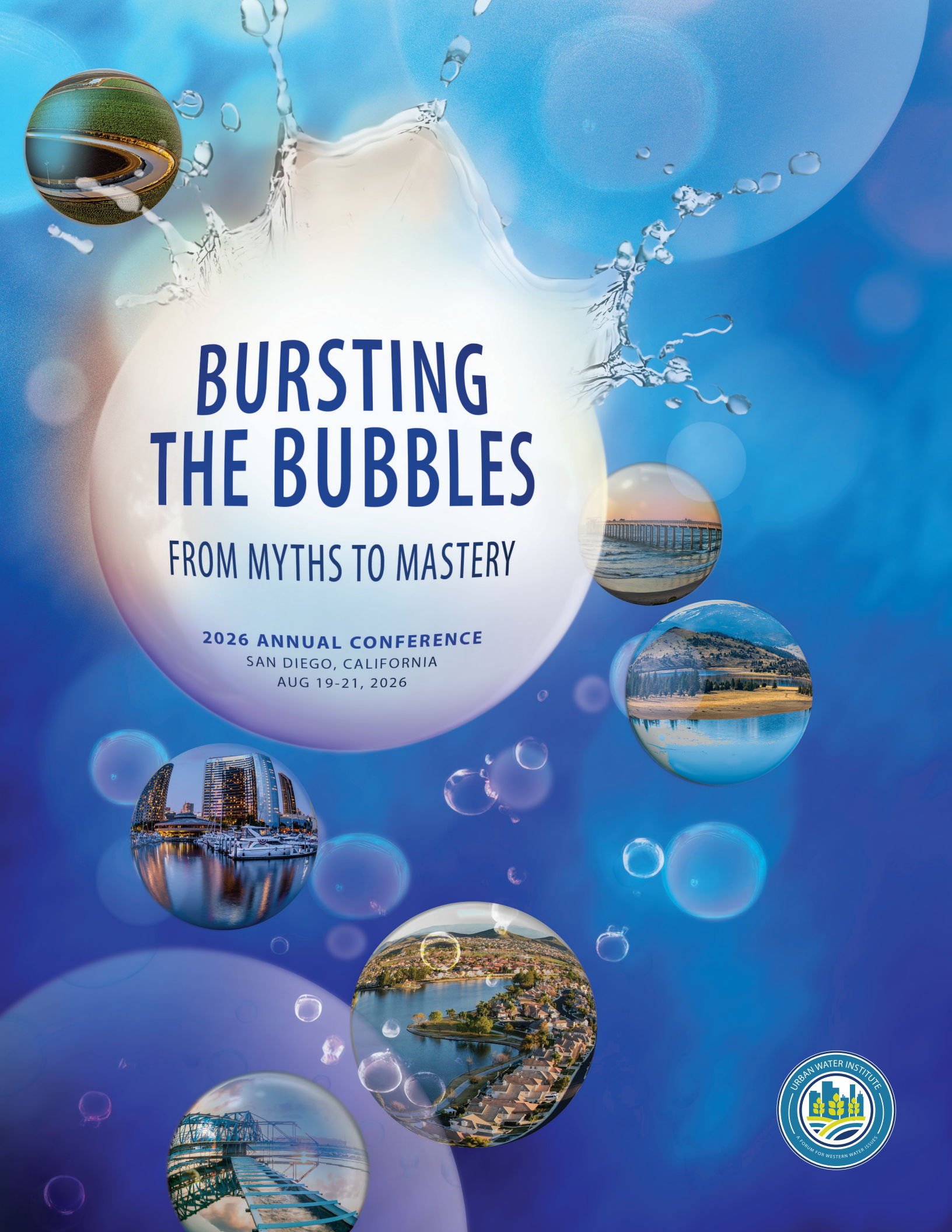




BURSTING THE BUBBLES

FROM MYTHS TO MASTERY

2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

AUG 19-21, 2026



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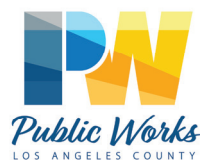
DIAMOND



GOLD



Jacobs



SILVER



BRONZE



EXHIBITOR



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19TH, 2026

TIME	ACTIVITIES
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	REGISTRATION, NETWORKING & EXHIBITS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
1:00 PM - 1:15 PM	CONFERENCE WELCOME <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> Jason Phillips , UWI 1st Chair; Vice President, Water Business Group, HDR Nick Serrano , Board Chair, San Diego County Water Authority Chairman Nick Serrano is the Deputy Chief of Staff for San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria and has represented the City of San Diego on the San Diego County Water Authority Board of Directors since May 2021. Nick made ending the longstanding litigation a cornerstone of his term that started in October 2024; he will share with UWI attendees the key insights and lessons learned.   
1:15 PM - 2:00 PM 	OPENING KEYNOTE: BURSTING WESTERN WATER'S TOUGHEST BUBBLES <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> <i>Bursting the Bubbles: from Myths to Mastery</i> has never been truer than today in western water. At the center of everything—Upper and Lower Basin Colorado River challenges, the Central Valley Project water system, western water-power generation, agriculture demands, urban demands, and rural communities—is the United States Bureau of Reclamation and acting commissioner Aubrey Bettencourt. A third-generation farmer from Kings County, California, Aubrey is joining UWI—exclusively—to share her thoughts on tackling these challenges head-on. Aubrey Bettencourt, Principal Deputy Commissioner - Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Commissioner, United States Bureau of Reclamation <i>Moderator: Darcy M. Burke</i>, UWI Executive Director; Vice President, Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
2:00 PM - 2:15 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>

WIFI LOGIN INFORMATION:

Network: LCBR_Meetings
Access Code: HDRINC26



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19TH, 2026

TIME	ACTIVITIES
2:15 PM - 3:30 PM 	BURSTING THE BOND BUBBLE – BONDS THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO BUILD WATER PROJECTS <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> California voters have passed nine water bonds since 2000, totaling approximately \$30 billion dollars to drought-proof the state, but what has this multi-year investment actually produced—and which winners and losers keep bubbling up? <i>Moderator:</i> Jennifer Persike, UWI Program Chair; President, Jennifer Persike & Company; Former Deputy Executive Director, ACWA Nancy Vogel, Senior Policy Advisor to the Director, CA Dept. of Water Resources Joe Del Bosque, Owner, Del Bosque Farms; Former Board Member, California Water Commission Garry Brown, Founder, President & CEO, Orange County Coastkeeper Jerry Brown, Executive Director, Sites Reservoir Project Authority
3:30 PM - 3:45 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
3:45 PM - 5:00 PM 	VIRTUAL BUBBLES: AI, DATA CENTERS & CYBERSECURITY IN THE WATER SECTOR <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> AI is transforming California water through smarter operations, faster leak detection, and better planning, but the large data centers required to operate it need significant amounts of energy and water. It's time to burst the NIMBY bubble and develop sound policy for your agency and its customers, while staying in your water agency lane. <i>Moderator:</i> Frank Ury, Senior Client Executive, Computer Aid Inc.; Vice President, Santa Margarita Water District Joel Barber, Colorado Regional Director, EKI Environment & Water, Inc. Kevin Morley, Senior Manager of Federal Relations, American Water Works Association (AWWA) Vivian Welsh, CEO & Co-Founder, Vivians.io
5:00 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
5:00 PM	OPENING RECEPTION <i>Bay Terrace</i>

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 20TH, 2026

TIME	ACTIVITIES
8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	BREAKFAST <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM 	BLOWING BIGGER BUBBLES: LET'S MESS WITH TEXAS <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> California prides itself on being at the forefront of water and environmental issues, but are we really? Find out what Texas is doing to lead the way, and how states across the U.S. can learn from their pioneering efforts and bold investments in bigger bubbles. Moderator: Andree Lee, UWI Immediate Past Chair; Executive Vice President, Water Resources and Engineering, EKI Environment & Water, Inc. Ken Jenkins, Vice President, Water Resources Planning and Sustainability, California Water Service Group Michael Turco, General Manager, Harris-Galveston Subsidence District & Fort Bend Subsidence District John Dupnik, Deputy Executive Administrator, Texas Water Development Board Vanessa Puig-Williams, Senior Director, Texas Water Program at Environmental Defense Fund
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM 	TINY BUBBLES EVERYWHERE: BREAKING THROUGH THE NOISE <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> Amidst a constant barrage of social media, streaming services, geotargeting ads and digital messaging, water agencies are finding new ways of breaking through clogged messaging channels to get the public's attention. Find out what new communication bubbles are rising to the surface. Moderator: Marice DePasquale, Board President, Mesa Water District; Principal, MConsensus Pasquale Talarico, CEO & President, HashtagPinpoint Corporation Kyle Oldoerp, Public Information Officer, Irvine Police Department
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 20TH, 2026

TIME	ACTIVITIES
12:00 PM - 1:15 PM	LUNCH <i>Marina Terrace</i>
1:15 PM - 2:15 PM 	BURSTING STATE-LINE BUBBLES: INTERSTATE SOLUTIONS FOR LOWER BASIN RESILIENCE <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> As Colorado River supplies become less predictable, Lower Basin agencies are moving beyond traditional shortage response toward new forms of interstate cooperation. Building on prior tools, this panel will explore the next step: interstate exchanges and pooled investments in desalination, reuse, storage, and augmentation projects. Moderator: Jeff Kightlinger, Consultant, Acequia Consulting, LLC; Former General Manager, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Chelsea McGuire, Director, Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona Ted Cooke, Board Member, Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona; Former General Manager, Central Arizona Project Meena Westford, Director of Imported Water, San Diego County Water Authority Bill Hasencamp, Manager of Colorado River Resources, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
2:15 PM - 2:30 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM 	BEYOND THE AG BUBBLE: POLICY IMPACTS TO CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITIES <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> As the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and other regulatory pressures reshape agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley, the impacts extend far beyond the farm gate. Look past the sea of change affecting the agriculture industry to explore how policy shifts are affecting Central Valley communities. Moderator: Jason Phillips, UWI 1st Vice Chair; Vice President, Water Business Group, HDR Eddie Ocampo, Director of Public Affairs, Self-Help Enterprises Aaron Fukuda, CEO, Tulare Irrigation District and the Mid-Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency Allison Febbo, General Manager, Westlands Water District

LUNCH BAG SPONSORS:



THURSDAY, AUGUST 20TH, 2026

TIME	ACTIVITIES
3:30 PM - 3:45 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
3:45 PM - 5:00 PM	 BLOWING NEW KINDS OF BUBBLES: WASTEWATER'S WAVE OF INNOVATION <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> Far from simply the “dark side of water,” the wastewater industry is advancing progressive regulations, sophisticated treatment technologies, and alternative energy solutions. Meet the leaders redefining wastewater’s role in California’s water future—moving from hidden infrastructure to high-impact innovation. Moderator: Adam Link, Executive Director, California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) Kevin Alexander, General Manager, Inland Empire Utilities Agency Martha Tremblay, Assistant Chief Engineer & Assistant General Manager, Los Angeles County Sanitation District Matthew Zucca, Authority Manager, Silicon Valley Clean Water; Board Vice President, Mid-Peninsula Water District
5:00 PM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
5:30 PM - 8:30 PM	HARBOR DINNER CRUISE <i>Loews Crown Isle Marina - Located directly behind the tennis courts.</i> Board California Spirit: 5:30pm Depart: 6:00pm sharp Complimentary Champagne + two drink tickets (bar open for additional purchases) Hors d’œuvres: 5:30–6:30pm Dinner buffet: 6:30pm Dessert: 7:30pm Return to dock: 8:30pm

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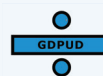
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FRIDAY, AUGUST 21ST, 2026

TIME	ACTIVITIES
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	BREAKFAST <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
9:30 AM - 11:00 AM 	CALIFORNIA-UNITED WATER PROGRAM RESILIENCE UNDER FIRE: PREPARING WATER AGENCIES FOR WHATEVER COMES NEXT <i>Commodore C/D/E</i> Every emergency tests more than infrastructure—it tests leadership. From wildfires and floods to power outages and cyber threats, California’s water agencies are being called on to protect critical services while making high-stakes decisions under extraordinary pressure. This featured session brings one of the state’s most experienced disaster recovery leaders to share the practical lessons every utility can apply before the next emergency hits. Opening Remarks: Adán Ortega, Jr., Board Chair, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California <i>Keynote Speaker:</i> Kevin Phillips, CPA, District Manager, Paradise Irrigation District Roundtable Discussions: Addressing the Challenges Shaping California Water Following the keynote presentation, attendees will participate in interactive roundtable discussions focused on the most pressing issues facing California water agencies, including affordability, infrastructure investment, emergency resilience, and regulatory challenges. Discussions will be facilitated by regional leaders to encourage the exchange of practical experiences, peer-to-peer learning, and actionable ideas to help agencies—large and small—tackle the challenges ahead. <i>Breakout Group Facilitators:</i> Adán Ortega, Jr., Board Chair, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Susan Peters, Director, Amador Water Agency; Vice President, Mountain Counties Water Resources Agency Michael Saunders, Board President, Georgetown Divide Public Utility District; Vice Chair, ACWA Region 3 Thomas Smegal, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency
11:00 AM	BREAK & MEET THE SPEAKERS <i>Commodore Foyer</i>
11:00 AM	CONFERENCE ADJOURNS <i>Commodore C/D/E</i>



SPEAKER BIOS



KEVIN L. ALEXANDER

Kevin Alexander, P.E., A.C.E., is General Manager of the Inland Empire Utilities Agency, where he leads staff and provides strategic direction to advance the agency's mission and goals. His expertise includes civil engineering, water treatment, resource management, operations and maintenance, advanced water reuse and groundwater recharge. With more than 30 years of experience, he has led major Southern California water reuse projects and driven technology implementation, digital transformation and operational improvements. Mr. Alexander holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Missouri University of Science and Technology.



JOEL BARBER

Joel Barber, PE, is Colorado Regional Director for EKI Environment & Water, where he leads the firm's expansion of water resources and environmental consulting services into the Colorado market and across the Rocky Mountain region. With more than 15 years of experience, he helps clients navigate complex water resource challenges through technical expertise, strategic planning and business leadership. His expertise includes groundwater science and engineering, municipal water development, water rights engineering, water supply planning, water resource commercial strategy, and data center development. He also brings extensive experience in environmental compliance, stakeholder engagement, alternative project delivery, and the use of data-driven decision support tools that help clients make informed, resilient decisions.



AUBREY BETTENCOURT

Aubrey Bettencourt is Principal Deputy Commissioner, Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Commissioner, of the Bureau of Reclamation — the nation's largest wholesale water supplier and second-largest producer of hydroelectric power. Her expertise includes water and science policy, natural resource conservation, government relations and agricultural support. Previously, she served as Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of the Interior, and State Executive Director for USDA's Farm Service Agency in California. She has also led government relations for Netafim, served as President and CEO of the Almond Alliance, and directed sustainability initiatives at Western United Dairies. A third-generation farmer at Bettencourt Farms in Kings County, Ms. Bettencourt is an Eisenhower Agricultural Fellow and holds a degree in History from Westmont College.



GARRY BROWN

Garry Brown is Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of Orange County Coastkeeper and Inland Empire Waterkeeper, where he leads efforts to protect waterways, strengthen environmental programs and build partnerships that improve water quality. His expertise includes environmental advocacy, nonprofit management, government relations, business development and organizational leadership. With more than 50 years of experience, he has built organizations, managed multimillion-dollar operations, secured strategic partnerships and influenced environmental policy throughout California.



JERRY BROWN

Jerry Brown is Executive Director of the Sites Reservoir Project, where he oversees project development and coordinates a multidisciplinary team of consultants, contractors and technical experts. His expertise includes planning, designing, constructing, operating and maintaining water, wastewater and recycled water systems. Previously, he served as General Manager of the Contra Costa Water District and founded Waterology Consulting. Mr. Brown holds a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cal State Northridge, a master's degree in Civil Engineering from USC, an MBA from San José State, and is a registered Civil and Mechanical Engineer in California.



DARCY M. BURKE (MODERATOR)

Darcy Burke is Executive Director of the Urban Water Institute, President and CEO of Watermark Associates, and Vice President of the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District, where she advances regional collaboration and water leadership. Her expertise includes organizational leadership, communications, partnership development, and legislative and regulatory affairs. Previously, she served as Director of Public Affairs for the Municipal Water District of Orange County and Executive Director of several Southern California nonprofit organizations, and serves on the U.S. EPA's Local Government Advisory Committee. She holds a bachelor's degree in International Economics and Marketing and an MBA in Organizational Leadership from Mount St. Mary's University, Los Angeles.



TED COOKE

Dr. Theodore C. "Ted" Cooke serves on the Board of Directors of the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona and chairs its Long-Term Water Augmentation Committee, helping guide strategies that strengthen Arizona's water future. His expertise includes water policy, utility leadership, risk management, operations and Colorado River planning. Previously, he served as General Manager of the Central Arizona Project and held leadership roles with public and private utilities and renewable energy developers. Dr. Cooke holds degrees in physics, operations management and management science, a Doctor of Business Administration, and professional certifications in finance, information technology and risk management.



JOE L. DEL BOSQUE

Joe Del Bosque is a first-generation farmer and owner of Del Bosque Farms in Firebaugh, California, where he grows organic melons, tomatoes, almonds and cherries. His expertise includes agricultural operations, water policy and advocacy for farmers and rural communities. Previously, he served for nine years on the California Water Commission and held leadership positions with organizations including AgSafe and the Central Valley Community Foundation. Mr. Del Bosque graduated from Cal State Fresno, and has dedicated his career to advancing California agriculture and raising awareness of drought and water supply challenges.



MARICE H. DEPASQUALE (MODERATOR)

Marice DePasquale is President of Mesa Water District, where she helps guide policies and investments that support reliable, sustainable water service. Her expertise includes infrastructure investment, groundwater sustainability, potable reuse, desalination, PFAS response and public affairs strategy. She also serves on the ACWA Region 10 Board and as Vice Chair of CalDesal while leading MConsensus, a public affairs firm specializing in government relations, community engagement and land use.



JOHN T. DUPNIK

John Dupnik, P.G., is Deputy Executive Administrator for the Office of Water Science and Conservation at the Texas Water Development Board, where he leads statewide water data, scientific research and conservation programs. His expertise includes groundwater and surface water science, flood planning, water conservation and innovative water technologies. Previously, he served as General Manager of the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District and held regulatory roles involving wastewater permitting, groundwater protection and water well compliance. Mr. Dupnik holds a master's degree in Energy and Earth Resources from the University of Texas at Austin and a bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences and Geology from Texas State University.

SPEAKER BIOS



ALLISON FEBBO

Allison Febbo is General Manager of Westlands Water District, where she directs district operations and represents the agency with government officials, partner organizations and the public. Her expertise includes hydrology, agricultural water management, groundwater sustainability, drought resiliency and climate adaptation. Previously, she served as General Manager of the Mojave Water Agency and contributed to major California water initiatives, including the Delta Conveyance Project and Shasta Reservoir Temperature Management Project. Ms. Febbo holds an MS in Hydrologic Science from UC Davis and a BS in Earth and Atmospheric Science from the Georgia Institute of Technology.



AARON FUKUDA

Aaron Fukuda is CEO of the Tulare Irrigation District and the Mid-Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency, where he oversees operations, regional water coordination, regulatory compliance and groundwater sustainability planning. His expertise includes agricultural water management, conjunctive use, groundwater sustainability, hydraulic design and public agency administration. Previously, he spent six years as an associate engineer with Summers Engineering, Inc., specializing in agricultural hydraulic systems. Mr. Fukuda holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, an MPA from Cal State Fresno, and is a registered Professional Engineer in California.



BILL HASENCAMP

Bill Hasencamp serves as Manager of Colorado River Resources for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, where he leads programs that strengthen the region's Colorado River supply portfolio. His expertise includes interstate water coordination, transfer agreements and long-term supply planning. Previously, he held senior planning and environmental management roles at Contra Costa Water District and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, working on water quality improvements, infrastructure operations and ecosystem restoration initiatives.



KEN JENKINS

Ken Jenkins is Vice President of Water Resources Planning and Sustainability at California Water Service Group, where he leads long-term water supply planning for utilities serving more than two million people across five states. His expertise includes water resources, conservation, water loss control, drought response, climate adaptation and grants management. Throughout his career, he has focused on developing strategies that strengthen water supply reliability and advance sustainable utility operations. Mr. Jenkins holds bachelor's degrees in Economics & Management and Political Science from Beloit College.



JEFF KIGHTLINGER (MODERATOR)

Jeff Kightlinger is the owner of Acequia Consulting, LLC, where he provides strategic guidance on complex water and energy issues. His expertise includes water law, Colorado River policy, utility leadership, water operations and regional resource planning. Previously, he served as CEO and General Counsel of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and as Interim General Manager of Pasadena Water & Power, overseeing major budgets, operations and multistate water agreements. Mr. Kightlinger holds a bachelor's degree from the UC Berkeley, and a law degree from Santa Clara University.



ANDREE LEE (MODERATOR)

Andree Lee is the Executive Vice President of Water Resources and Engineering for EKI Environment & Water. She has several years of public and private sector experience performing and managing water resources projects. Her specialty is facilitating collaborative solutions to complex water management challenges among agencies and stakeholders. She has led regional and countywide water planning and water supply development efforts for public and private sector clients across the western US. She holds a BA in Geography and Environmental Studies from UCLA.



ADAM LINK (MODERATOR)

Adam Link is Executive Director of the California Association of Sanitation Agencies, where he leads advocacy efforts on behalf of California's clean water agencies. His expertise includes regulatory, legislative and legal advocacy, with more than 15 years of experience in clean water and environmental policy. Previously, he practiced law focused on water quality, environmental and local government issues and worked in the California Legislature and for Accenture. Mr. Link holds a degree from UC Santa Barbara and a law degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law.



CHELSEA MCGUIRE

Chelsea McGuire is Director of the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona, where she oversees strategic investments in water conservation, reuse, augmentation and water quality. Her expertise includes water infrastructure finance, natural resources policy, agricultural issues and collaborative water management. Previously, she served as Director of Government Affairs for the Arizona Farm Bureau, where her water policy work helped shape WIFA's water augmentation program. Ms. McGuire holds a bachelor's degree in Agribusiness Economics from the University of Arizona and a JD from Regent University School of Law.



KEVIN M. MORLEY

Kevin Morley, Ph.D., is Senior Manager of Federal Relations for the American Water Works Association, where he advances national policy and technical initiatives focused on water-sector security and resilience. His expertise includes infrastructure risk, disaster resilience, utility preparedness and national water policy. Over more than 20 years, he has developed ANSI standards, testified before Congress, served as a Disaster Resilience Fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and contributed to the President's National Infrastructure Advisory Council. Dr. Morley holds a Ph.D. from George Mason University, an MS from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and a BA from Syracuse University.



EDDIE OCAMPO

Eddie Ocampo, Ph.D., is Director of Public Affairs at Self-Help Enterprises, where he advances initiatives supporting affordable housing, water policy and rural economic development throughout California's San Joaquin Valley. His expertise includes public affairs, community development, government relations, stakeholder engagement and regional water policy. With more than 25 years of experience, he has built partnerships that strengthen rural communities and currently serves as Chair of the San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint, a collaborative initiative focused on the region's long-term water future.

SPEAKER BIOS



KYLE OLDOERP

Kyle Oldoerp is Public Information Officer for the Irvine Police Department, where he leads media relations, community engagement and multimedia communications. His expertise includes public information, strategic communications, digital storytelling and building community trust through creative, authentic outreach. During more than 30 years with the department, he served as a Civilian Traffic Investigator, SWAT Tactical Dispatcher, Major Accident Investigation Team investigator and Explorer Coordinator before transitioning into public information.



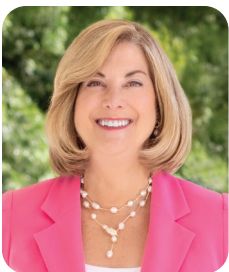
ADÁN ORTEGA, JR.

Adán Ortega, Jr. is Chair of the Board of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, where he leads strategic initiatives to strengthen long-term water reliability. His expertise includes water policy, government relations, climate adaptation, stakeholder engagement and water infrastructure planning. Previously, he served as Metropolitan's Vice President of External Affairs, chief deputy to the California Secretary of State, Assistant General Manager for West Basin and Central Basin municipal water districts, and a member of the California Water Commission. Mr. Ortega holds a bachelor's degree in English and History from Whittier College.



DAVE PEDERSEN

Dave Pedersen is the General Manager of Las Virgenes Municipal Water District and Administering Agent for the Las Virgenes-Triunfo Joint Powers Authority. He has more than 25 years' experience in water utility management and currently serves as the chief executive responsible for providing water and sanitation services to approximately 100,000 people. Previously, he served as the Executive Director of Operations for the Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) in Orange County California. Mr. Pedersen holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the UC Irvine and an MBA from Cal State Long Beach.



JENNIFER PERSIKE (MODERATOR)

Jennifer Persike is Founder and President of Jennifer Persike & Company, where she helps organizations strengthen leadership and strategy. Her expertise includes organizational development, diversity and inclusion and strategic planning. Previously, she served as Executive Director of Leadership California and Deputy Executive Director for the Association of California Water Agencies. She holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Political Science from Chico State University, along with certifications in Facilitation, Mediation and Arbitration from UC Davis, and Diversity & Inclusion from Cornell University.



SUSAN PETERS

Susan Peters is a Board Director for District 4 of the Amador Water Agency, where she serves on the Planning and Engineering and Policy committees. Her expertise includes community planning, land use and local policy. Previously, she served as the City Planner for the City of Jackson and has also served on the Sutter Creek Design Review Committee. Ms. Peters holds a master's degree in Urban Planning from UCLA and a BA in Environmental Studies, with an emphasis in Urban Planning, from the UC Santa Barbara.



JASON PHILLIPS (MODERATOR)

Jason Phillips is Vice President in HDR's Water Business Group and Irrigation Practice Leader, guiding water supply initiatives and multi-agency infrastructure projects. His expertise includes irrigation systems, water reliability planning and regional collaboration. Previously, he served as CEO of the Friant Water Authority and spent 15 years with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. He holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Portland State University.



KEVIN PHILLIPS

Kevin Phillips is District Manager of Paradise Irrigation District, where he oversees utility operations and strategic initiatives to provide reliable water service. His expertise includes utility management, finance, accounting, organizational leadership and post-disaster recovery. Previously, he served as Finance and Accounting Manager and Chief Financial Officer for Paradise Irrigation District, Town Manager for the Town of Paradise, Director of Member Outreach for ACWA JPIA, and worked as a CPA with Matson & Isom Accountancy Corporation. Mr. Phillips holds a BS in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting and Finance from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.



VANESSA PUIG-WILLIAMS

Vanessa Puig-Williams is Senior Director of the Texas Water program at the Environmental Defense Fund, where she leads efforts to advance sustainable groundwater management. Her expertise includes water policy and law, groundwater management, environmental law, conservation, stakeholder engagement and endangered species issues. Previously, she served as Executive Director and General Counsel of the Trinity Edwards Springs Protection Association and as an Assistant Attorney General handling environmental enforcement cases. Ms. Puig-Williams holds a JD from the University of Texas School of Law and bachelor's degrees in History and Geography from the University of Texas at Austin.



MICHAEL SAUNDERS

Dr. Michael Saunders is President of the Georgetown Divide Public Utility District Board of Directors, where he helps guide water policy, legislative advocacy and regional collaboration. His expertise includes water policy, special district governance, legislative affairs and statewide water leadership. He also serves as Vice Chair of El Dorado LAFCO and holds leadership roles with the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association, Sacramento Regional Water Authority and the Association of California Water Agencies. Dr. Saunders holds a BS in Nutritional Biochemistry from Cornell University and an MD from Howard University.



NICK SERRANO

Nick Serrano serves as Board Chair of the San Diego County Water Authority and Deputy Chief of Staff to San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria, where he oversees board appointments, communications, community outreach and special projects. His expertise includes public service, political communications and water policy, with a focus on affordability and access. Previously, he held positions with the San Diego County District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office and Probation Department, and served in several roles for Mayor Todd Gloria, including Communications Director and campaign manager. Mr. Serrano holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from San Diego State University.

SPEAKER BIOS



THOMAS SMEGAL

Thomas "Tom" Smegal is CEO and General Manager of the Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency, where he represents 26 member agencies on water supply, reliability, water quality and wholesale water rates. His expertise includes water utility finance, rate design, infrastructure planning, public outreach and water resource management. Previously, he spent 27 years with California Water Service Company, serving as Vice President, CFO, Treasurer and other executive leadership roles. Mr. Smegal is a registered Civil Engineer and studied at Stanford University and UC Berkeley, with an interdisciplinary focus on water and energy resources.



PASQUALE TALARICO

Pasquale Talarico is President and CEO of HashtagPinpoint Corporation, where he leads strategic communications efforts that help organizations, elected officials and public agencies build trust and inspire action. His expertise includes public policy, water, homelessness, community engagement and message development. During more than 16 years in communications, he served as a trusted advisor in the California State Senate, Director of Public Affairs for the Yorba Linda Water District and a communications consultant for the California State Assembly.



MARTHA TREMBLAY

Martha Tremblay is Assistant Chief Engineer and Assistant General Manager at the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, where she provides leadership for wastewater and solid waste operations. Her expertise includes civil and environmental engineering, wastewater treatment, recycled water, biosolids management and regulatory compliance. During her 30-year career, she served as Sewer Design Section Head and Wastewater Collection Systems Manager while supporting compliance programs across the agency. Ms. Tremblay holds a BS in Civil Engineering from USC, an MS in Civil Engineering from UC Berkeley, and is a registered Professional Engineer and Board Certified Environmental Engineer.



MICHAEL TURCO

Michael Turco is General Manager of the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District and Fort Bend Subsidence District, where he leads groundwater regulation and water conservation efforts to protect regional communities. His expertise includes hydrogeology, groundwater management, water resources planning, subsidence prevention and scientific data collection. Previously, he worked with the U.S. Geological Survey on surface water and groundwater research before joining the Subsidence Districts in 2013. Mr. Turco holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Geology, with a focus on hydrogeology, from the University of Nebraska.



FRANK URY (MODERATOR)

Frank Ury is Vice President of the Santa Margarita Water District Board of Directors, where he supports regional water governance and technology initiatives. His expertise includes technology operations, infrastructure strategy, cybersecurity, sales and business development. Previously, he served as a Mission Viejo Councilmember and Mayor, held senior technology roles with DXC Technology, HP Enterprise Services, Intel Corporation and Black & Decker, and served on the Orange County Transportation Authority Board. Mr. Ury holds a BS in Electrical Engineering from the University of Notre Dame, a master's degree in Electrical Engineering from USC and an MBA from UC Irvine.



NANCY VOGEL

Nancy Vogel is Senior Policy Advisor to the Director of the California Department of Water Resources, where she supports the development and coordination of statewide water policy. Her expertise includes water policy, natural resources, government communications, legislative oversight and journalism. Previously, she served as Director of the Governor's Water Portfolio Program and Deputy Secretary for Water at the California Natural Resources Agency, held communications roles with DWR and CNRA, worked as a principal consultant for the California Senate, and spent nearly 20 years as a journalist. Ms. Vogel holds a BS in Conservation and Resource Studies and a MA in Journalism from the UC Berkeley.



VIVIAN WELSH

Vivian Welsh is CEO and Co-Founder of Vivians.io, where she designs business automation and artificial intelligence systems that help organizations adopt technology while keeping people at the center of their work. Her expertise includes responsible AI strategy, business automation, organizational training and translating complex technology into practical tools. Previously, she taught science and has trained organizations, including Rancho California Water District, to use AI effectively and responsibly. Ms. Welsh holds a degree in biology and is committed to helping teams build skills that strengthen, rather than replace, human judgment



MEENA WESTFORD

Meena Westford is Director of Imported Water for the San Diego County Water Authority, where she oversees Colorado River and Metropolitan Water District programs and supports regional water transfer initiatives. Her expertise includes water policy, water resource management, Colorado River issues and intergovernmental relations. Previously, she served as Executive Policy Advisor for Colorado River Programs at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and spent 17 years with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in water resource planning roles. Ms. Westford holds a BA in Economics from San Diego State University and an MA in Environmental Policy Management from the University of Denver.



MATTHEW ZUCCA

Matthew Zucca is Authority Manager of Silicon Valley Clean Water, where he leads the agency serving nearly 300,000 people on the San Francisco Peninsula. His expertise includes planning, engineering, capital improvement programs and public utility leadership for water, wastewater and stormwater systems. Previously, he served as Assistant Director of Utilities for the City of Palo Alto, Deputy Public Works Director for the City of San Mateo and Principal Engineer at EKI Environment & Water. Mr. Zucca holds a degree from UC Davis and is a licensed Professional Civil Engineer in California.

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Much of what runs through our San Francisco Bay Area wastewater treatment facility in Redwood City may get thrown away elsewhere. Not at Silicon Valley Clean Water (SVCW). Here we recover resources.

Cogeneration engines and linear generators turn biogas into electricity on-site. Add in a new Food Waste Facility (first one on the Peninsula in the San Francisco Bay Area), taking organic waste that normally gets sent to a landfill, and now renewable biogas powers 100% of what it takes to run the place. We call that progress toward energy neutrality. Battery storage banks the power so it's there when demand hits, not just when the biogas happens to be flowing. Machine learning is in development to optimize all of this so even less energy is pulled from the grid.

This isn't the finish line. It's the baseline for what comes next.

During the **Blowing New Kinds of Bubbles: Wastewater's Wave of Innovation** at this week's **UWI Annual Conference** session on **Aug 20th from 3:45pm - 5:00pm**, Matthew Zucca, Authority Manager, Silicon Valley Clean Water, is a speaker along with a panel of industry experts:

- Kevin Alexander, General Manager, Inland Empire Utilities Agency
- Martha Tremblay, Assistant Chief Engineer & Assistant General Manager, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

Moderator: Adam Link, Exec Dir, CASA



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