



**GLOBAL  
CHALLENGES**



**LOCAL  
SOLUTIONS**



## **2025 SPRING CONFERENCE**

RIVIERA RESORT & SPA PALM SPRINGS  
FEBRUARY 26-28, 2025

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITIES
12:00 - 1:00PM	<b>REGISTRATION, NETWORKING &amp; EXHIBITS</b>
1:00 - 1:45PM 	<b>OPENING KEYNOTE: WILDFIRES, WATER SUPPLY &amp; WORST-CASE SCENARIOS</b> <i>The devastating Los Angeles fires have shone a spotlight on the critical link between wildfires and water supply. As an author of UCLA's Wildfire &amp; Water Supply Report, Dr. Pierce is an expert in the field. His pioneering research explores the myriad challenges and potential solutions to the crippling effects of wildfire on water supply.</i>  Dr. Gregory Pierce, Co-Director, UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation  <b>10 minute Audience Q&amp;A / 10 minute Meet the Speaker</b>
1:50 - 3:00PM 	<b>WATER: WET WATER, PAPER WATER, VIRTUAL WATER</b> <i>A recent report released by NRDC found that more than 1,100 counties— one-third of all counties in the lower 48—will face higher risks of water shortages by mid-century as the result of global warming. More than 400 of these counties will face extremely high risks of water shortages. The speakers will focus on California's water situation.</i>  Karla Nemeth, Director, California Department of Water Resources (Invited) Edward Ring, Director of Water & Energy Policy, California Policy Center Dr. Jay Lund, Vice Director, UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences <i>Moderator: Jason Phillips, UWI Board Secretary; CEO, Friant Water Authority</i>  <b>10 minute Audience Q&amp;A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers</b>
3:00 - 3:10PM	<b>BREAK</b>



**AGENDA**

TIME	ACTIVITIES
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**3:10 - 4:15PM**



**PFAS: NOT ONLY DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER**

*Where do we stand on PFAS regulations? Will there be a political tug of war between the past Executive branch administration and the incoming chair of the US Senate Environmental Committee on PFAS regulations?*

Dr. Kevin Morley, Federal Relations Manager, American Water Works Association

Dr. Anna Reade, Director of PFAS Advocacy, Environmental Health  
Major General R. Mark Toy, USACE Ret., General Manager, Yorba Linda Water District

*Moderator:* Greg Newmark, UWI Board of Directors; Principal, Los Angeles Office Leader, Myers Nave

**10 minute Audience Q&A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers**

**4:20 - 5:30PM**



**GOING TO THE WELL TOO OFTEN – EVENTUALLY IT RUNS DRY**

*An insightful discussion regarding the critical issues surrounding the Colorado River’s water supplies and demands. This session will feature conversations on the current state of the river, and the challenges of balancing water resources.*

Colorado River Board of California; State of California (Invited)  
Representative Upper Basin TBD (Invited)  
Representative Federal Government (Invited)

*Moderator:* Craig Miller, UWI Board of Directors; General Manager, Western Municipal Water District

**10 minute Audience Q&A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers**

**5:45 - 7:00PM      OPENING RECEPTION**

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 27, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITIES
8:00 - 8:45AM	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
8:45 - 9:55AM 	<b>UNCERTAIN SUPPLIES, GROUNDWATER DEPLETION, RISING TEMPERATURES, REDUCED SNOW PACK – WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?</b> <i>Gound water depletion, farming demands, climate impacts... We ain't seen nothin' yet.</i>  Victor Martinez, Mayor, City of Mendota (Invited) Dr. David Sunding, Graduate Professor, UC Berkeley College of Natural Resources  Moderator: Jason Phillips, UWI Board Secretary; CEO, Friant Water Authority  <b>10 minute Audience Q&amp;A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers</b>
10:00 - 11:10AM 	<b>TAPPING TILLMAN: OVERCOMING ADVERSITY TO TRANSFORM LA'S WATER FUTURE</b> <i>Hear the story of how the City of Los Angeles overcame the dreaded "toilet-to-tap" moniker and developed a campaign for succession of the San Fernando Valley to break ground on the L.A. Groundwater Replenishment Project, the City's first and largest potable reuse project. The \$740 million project will produce 25 million gallons per day of purified water for groundwater recharge, supplying more than 250,000 people with a new source of drinking water. How did they do it, and what are the secrets to success that can help advance Pure Water LA and Pure Water SoCal? Hear from the water managers who made it happen.</i>  Intro by Janisse Quiñones, CEO and Chief Engineer, Los Angeles Department of Water & Power Jesus Gonzalez, Manager of Water Resources, Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (Invited)  Ryan Thiha, Sr. Environmental Engineer and Program Manager, LA Sanitation and Environment (Invited)  Moderator: David Pedersen, UWI 1st Vice Chair; General Manager, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District  <b>10 minute Audience Q&amp;A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers</b>



**AGENDA**

TIME	ACTIVITIES
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**11:15AM - 12:25PM**



**THE STIGMA OF SGMA**

*Ten years ago, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed by Governor Schwarzenegger as THE answer to California’s groundwater management challenges. Underneath the 10-year celebrations, a harsh reality is setting in that it may not be the cure everyone hoped for. This session looks under the hood of SGMA to examine some of the difficult facets of implementing the program.*

Dusty Ference, Executive Director, Kings County Farm Bureau  
Joaquin Esquivel, Chair, State Water Resources Control Board  
Paul Gosselin, Deputy Director of Sustainable Groundwater Management (Invited)

*Moderator:* Jennifer Persike, UWI Board of Directors; Founder/President, Jennifer Persike & Company

**10 minute Audience Q&A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers**

**12:30 - 1:30PM LUNCH**

**1:30 - 2:00PM**



**COMMUNICATING THE VALUE OF WATER**

*Short panel presentation as an introduction to the ‘tasting’ that will occur at the cocktail reception.*

Kelly Smith, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, Louisville Water  
American Water Works Association, Denver (Invited)

*Moderator:* Darcy Burke, UWI Board Planning Chair; Director, Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 27, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITIES
<p data-bbox="175 743 375 772"><b>2:15 - 3:25PM</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="493 554 1097 583"><b>SQUEEZING BLOOD OUT OF A ROCK</b></p> <p data-bbox="493 596 1468 735"><i>New water conservation mandates have put into place increasingly stringent water use targets and penalties. California has conserved a tremendous amount of water to-date. Additional water savings have been mandated, but are they attainable or are water providers being asked to squeeze blood out of a rock?</i></p> <p data-bbox="493 777 1468 844">Tia Fleming, Executive Director of External Affairs, California Water Efficiency Partnership</p> <p data-bbox="493 865 1446 932">Kendra Olmos, Water Efficiency Senior Project Manager, EKI Environment &amp; Water</p> <p data-bbox="493 953 1414 1020">Elizabeth Lovsted, Water Resources Manager at San Diego County Water Authority</p> <p data-bbox="493 1075 1468 1142"><i>Moderator: Andree Lee, UWI Board President; Vice President of Environment and Water, EKI Environment &amp; Water</i></p> <p data-bbox="493 1176 1390 1205"><b>10 minute Audience Q&amp;A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers</b></p>
<p data-bbox="175 1423 375 1453"><b>3:30 - 5:00PM</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="493 1323 1446 1390"><b>THE FUTURE ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE – PLANNING FOR TOMORROW</b></p> <p data-bbox="493 1411 1484 1612"><i>The Water Energy Education Alliance (WEEA or Alliance) is a coalition of water, energy, and education leaders working together to build and bolster career pathways to water and energy jobs for all California students. The Alliance is a collection of more than 200 professional organizations statewide, including water and energy agencies, departments of education, school districts, colleges, technical trade schools, and more. WEEA is administered and led by the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC).</i></p> <p data-bbox="493 1663 1419 1730">Tiffany Baca MWDOC, Public Affairs Manager, Municipal Water District of Orange County; Executive Director, Water Energy Education Alliance</p> <p data-bbox="493 1751 1495 1780"><i>Moderator: Paul Brown, UWI Board of Directors; President, Paul Redvers Brown</i></p>



**Friday, February 28, 2025**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>
<b>8:30 - 9:15AM</b>	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
<b>9:15 - 10:45AM</b> 	<b>CALIFORNIA AT THE CROSSROADS: PEOPLE, POLITICS &amp; POWER IN 2025</b> <i>How will the results of the 2024 elections impact the water industry? Find out from state and federal experts what we can expect in 2025.</i>  Eric Sapirstein, President, ENS Resources Townsend Public Affairs (Invited)  <b>10 minute Audience Q&amp;A / 15 minute Meet the Speakers</b>