



MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Thomas M. Byler, Director
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SUBJECT: Agenda Item K, March 16, 2018
Water Resources Commission Meeting

Strategic Planning

I. Introduction

During this informational agenda item, staff will provide an update on the Department's ongoing strategic planning efforts.

II. Background

The Secretary of State's 2016 performance audit recommended that the Department develop a long-term plan to prioritize its responsibilities and set clear measureable goals for water sustainability. While the Integrated Water Resources Strategy provides a comprehensive, high-level framework for strategic guidance, the Department would benefit from a strategic plan that more directly focuses on the agency's priorities, processes and functions. Toward that end, at the January 2017 Commission meeting, the Commission and Department agreed to embark on a strategic planning effort.

During Phase 1 of the planning effort, the Department outlined the purposes of strategic planning, identified what products would be produced, and developed the planning process. As reported to the Commission in August, the Department concluded Phase 1 and identified three reasons for doing strategic planning:

1. To prioritize our work;
2. To continue to improve as a positive and productive workplace; and
3. To improve our internal and external communications.

The Department shared a tentative timeline for completing Phase 2, which includes developing the strategic plan and presenting it for adoption by the Commission in the fall of 2018.

III. Core Values

One component of strategic planning is to outline the Department's core values. Core values are the principles that guide how the Department operates and completes its work. The Staff Strategic Planning Committee reviewed input gathered from staff and developed a draft list of

core values. The committee will present the list to Department managers in late March and together the two groups will finalize the list of core values. The Department will report on progress to the Commission at the March meeting.

IV. Work Prioritization

In addition to core values, the goal of the strategic planning effort is to help prioritize the Department's work. The Department, in consultation with the Commission, stakeholders, and partner agencies, will identify priority issues for the next five years. The Department is reflecting on and asking others to reflect on what activities to prioritize over the next five years. The Department does not intend to develop a long list of tasks to include in the strategic plan but to hone in on broader focus areas for strategic development and improvement. For example, a potential area of priority could be process improvements, where the Department seeks to improve how it processes water right transactions, funding applications, the regulation of water rights, etc. Work plans created after the development of the strategic plan will then outline more detail of what the Department intends to do and when it intends to do it.

The Department will solicit feedback from stakeholders on this topic starting in March 2018. The Department will engage stakeholders through an online survey and individual meetings. The Department also intends to engage with other key partners, including state agencies and tribes. The Commission will have an opportunity for more in-depth input and conversation at a special meeting proposed for May 2018.

V. May Special Commission Meeting

In order to create time and space for reflection and input into the strategic plan, the Commission will hold a special planning meeting on May 15-16, 2018. The meeting will allow for discussion between commission members and staff. At this meeting the Department intends to:

- Present the results of the stakeholder survey and stakeholder meetings
- Share feedback from other partners
- Solicit input from the Commission

No actions or decisions will be made at this meeting.

VI. Conclusion

The Department intends to finalize a strategic plan in the fall of 2018. The Department is identifying core values and is developing ideas on the work prioritization portion of the plan. The Commission will have more in-depth conversations about strategic planning at the upcoming special Commission planning meeting on May 15-16, 2018.

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