

**ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE A UNIQUE PANELIST LINK BY EMAIL. PLEASE USE THIS LINK TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING.**



*Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 and the findings made by CVAG, this meeting will only be conducted via video/teleconferencing.*

## **ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE AGENDA**

**THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2022  
12:00 p.m.**

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public may use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81339429896?pwd=NTV0dnZ5TGdkcjlJOZ2lwakwxSjhUUT09>

**Passcode:** 587427

**One tap mobile:** +16699009128,,81339429896#

**Dial In #:** +1 669 900 9128

**Webinar ID:** 813 3942 9896

**Passcode:** 587427

*This will provide listening access and ability to address the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee when called upon.*

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONNECT VIA DIAL IN OPTION, PLEASE CALL 760-346-1127**

Public Comment is encouraged to be emailed to the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee prior to the meeting at [cvag@cvag.org](mailto:cvag@cvag.org) by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the committee meeting. Comments intended to be read aloud should be no more than 300 characters.

**THIS MEETING IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.  
ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

**UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED, ALL ACTION ITEMS WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR FINAL APPROVAL.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Linda Evans, City of La Quinta, Chair
  
  2. **ROLL CALL** – Jennifer Nelson
    - A. **Member Roster** [4](#)
  
  3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Anyone wishing to address the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee on items appearing on this agenda may do so at this time. Please limit comments to 3 minutes. At the discretion of the chair, additional public comment time and/or opportunities during the meeting may be granted.
  
  4. **COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS**
    - A. **Update from three city meeting to address future electrical infrastructure needs in Imperial Irrigation District**
  
  5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**
    - B. **Approve April 14, 2022 Committee Meeting Minutes** [5](#)
  
  6. **DISCUSSION / ACTION**
    - A. **Revitalizing the Salton Sea: Update from the State and Regional Efforts – Emmanuel Martinez** [10](#)
      1. Presentation by Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer for the California Natural Resources Agency
      2. Presentation by Patrick O’ Dowd, Executive Director of the Salton Sea Authority

**Recommendation:** Information
- 
7. **INFORMATION**
  - A. **Attendance** [13](#)
  - B. **Inland Regional Energy Network Updates** [14](#)
  - C. **CVAG Meeting Calendar for Fiscal Year 2022/23** [16](#)
  - D. **Update on Middle-Mile Broadband Efforts** [17](#)

## 8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Any member of the public wishing to address the Committee on items not appearing on this agenda may do so at this time. Please limit comments to 2 minutes. At the discretion of the chair, additional public comment time and/or opportunities during the meeting may be granted.

## 9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Meetings:

The next meeting of the **Energy & Environmental Resources Committee** will be held on Thursday, June 9, 2022, at noon via Zoom webinar.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, June 6, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

The next meeting of the **General Assembly** will be held on Monday, June 27, 2022, at 6 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

## 10. ADJOURN

**Item 2A**

**Energy & Environmental Resources Committee  
Member Roster  
2021 – 2022**



<b>VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	<b>Secretary/Treasurer Vincent Gonzales III</b>
City of Blythe	<b>Vice Mayor Joseph DeConinck</b> <i>Alternate: Councilmember Joseph Halby III</i>
City of Cathedral City	<b>Councilmember Nancy Ross</b> <i>Alternate: Mayor Pro Tem Rita Lamb</i>
City of Coachella	<b>Councilmember Neftali Galarza</b> <i>Alternate: Mayor Pro Tem Josie Gonzalez</i>
Coachella Valley Water District	<b>Board Member Anthony Bianco</b>
City of Desert Hot Springs	<b>Councilmember Russell Betts</b> <i>Alternate: Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner</i>
Imperial Irrigation District	<b>Director JB Hamby</b>
City of Indian Wells	<b>Mayor Pro Tem Donna Griffith</b> <i>Alternate: Councilmember Richard Balocco</i>
City of Indio	<b>Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Ortiz, Vice Chair</b> <i>Alternate: Councilmember Elaine Holmes</i>
City of La Quinta	<b>Mayor Linda Evans, Chair</b>
Mission Springs Water District	<b>Vice President Nancy Wright</b> <i>Alternate: President Randy Duncan</i>
City of Palm Desert	<b>Councilmember Gina Nestande</b>
City of Palm Springs	<b>Councilmember Dennis Woods</b> <i>Alternate: Mayor Lisa Middleton</i>
City of Rancho Mirage	<b>Mayor Charles Townsend</b> <i>Alternate: Mayor Pro Tem Richard W. Kite</i>
Riverside County – District 4	<b>Supervisor V. Manuel Perez</b>
<b>Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members</b>	
Desert Water Agency	<b>Board Member Patricia Oyar</b>
Riverside County – District 5	<b>Supervisor Jeff Hewitt</b> <i>Alternate: Director Russ Martin, Mission Springs Water District</i>

**ITEM 5A**

**Energy and Environmental Resources Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 14, 2022**



The audio file for this meeting can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Linda Evans, City of La Quinta, at 12:01 p.m. via Zoom, pursuant to AB 361 and the guidelines for governing how public meetings are held virtually.
- 2. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

**Members Present**

Councilmember Nancy Ross  
Mayor Stephen Hernandez  
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner  
Director JB Hamby  
Mayor Pro Tem Donna Griffith  
Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Ortiz  
Mayor Linda Evans, *Chair*  
Vice President Nancy Wright  
Councilmember Gina Nestande  
Councilmember Dennis Woods  
Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend  
Riverside County – District 4

**Agency**

City of Cathedral City  
City of Coachella  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
Imperial Irrigation District (*Arrived during Item 4*)  
City of Indian Wells  
City of Indio  
City of La Quinta  
Mission Springs Water District  
City of Palm Desert  
City of Palm Springs  
City of Rancho Mirage  
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez (*Absent during Item 5*)

**Ex-Officio Members Present**

Director Russ Martin

Riverside County

**Others Present**

Tom Kirk	CVAG
Erica Felci	CVAG
Peter Satin	CVAG
Joanna Stueckle	CVAG
Jennifer Nelson	CVAG
Emmanuel Martinez	CVAG
David Freedman	CVAG
Liz Barnwell	CVAG
Allen McMillen	CVAG
Kevin Broadie	CVAG
Tony Quiroz	CVAG
Margaret Park	Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Pat Cooper	Riverside County
Liz Hernandez	Palm Springs Disposal Service
Jennifer Cusack	Southern California Edison
Jacob Alvarez	City of Coachella
Trinidad Arredondo	CVUSD Trustee
Patrick O'Reilly	
Fatima Loza	

**Members/ Ex-Officios Not Present**

Sec./Treasurer Vincent Gonzales III	Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Vice Mayor Joseph DeConinck	City of Blythe
Board Member Anthony Bianco	Coachella Valley Water District
Board Member Patricia Oygard	Desert Water Agency

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**4. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Chair Linda Evans highlighted the ongoing construction of the CV Link taking place in La Quinta. Vice Chair Oscar Oritz provided an update on sustainability issues being addressed by the Southern California Association of Governments. Councilmember Nancy Ross announced a temporary road closure for the Cathedral City bridge, which connects to the CV Link.

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. Approve February 10, 2022 Committee Meeting Minutes**

**B. Authorize the Executive Director to take the necessary actions and execute the required agreement with the County of Riverside to receive \$80,000 from the Coachella Valley Air Quality Enhancement Grant Program for the region’s Smart Scalping and Landscape Certification Program**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR PRO TEM TOWNSEND AND SECONDED BY DIRECTOR HAMBY TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 11 AYES, 2 ABSTENTIONS AND 4 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

Vice Mayor Joey DeConinck	<b>Absent</b>
Secretary/Treasurer Vincent Gonzales III	<b>Absent</b>
Councilmember Nancy Ross	<b>Aye</b>
Mayor Stephen Hernandez	<b>Aye</b> (Abstained from Item 5A)
Board Member Anthony Bianco	<b>Absent</b>
Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner	<b>Aye</b> (Abstained from Item 5A)
Director JB Hamby	<b>Aye</b>
Mayor Pro Tem Donna Griffith	<b>Aye</b>
Councilmember Elaine Holmes	<b>Aye</b>
Mayor Linda Evans	<b>Aye</b>
Vice President Nancy Wright	<b>Aye</b>
Councilmember Gina Nestande	<b>Aye</b>
Councilmember Dennis Woods	<b>Aye</b>
Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend	<b>Aye</b>

**6. DISCUSSION / ACTION**

**A. Coordination with the Coachella Valley Energy Commission – Emmanuel Martinez**

Emmanuel Martinez presented the staff report that included information on the Coachella Valley Energy Commission Committees and the strategic plan in place to address energy conservation. Member discussion ensued.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

**B. Regional PM10 Street Sweeping**

Mr. Martinez provided a detailed update that was followed by a brief member discussion that included an informational report from Executive Director Kirk on the effectiveness of street sweeping.

**IT WAS MOVED BY DIRECTOR HAMBY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM GRIFFITH TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTIONS TO EXECUTE A SIX-MONTH CONTRACT EXTENSION WITH M&M SWEEPING, INC., FOR REGIONAL PM 10 STREET SWEEPING SERVICES**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 12 AYES AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

<b>Vice Mayor Joey DeConinck</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Secretary/Treasurer Vincent Gonzales III</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Councilmember Nancy Ross</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Stephen Hernandez</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Board Member Anthony Bianco</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director JB Hamby</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Donna Griffith</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Elaine Holmes</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Linda Evans</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Vice President Nancy Wright</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Gina Nestande</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Dennis Woods</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor V. Manuel Perez</b>	<b>Aye</b>

**C. State Legislation Related to Automated Rooftop Solar Permitting Programs**

David Freedman provided a staff report. Member discussion ensued, with members expressing interest in seeing whether the funding thresholds could be changed so local cities were eligible for additional funding based on their population sizes.

**IT WAS MOVED BY SUPERVISOR PEREZ AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER WOODS TO SUPPORT SENATE BILL 379 WITH ADDITIONAL RESEARCH ON FUNDING LEVELS AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR AND/OR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO SIGN LETTERS OF SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE FOR ITS APPROVAL**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 12 AYES AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

<b>Vice Mayor Joey DeConinck</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Secretary/Treasurer Vincent Gonzales III</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Councilmember Nancy Ross</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Stephen Hernandez</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Board Member Anthony Bianco</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Gary Gardner</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director JB Hamby</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Donna Griffith</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Elaine Holmes</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Linda Evans</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Vice President Nancy Wright</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Gina Nestande</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Dennis Woods</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Charles Townsend</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor V. Manuel Perez</b>	<b>Aye</b>

**D. Inland Regional Energy Network Update**

Mr. Freedman provided a brief staff report and Committee members provided feedback.

There was no action taken on this item as if was for informational purposes.

**7. INFORMATION** – The following items were provided in the agenda for information only:

**A. Attendance Record**

**B. Update on Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program**

**C. Update on legislative advocacy efforts**

Councilmember Woods requested that staff provide an update on broadband in the valley at a future meeting.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Upcoming Meetings:



The next meeting of the **Energy & Environmental Resources Committee** will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2022, at noon via Zoom webinar.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, April 25, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

**10. ADJOURN** – Chair Evans adjourned the meeting at 12:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jennifer Nelson, Clerk*

## **ITEM 6A**

# Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy and Environmental Resources Committee

May 12, 2022



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Revitalizing the Salton Sea: Update from the State and Regional Efforts

**Contact:** Emmanuel Martinez, Senior Programs Manager ([emartinez@cvag.org](mailto:emartinez@cvag.org))

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### **Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** Reduced water inflows to the Salton Sea and the associated public health and environmental impacts has been a concern and priority for the Coachella Valley and CVAG's Energy and Environmental Resources Committee. At the May meeting, members of the Energy & Environmental Resources will receive a two-part update on the efforts to restore the sea. The first will be from Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer for the California Natural Resources Agency, who will discuss statewide efforts and updates on the state-led community engagement efforts. Patrick O' Dowd, Executive Director of the Salton Sea Authority, will then update CVAG's Energy & Environmental Resources Committee on the regional efforts.

By way of background, the major contributor to declining water levels at the sea is due to a water transfer agreement amongst Southern California agencies called the Quantification Settlement Agreement. This agreement was designed to bring California into its authorized allocation of Colorado River Water while addressing growing urban demand for water. To do this, in 2003, the QSA was signed between the Imperial Irrigation District, Coachella Valley Water District, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and San Diego County Water Authority to define rights to a portion of Colorado River water for each entity.

The QSA came in response to California consistently using more than its annual Colorado River entitlement of 4.4 million acre-feet. In order to reduce its reliance on the river, California agreed to a water transfer of as much as 200,000 acre-feet a year from the water-rich Imperial Valley to coastal San Diego for up to 75 years. Also, a transfer of 105,000 acre-feet annually between IID and Metropolitan and a transfer of as much as 103,000 acre-feet annually between IID and the Coachella Valley Water District. Ultimately, this became the largest agricultural to urban water transfer in the United States. With less water to farm in Imperial, there was less run-off water flowing into the Sea, causing air quality issues due to dry lakebed exposure and habitat loss for more than 400 avian species on the Pacific Flyway.

For many years after the QSA was executed – and despite calls for action from the Coachella Valley – the State of California had been largely absent from investing into any mitigation measures to address habitat, environmental and public health concerns associated with the receding sea. In large part, this was attributed to the large price tag to implement prior projects promulgated in past plans, and lack of political attention at the state level. However, in recent years the State has played more active role in addressing these concerns.

### *State's Focus on Implementing a 10-Year Plan*

In 2015, then-Gov. Jerry Brown created the Salton Sea Task Force, directing agencies to develop a comprehensive management plan for the sea to meet a short-term goal of building 9,000 to 12,000 acres of habitat and dust suppression projects, and a longer-term goal of up to 25,000 acres. Then in 2017, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted a 10-year plan calling for 29,800 acres of ponds, wetlands and dust-suppression projects on portions of exposed lake bed. The plan includes annual targets for completion, ramping up to 4,200 acres in 2028. The agreement further commits the state to creating a long-term plan beyond the initial 10 years. The CVAG Executive Committee in June 2017 adopted Resolution 17-003, which supports fully-funded Salton Sea Phase 1 10-year plan.

The California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of Water Resources and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife are now focused on implementing the Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP), which includes a 10-year plan that aims to improve conditions by constructing 30,000 acres of habitat and dust suppression projects around the sea. Recently, the SSMP team released its 2022 Annual Report and organized virtual community meetings to provide updates during the months of March and April 2022. The California Natural Resources Agency submitted its 2022 Annual Report on the Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP) to the State Water Resources Control Board, in compliance with Order WR 2017-0134. In addition to the Annual Report update, the SSMP team also provided an overview of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process and how it relates to the SSMP 10-Year Plan.

Additionally, the SSMP team continues exploring long-range plan options and conduct vegetation enhancement projects at the north-end of the sea. As it relates to the long-range plan, the SSMP team is working on planning processes and pre-liminary restoration concepts. The state is also collaborating with the US Bureau of Reclamation on a 1,700-acre project to restore exposed lakebed sites through establishment of native vegetation and enhancement of existing vegetation communities. The work, which started in late December 2021, is planned at three project sites. Two sites are located near the unincorporated community of Salton City: Clubhouse (approximately 400 acres) and Tule Wash (approximately 1,215 acres). The third site is located near the community of Bombay Beach (approximately 90 acres).

### *Regional Efforts Advance the North Lake Project*

The Salton Sea Authority was formed in 1993 through a Joint Powers Agreement amongst various local stakeholders to cooperate with the State on Salton Sea restoration efforts and ensure local priorities are implemented. In 2012, state legislation, AB 71, formalized a strong partnership between the SSA and the State, which ensured local coordination and collaboration with the state on Salton Sea revitalization efforts. AB 71 also authorized funding from the Salton Sea Restoration Fund for the Salton Sea Authority to lead a feasibility action plan. This is now referred to as the Financial Feasibility Action Plan (FFAP). The FFAP project was completed in a series of benchmarks over 2014-2016 with separate reports for each. These included a review of existing conditions; previous alternatives for restoration; review of options for importing and exporting water from the sea, and for performing in-sea improvements; opportunities for funding improvements through the development of real estate around the sea; and estimation of funding streams from development of alternative energy sources around the sea. This study has been helpful in advancing current efforts regarding short- and long-term range options and potential ways to fund identified projects.

One of the key projects the SSA has undertaken is the North Lake project. As part of the state's SSMP 10-year Plan, the vision of the North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project is to build an

approximately 160-acre lake near the North Shore Beach & Yacht Club Community Center. The project will provide both shallow and deep-water habitat, suppress dust by the creation of the lake and provide recreational benefits. The project could be designed as either freshwater or brackish water habitat. The State will analyze the project alternatives as part of the Environmental Assessment process for the Phase I: 10-Year Plan. An addendum for this project was completed to provide state environmental compliance for this project.

This project could be integrated into a larger North Lake concept, which is envisioned as about 4,000 acres in a horseshoe-shaped lake. To implement the North Lake project, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors and the Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors in 2021 approved reimbursement agreements that allow Riverside County to utilize \$19.25 million in state funding, from the voter-approved Proposition 68 parks bond, to manage this project. In managing this project, Riverside County will serve as a subcontractor to the Salton Sea Authority in consultation with the SSMP Team. Other project partners include the California Natural Resources Agency's Salton Sea Management Program, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Department of Water Resources.

Riverside County issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) package for engineering design and environmental services in January 2022 for implementation of this demonstration project. By the end of this year, the county anticipates developing a conceptual design of the, completing the environmental compliance and permitting and make progress on securing land access and water supply. By early 2023, the county anticipates starting construction. In order to keep the community informed, the Salton Sea Authority in February hosted a community engagement meeting with updates on these efforts.


In addition, and to address exposed playa due to the receding Sea, the Authority has also focused work on the implementation of Salton Sea Perimeter Lake Concept. This project proposed to cover approximately 30,000 acres of playa that would otherwise be exposed along the sea's shoreline. The Salton Sea Authority is also facilitating a joint agency project to restore access at the Salton Sea through cleanup of the marina at North Shore Beach and Yacht Club. This project will improve access to the existing launch ramp and marina at the Club. Partners with the Authority for this project include the US Bureau of Reclamation, Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (CVMC) and Riverside County.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no cost to CVAG for this presentation.

**ITEM 7A**

**ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
ATTENDANCE RECORD  
FY 2021-2022**

<b>VOTING MEMBERS</b>	<b>JUL</b>	<b>AUG</b>	<b>SEP</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>	<b>JAN</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>APR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUNE</b>
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-		-			
City of Blythe	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-			
City of Cathedral City	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of Coachella	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-	✓		
Coachella Valley Water District	-	-		-		-	-	✓	-			
City of Desert Hot Springs	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
Imperial Irrigation District	-	-		-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of Indian Wells	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of Indio	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of La Quinta	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
Mission Springs Water District	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of Palm Desert	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of Palm Springs	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		
City of Rancho Mirage	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-	✓		
Riverside County - District 4	-	-	✓	-		-	-	✓	-	✓		
<b>EX-OFFICIO / NON-VOTING MEMBERS</b>												
Desert Water Agency	-	-		-		-	-		-			
Riverside County - District 5	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓		

Absent  No Meeting -  
 Vacancy **\*\*** Present ✓

**ITEM 7B**

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Environmental Resources Committee**

May 12, 2022



**STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Inland Regional Energy Network Updates

**Contact:** David Freedman, Program Manager ([dfreedman@cvag.org](mailto:dfreedman@cvag.org))

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**Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** As previously reported to the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee, CVAG has been collaborating with Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) and San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) on creating a new joint Regional Energy Network for the Inland Empire, known as Inland Regional Energy Network or I-REN. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) approved the I-REN application and business plan in November 2021. This staff report provides an update on the efforts to finalize agreements to related to programming and governance.

Staff of the three agencies are discussing a Programs Agreement with SoCalGas, which the CPUC designated as the fiscal and contracting agent for I-REN. Southern California Edison is also party to the Programs Agreement. The Programs Agreement establishes the roles and deliverables of SoCalGas and WRCOG in invoicing, reporting and payments and outlines the three program categories described in the business plan. CVAG will serve as the lead agency on developing and implementing programs and policies in I-REN's Codes and Standards sector. Additionally, the staffs have reached agreement on the I-REN governance structure that was outlined in the report for the February meeting of the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee. This agreement will include the authority of WRCOG to administer I-REN on a day-to-day basis and the authority of the I-REN Executive Committee to make all executive decisions for I-REN. The governance structure will incorporate the feedback that the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee previously provided.

CVAG staff anticipates bringing both the Programs Agreement and the I-REN governance documents to the Energy & Environmental Resources and Executive Committees for review and approval at their respective meetings in June 2022. This will also confirm the approach to CVAG's representation on I-REN's Executive Committee. Based on the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee's consensus in February, the intent is to allow the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee to review and provide direction on all items being considered at the I-REN Executive Committee, then delegate voting on such items to the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee Chair, or, in the Chair's absence, to the CVAG Executive Director and/or the Executive Director's designee.

While I-REN's formal launch will occur once all necessary agreements are signed, CVAG staff has already begun work on I-REN programming. The first program will be a webinar training on May 18, 2022 for local permitting and planning staffs as well as solar installers on the SolarAPP+ platform and the CalAPP grant program, which was detailed in the of the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee's April 14 agenda materials. Staff is also scheduled to present at a May 20 panel discussion on local residential building energy efficiency reach codes exceeding the California

Energy Code requirements at the MyGreen Building Conference & Expo sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council Los Angeles Chapter.

**Fiscal Analysis:** Staff time dedicated to I-REN is covered through the I-REN budget, which is nearly \$65.6 million through period 2022-2027. This funding comes from customers of Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) such as SCE and SoCalGas through the on-bill Public Goods Charge levied by the IOUs. The I-REN Executive Committee will, as part of its budget process, determine amounts to be allocated in furtherance of I-RENs programs.

**COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS  
FISCAL YEAR 2022/2023**



CVAG STANDING COMMITTEES	DAY	TIME	JULY (Dark)	AUG (Dark)	SEPT	OCT (Dark)	NOV	DEC (Dark)	JAN	FEB	MAR (Dark)	APR	MAY	JUN
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Last Monday	4:30 p.m.	-	-	26	-	H Dec 5	-	30	27	-	24	H June 5	26
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	10:00 a.m.		-	H Aug 29	-	7	-	H Jan 9 11:00 am	6	-	3	1	5
COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	10:30 a.m.	-	-	8	-	10	-	12	9	-	13	11	8
DESERT COMMUNITY ENERGY	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	3:00 p.m.	18	22	19	17	21	-	H Jan 9	H Feb13	20	17	15	19
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	12:00 p.m.	-	-	8	-	10	-	12	9	-	13	11	8
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	9:00 a.m.	-	-	12	-	14	-	9	13	-	-	8	12
HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	-	-	21	-	16	-	18	15	-	19	17	21
GENERAL ASSEMBLY	Last Monday in June	6:00 p.m.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26

H = Holiday \* = Special Meeting

AGENDAS CAN BE FOUND AT: [www.cvag.org](http://www.cvag.org).

UPDATED: May 6, 2022

**PLEASE NOTE:** When it becomes necessary to have a special meeting or to change the date of a meeting, committee members will be alerted and the change will be noted on the CVAG website calendar.



## **ITEM 7D**

# Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Environmental Resources Committee

May 12, 2022



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Update on Middle-Mile Broadband Efforts

**Contact:** Jonathon Hoy, Transportation Director ([jhoy@cvag.org](mailto:jhoy@cvag.org))

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### **Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** At the April meeting of the Energy & Environmental Resources Committee, it was requested that staff provide an update on the efforts to make broadband accessible in the Coachella Valley. CVAG staff's efforts on this effort have been regularly recapped in reports to the Transportation Committee, as the opportunity is tied to the CV Sync regional traffic signal synchronization project. This staff report provides a recap of the steps that have been taken in recent months.

CVAG's CV Sync project has been identified by the state as one of 18 locations that will be receiving an initial middle-mile broadband investment under Senate Bill 156. This positions the regional signal synchronization project as an opportunity to also create an open-access middle-mile network that provides needed infrastructure to connect unserved and underserved areas in the Coachella Valley and increase competition in areas already being served.

On March 17, 2022, CVAG staff met with the State's third-party administrator – GoldenStateNet, also known as CENIC – to provide an update on the preliminary engineering costs and design status. Initial estimates show that it will cost \$44 million, which includes a 15 percent contingency, to build the middle-mile connection to CV Sync, which is a first of this type of project. It is important to note this preliminary cost estimate includes the Coachella Valley work, as well as a state request to extend infrastructure to the Imperial County line. CVAG will continue to work with the State and the engineering to refine this estimate.

As it relates to the design, staff discussed route refinements that would loop from Desert Hot Springs to Palm Springs and goes down Highway 111 to Coachella. At that point, the project routes loops around west along Varner Road and back to the City of Desert Hot Springs. This change differs from initial concepts that would have created a singular route running west to east. The new design will allow for increased reliability and redundancy needed to have a robust middle-mile system in the Coachella Valley. This specific Coachella Valley loop is in line with the project foot-print for CV Sync. It is expected that costs for the trenching and boring will be shared between the State and CVAG, and the State would fully cover costs associated with the extension from Coachella to the Imperial County border.

Staff continues to work with the State to finalize the contract. In addition to paying for the capital costs, staff was also able to negotiate administrative costs for staff time dedicated to the project. It is anticipated that the middle-mile project would be transferred to State ownership once complete. These details will continue to be discussed and be incorporated into the final contract, which will come before CVAG committees for approval.

The Middle-Mile Advisory Committee also met on March 18 to receive an update from the Caltrans, the California Public Utilities Commission and GoldenStateNet on the initial 18 projects. Efforts are focused on preconstruction work, such as environmental clearances, subsurface utility investigations, project design and field reviews. At this meeting, the CPUC released its data and mapping analysis for all 18 projects. The analysis shows underserved areas, areas without affordable rates and areas that lack open-access middle-mile networks. The CPUC also provided an update on technical assistance grants for last-mile connections. These grants are open to local agencies and California's Tribal Nations, including those without federal recognition, to receive technical assistance to expand broadband to communities lacking sufficient internet. Workshops will take place in April, and more information can be found at <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/broadband-implementation-for-california/local-agency-technical-assistance>.

CVAG staff will continue to seek opportunities for funding for last-mile connections that can be facilitated via completion of the middle-mile. This includes the Local Agency Technical Assistance Grant Program (LATA), which has a \$50 million allocation to the program. Of these funds, \$5 million is set-aside for Tribes. Eligible costs under the program include the development of broadband network deployment projects to benefit unserved Californians, including the costs of joint powers authority formation, environmental studies, network design, and engineering study expenses.

Staff will also continue to coordinate with local stakeholders, including cities, school districts and community institutions to identify opportunities to reap the benefits of the investments being made in broadband to benefit the Coachella Valley, particularly unserved and underserved areas. Lastly, CVAG staff will continue to keep its committees apprised of progress on the Coachella Valley's middle-mile project development and work with the state.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no additional cost for this update. Costs related to planning for the broadband effort are included in the CV Sync project, including the contract amendment the CVAG Executive Committee authorized in September 2021 with Advantec Consulting Engineer's Environmental and Engineering Services Phase II Contract to incorporate design of redundant fiber optic cable.