



Agenda

Carmichael Water District/Sacramento Suburban Water District 2x2 Committee Meeting

3701 Marconi Avenue, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95821

Wednesday, December 21, 2022
4:00 p.m.

This meeting will be conducted both in-person in the Sacramento Suburban Water District's Boardroom at the address above, and by videoconference and teleconference using the information provided below. The public is invited to listen, observe, and provide comments during the meeting by any method provided. The Chairperson will call for public comment on each agenda item at the appropriate time and all votes will be taken by roll call. If a member of the public chooses to participate in this public meeting via videoconference and/or teleconference, please see the instructions below.

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Where appropriate or deemed necessary, the Committee may take action on any item listed on the agenda, including items listed as information items. Public documents relating to any open session item listed on this agenda that are distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Committee less than 72 hours before the meeting are available for public inspection at each Agency's Administrative Offices.

The public may address the Committee concerning an agenda item either before or during the Committee's consideration of that agenda item. Persons who wish to comment on either agenda or non-agenda items should fill out a Comment Card and give it to either one of the General

Managers. The Chairperson will call for comments at the appropriate time. Comments will be subject to reasonable time limits (3 minutes).

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Call to Order

Roll Call

Announcements

Public Comment

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on non-agenda items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee. Comments are limited to 3 minutes.

Consent Items

The Committee will be asked to approve all Consent Items at one time without discussion. Consent Items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. If any Committee member, staff, or interested person requests that an item be removed from the Consent Items, it will be considered with the Items for Discussion and/or Action.

1. **Minutes of the October 13, 2022, CWD/SSWD 2x2 Committee Meeting**
Recommendation: Approve subject minutes.

Items for Discussion and/or Action

2. **Combination Study Business Case Analysis Status Update**
Recommendation: No action. Receive update on the status of the Draft Combination Study Business Case Analysis Report.
3. **Combination Discussion Communications Plan**
Recommendation: Staff recommends the following: Receive Draft Combination Discussion Communications Plan; and Approve of a Memorandum of Understanding for 50/50 shared costs associated with developing and implementing a Communications Plan to be presented to the CWD and SSWD Boards for final approval.
4. **Combination Discussion – Next Phase**
Recommendation: Direct staff as appropriate on next steps of analysis on Combination Discussions between CWD and SSWD.
5. **Next Meeting**
Recommendation: Determine next meeting of the 2x2 Committee.

6. Public Comment

Adjournment

I certify that the foregoing agenda for the December 21, 2022, meeting of the Carmichael Water District/Sacramento Suburban Water District 2x2 Committee was posted by December 16, 2022 in a publicly-accessible location at the Sacramento Suburban Water District office, 3701 Marconi Avenue, Suite 100, Sacramento, California, and at the Carmichael Water District office, 7837 Fair Oaks Boulevard, Carmichael, CA 95608, and was made available to the public during normal business hours.

Dan York
General Manager/Secretary
Sacramento Suburban Water District



Agenda Item: 1

Date: December 21, 2022

Subject: Minutes of the October 13, 2022, CWD/SSWD 2x2 Committee Meeting

Staff Contact: Dan York, SSWD General Manager
Cathy Lee, CWD General Manager

Recommended Board Action:

Approve the draft minutes of the October 13, 2022, CWD/SSWD 2x2 Committee Meeting.

Attachment:

1 – Draft Minutes



Minutes

Carmichael Water District/Sacramento Suburban Water District 2x2 Committee Meeting October 13, 2022

Location:

3701 Marconi Avenue, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95821, and Audio Conference at 1-669-900-6833, and Video Conference using Zoom at Meeting Id #873 2290 1343

Call to Order – Videoconference/Audioconference Meeting

CWD Director Jeff Nelson (Chair Nelson) called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

SSWD Directors

Present: Dave Jones and Craig Locke.

SSWD Directors

Absent: None.

CWD Directors

Present: Mark Emmerson and Jeff Nelson.

CWD Directors

Absent: None.

SSWD Staff Present: General Manager Dan York (SSWD GM York), Assistant General Manager Matt Underwood, Heather Hernandez-Fort.

CWD Staff Present: General Manager Cathy Lee (CWD GM Lee).

Public Present: Seth Garrison, Zach Green, Christine Kohn, Desirae Fox, Ron Davis, Greg Zlotnick, Paul Helliker, Kevin Thomas, and Gwyn-Mohr Tully.

Announcements

SSWD General Manager Dan York (SSWD GM York) announced:

- Rob Swartz' retirement party was that evening.

Public Comment

None.

Consent Items

1. Minutes of the July 20, 2022, CWD/SSWD 2x2 Committee Meeting

SSWD Director Jones moved to approve the Consent Item; CWD Director Emmerson seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

AYES:	Jones, Locke, Emmerson, and Nelson.	ABSTAINED:	
NOES:		RECUSED:	
ABSENT:			

Items for Discussion and/or Action

1. Combination Study Business Case Analysis Status Update

SSWD GM York presented the staff report and introduced Seth Garrison and Zach Green with Raftelis, who presented the PowerPoint presentation, provided an update to the Business Case Analysis Study Report (Study), and answered clarifying questions.

The Committee agreed that the next steps would be for each agency to meet separately in Special Board Meetings in the middle of November, if possible, to discuss the Study and solicit any feedback/edits from each Board. They agreed that each agency would then decide to either stop there, or keep moving forward; noting that if they agreed to keep moving forward, the following step would be to hold a Joint Board meeting in December, if possible, for both Boards to decide next steps.

SSWD Director Jones recommended to change the language in the Study from, “same level of water service,” to a “higher level of water service.”

SSWD Director Locke recommended to incorporate language like, “resiliency, sustainability, and higher level of service,” into the Executive Summary. He added that the Executive Summary should also include how much water is actually available at this present time for each agency.

The Committee agreed to provide any edits they each had to the report to staff by Friday, October 21, 2022.

Chair Nelson recommended to edit the cover of the Study to remove the word “final,” as it was still a draft document.

2. Combination Study Communications Plan Update

SSWD GM York presented the staff report.

Chair Nelson recommended that the CWD Board see the draft Study first before they move forward with more community outreach.

SSWD GM York expressed that SSWD would hold off on further outreach as well until both Boards had an opportunity to review the draft Study.

3. **Next Meeting - Individual Board Meetings or Joint Board Meeting**
The Committee agreed for each agency to hold separate Special Board Meetings to discuss the report and next steps, with an anticipation of holding a Joint Board meeting before the end of the year.
4. **Public Comment**
CWD Director Emmerson thanked the General Managers for their good management skills, expressing this process has been very well controlled and well managed.

Adjournment

Chair Nelson adjourned the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

Dan York
General Manager/Secretary
Sacramento Suburban Water District

Agenda Item: 2

Date: December 21, 2022

Subject: Combination Study Business Case Analysis Status Update

Staff Contact: Dan York, SSWD General Manager
Cathy Lee, CWD General Manager

Recommended Committee Action:

No action. Receive update on the status of the Draft Combination Study Business Case Analysis Report.

Discussion:

Raftelis presented the Draft Combination Study Business Case Analysis Report (Draft Report) at the 2x2 Committee meeting on October 13, 2022. The Committee members committed to provide their feedback by October 21, 2022 in order to present the Draft Report to the CWD and SSWD Board of Directors.

The Draft Report was presented to the SSWD at their November 9, 2022 Special Board meeting. The SSWD Directors provided their feedback, of which was provided to CWD. The CWD Board held a Board Workshop on November 14, 2022 to discuss the Draft Report. The CWD Board committed to provide their feedback to staff. Staff is still in the process of receiving feedback from the CWD. Once received, all feedback from the CWD and SSWD Board of Directors will be forwarded to Raftelis to address.

The current plan is to have the final Draft Report prepared to present to the respective Boards in January 2023. The intent is for the CWD and SSWD Boards to accept the final Report and provide direction moving forward in the Combination Discussions.

Agenda Item: 3

Date: December 21, 2022

Subject: Combination Discussion Communications Plan

Staff Contact: Dan York, SSWD General Manager
Cathy Lee, CWD General Manager

Recommended Committee Action:

Staff recommends the following:

1. Receive Draft Combination Discussion Communications Plan.
2. Approve of a Memorandum of Understanding for 50/50 shared costs associated with developing and implementing a Communications Plan to be presented to the CWD and SSWD Boards for final approval.

Discussion:

During Combination Discussions, in order to reinforce customer service and benefits, as well as mission, vision, and values of each organization to key stakeholders, both internal and external, it is important to receive buy-in from such stakeholders. This can assist in making the effort a success. A Communications Plan is intended to ensure the right messages about Combination Discussions are communicated to keep every stakeholder informed and potentially reduce employee anxiety.

Staff has been working diligently in developing a draft Communications Plan since the onset of the Combination Discussions between CWD and SSWD. The SSWD has a Professional Services Agreement with IN Communications for its external communications effort. The subject Agreement can be amended to assist with the public outreach for the CWD/SSWD Combination Discussions.

Staff is recommending that the Committee provide direction to present to their respective Boards a Memorandum of Understanding to finalize and implement a Communications Plan for customer/stakeholder outreach on the Combination Discussions between the two districts.

The estimated cost to conduct the subject outreach is estimated to not exceed \$20,000. Both CWD and SSWD will share the associated costs 50/50, with SSWD responsible for administering the agreement/invoices.

Attachment 1 is the Communications Plan drafted by Raftelis. Utilizing that Communications Plan, staff coordinated with IN Communications to develop Attachment 2, which is the outreach efforts broken out in phases, with Attachment 3 as a simplified flowchart of those phases.

Fiscal Impact:

The estimated cost for the Public Outreach is not to exceed \$20,000, which will be split 50/50 between CWD and SSWD.

Carmichael Water District and Sacramento Suburban Water District

Combination Study Communications Plan



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Background

Sacramento Suburban Water District and Carmichael Water District Strategic Business Case Analysis for a Potential Combination

In early 2020, Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) and Carmichael Water District (CWD), along with five other regional water agencies, participated in the Sacramento Regional Water Utility Collaboration Study to identify opportunities for increased collaboration. The goal of the Study was to identify opportunities for additional operational and financial efficiency, and to improve service provision to customers.

On June 21, 2021, the SSWD Board of Directors accepted the Regional Study and directed its General Manager to continue identifying collaboration opportunities with the Carmichael Water District. Both Districts desire to become more efficient in working together to minimize costs to their customers and optimize the use of their water supplies, personnel, equipment, infrastructure and other resources, and enhance their impact on state and federal policies.

A study of how the two agencies could combine began in April 2022. A comprehensive report is expected by fall 2022, which will include recommendations of how consolidation or shared services for the Districts might proceed and presents a business case analysis for combining services. If conditions appear favorable, a timeline for combination will be proposed.

This analysis of the Districts provides an opportunity to reinforce customer service and benefits, as well as mission, vision, and values of the organizations to key stakeholders—both internal and external. Getting buy-in from stakeholders will be a critical success factor during and beyond this Study if consolidation is pursued. This strategic communications strategy is intended to ensure that the right messages about the Combination Study are communicated to keep every stakeholder informed and reduce employee anxiety.

Currently, internal stakeholders have been informed along the way since 2020 with opportunities for employees to ask questions. The most frequently asked question is about impacts on the workforce. Community-wide communication about the Combination Study to external stakeholders has primarily only been through each Districts' Board meetings and the public 2x2 Ad Hoc Committee. Members of the public who tend to be more engaged and follow board agendas and meetings will have a higher awareness, but they represent a small percentage of customers and the public. The SSWD website includes an overview of the two studies, but it does not appear on the CWD website.

The release of the Combination Study Report will ignite interest in the potential merger, job security topics, workforce issues, and benefits to customers. The goal is to inform constituencies about the feasibility study process and set expectations of next steps. With state water and environment regulators and policy makers based in Sacramento, placing a story in area news outlets can reach key local, regional, and state stakeholders. Proactively informing stakeholders will help ensure that the right messages are communicated. Internally, keeping employees “in the know” and reducing employee anxiety may boost morale and help retain talent. These efforts can also help mitigate potential issues with labor. Externally, this is an opportunity to reinforce customer messaging about services and benefits, as well as restate the mission, vision, and values of both organizations to key stakeholders—both internal and external.

Planning

The enclosed strategic communications plan and messaging framework places a high priority on communicating internally and outlines a path to communicating with external audiences. Representatives at each agency are a great asset and serve as front line ambassadors—their interactions with customers build trust in their water provider every day. Engaged and informed employees perform better, experience less burnout, and stay in organizations longer.

Overarching Plan Goals

- Raise awareness and manage expectations that a feasibility study is being conducted to examine shared resources and efficiencies.
- Clearly communicate to stakeholders how and what frequency they will be kept informed about the study.
- Strengthen and formalize internal and external communications to build and improve relationships with stakeholders.
- Expand and diversify communication delivery and provide a framework for communications and outreach that enables staff from both Districts to communicate and engage effectively and efficiently.
- Position both water districts as responsible and reliable clean water service providers and caring community partners.

Success Measures

- The Districts are not receiving many inquiries now, but the true test is when the Study Report is published and released through the Boards and 2x2 Committee and added to the websites. More inquiries to customer service could be an indication of more awareness.
- Seen as a positive that an increased number of inquiries from the media is an opportunity to tell the right story and position the Districts as thought leaders in the region.
- Local community recognition and support for the value of service provided by the Districts.
- Signs of trust -- internally and externally.

Stakeholder Identification

Both water districts identified stakeholders for the purposes of this Plan as individuals, groups, organizations or political entities that have an interest in the Study and are assumed to be directly or indirectly affected by the outcome of decisions related to the Study.

- Employees of each District
- Parks Departments are a shared and interested stakeholder
- Governing bodies for each District
- Customers of each District
- Water Forum Environmental Caucus
- Regional Water Authority
- Other water and environmental advocacy organizations
- City of Sacramento
- City of Carmichael
- County Board of Supervisors
- Other local elected officials
- Regulators
- Vendors
- News Media
- LAFCO
- Business community, incl. Chamber of Commerce and Taxpayer Advocacy Groups
- HOAs
- Civic organizations

Stakeholder Mapping

On one end of the spectrum are those who are most interested and who wield the most influence over your success. At the other end are those who are not heavily engaged and have the least influence.



Communication Channels

Each District has its own outreach and communications program, generally relying on some combination of websites, bill inserts, bill messaging, conservation education, and outreach events to reach customers. The key is to communicate early and often. Each District also has internal communication channels to reach employees, governing boards and policymakers.

For this Plan, the focus is on using existing channels while supplementing with active outreach to key stakeholder audiences to inform stakeholders and engage them in attaining the goals of the Study. What follows is an inventory of available communication channels and resources for each of the participating agencies.

Carmichael Water District	Channel	Frequency/Notes
Internal	Staff, tailgate, road show meetings	Reach field and administrative staff
	Employee email & newsletters	Reach administrative staff
	Employee Bulletin Boards and Gathering Areas (break/lunch rooms)	Posters, fliers
	Employee Intranet	Official location of employee news
	New employee orientations	Transparency with staff just joining the organization
	Board & Committee meetings	Monthly
External	Active in community organizations and signature events	Neighborhood associations, civic associations, Speaker's Bureau, community events
	Newsletter	Establish a regular cadence
	Bill inserts	Monthly, limited character space, could be missed or overlooked
	Customer service counter and kiosks	Location to place fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, current events
	Direct mail	If the Study proceeds
	Social media	Nextdoor
	Website	Mirror landing page for the Study as on SSWD website;
	Business & civic groups (Carmichael Chamber, Kiwanis, etc.)	Information distribution to members and speaking engagements
	Establish e-news proactive distribution	As needed to release news and notifications
	Facility tours	Opportunity to share news of the District

Sacramento Suburban Water District	Channel	Frequency/Notes
Internal	Staff, tailgate, road show meetings	Reach field and administrative staff
	Board and Committee meetings	Monthly
	Employee bulletin boards and gathering areas (break/lunch rooms)	Posters, fliers
	Employee email	Reach administrative staff
	Employee intranet	Official location of employee news
External	New employee orientation	Transparency with staff just joining the organization
	Customer service counters, kiosks	Location to place fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, current events
	Community and industry events and forums	Tabling/exhibiting opportunity to distribute information; prep staff to answer basic questions
	Speaker's Bureau	Expand to offer presentations to civic, nonprofits, and faith based
	Newsletter	Establish a regular cadence
	Bill inserts	Monthly, limited character space and often not read or overlooked
	Direct mail	As needed, not as likely to be overlooked
	Social media	Establish 1-2 leading platforms followed by key stakeholders
	Website	Update name of the Study on "About" menu
	Business & civic groups (Carmichael Chamber, Kiwanis, etc.)	Information distribution to members and speaking engagements
E-news	As needed to release news and notifications	
Facility tours	Opportunity to share news of the District	

Key Message Platform

A message platform provides consistency to Study communications. Simple, informative and clear messages have been developed and tailored to internal and external stakeholder audiences based on relevancy.

Spokespersons

The 2x2 Ad Hoc Committee is meeting regularly to evaluate collaboration opportunities, up to and including a potential combination of the two districts. Each District General Manager will serve as the lead spokesperson for their agency and/or an informed Board will speak as body and not individually.

Each agency understands the importance of not speaking for the other. For inquiries or speaking opportunities where one spokesperson should represent the Study there is consensus that Dan York, General Manager of Sacramento Suburban, should be the spokesperson because he is the contract administrator for the Study.

Guidelines for message development

Each agency representative will determine the most effective communication method(s) to reach specific audiences based on their respective needs and feedback provided, and tailor communication delivery appropriately.

Messages should be consistent across every communication channel (website, newsletters, presentations, meetings, etc.) When communicating changes or decisions, clearly explain the “why.”

The Study goals should be the leading focus for each District and the 2x2 Ad Hoc Committee members when communicating about the Study. Customers are a top priority and central to the strategic direction of the Study. The connection to customer service is top of mind in message development.

Message themes

The following themes help guide message development and maintain consistency as the Study moves through various phases:

1. We are experts and provide a valued service.

- A. Employees from each District work hard every day to deliver high quality, reliable water service to about 240,000 people in north Sacramento County.
- B. As water providers we work 24/7/365 to run complex water systems. With significant infrastructure improvement plans, we’re staying on top of maintenance, upgrades, and new projects needed to keep these systems running effectively and efficiently.
- C. The foresight and legacy of those who created and lead our agencies allows us to provide high quality, reliable drinking water for our customers today.

2. The CWD/SSWD Combination Study will examine the feasibility, benefits and risks of a shared path to a secure water future.

- A. The Study builds on our history and each water provider's core responsibility and mission of providing and delivering a high-quality, reliable supply of drinking water—we'll continue to focus on the importance of providing excellent water quality and maintaining our infrastructure.
- B. Our utility environment is changing, so we must find new ways to serve our region efficiently by expanding partnerships and embracing technology to improve our customers' experience.
- C. The Study considers trends in our industry and communities that affect each of our water agencies and guides us to address opportunities and challenges; like water supplies and demand, drought, pressure to keep rates affordable, and regulatory changes.

3. The CWD/SSWD Combination Study is being developed with input from employees and governing boards.

- A. The Study's 2x2 Ad Hoc Committee includes leadership and management from both participating water districts.
- B. Because the Study is designed to serve our customers, employees, and stakeholders, we intend to include their perspectives where possible through surveys, focus groups, tours, community meetings, and/or open houses.
- C. The governing boards of each water district has reviewed and formally approved our efforts to develop the Study.

4. This Study is focused on providing a sustainable approach to a secure water future for our customers.

- A. We all have something at stake when it comes to water, so we are continuing to build partnerships to ensure we have safe and reliable water to support residents, businesses, and other public agencies, such as schools and parks, in our communities.
- B. The Study partners will collaborate to find solutions for modernizing our water systems and the policies and processes that help reduce costs and encourage efficiency.
- C. Together, we have a valuable contribution to make. We know you care about your water, so we'll help you learn more about the essential service we provide.

5. Every employee plays a role in achieving our vision.

- A. Employees are our most important asset.
- B. The Study is tied directly to the success of our region and relies heavily on our employees.
- C. Every role, from field crews, operators, and engineers to customer service representatives and accountants is connected to the Study goals of efficiency, improved services, and cost savings.

6. Employee feedback and input will continue to be important as we enter into different phases of the study.

- A. Your manager and supervisor will work with you to show how your work connects to the Study.
- B. We'll connect our employees to our successes and report on how we are doing on achieving our goals.
- C. We expect you to tell your supervisor and manager how things are going and to make suggestions for improvement.

Implementation Plan

INTERNAL

Communicating to raise awareness and understanding about the Study with employees and governing bodies.

Gaining awareness, interest, and ultimately engagement among the Districts' employees and governing bodies is critical for the Combination Study to be successful. Telling the story of why the partner agencies have initiated the Study and how employees will influence and be affected by the Study is at the heart of enhancing employee engagement. Employees who understand how their work impacts the overall success of the Study are more likely to take actions to align with the Study's goals and will help move it forward.

Core principles that connect employees to the Study:

Communicate from the top down and share progress

While most employees prefer to hear job-specific tactical information from their immediate supervisor, they expect to hear organizational strategy from leadership, and especially not from a local news story. Although employee input is used to develop the Study, the strategy behind the Study comes from the senior levels of their organizations. Leadership is responsible for communicating the priorities, listening and responding to feedback, setting the tone and energizing people behind common goals.

Recognize and celebrate employee contributions

Employees will want to be recognized for their contributions to the success of the Study. Recognition can take many forms from a simple shout-out to elaborate programs with rewards and prizes. But the most important aspect is to create opportunities to acknowledge employee contributions, and opportunities for recognition among peers and a way to share examples of success as inspiration to other employees.

Internal Communication Strategies for Employees

As the Study moves forward and identify opportunities to share services, change management will become very important. In fact, the Study could risk failure if leadership is not maintaining a cadence of information sharing that keeps employees engaged, even when they are working on their day-to-day duties.

The following strategies are meant to work together to enhance internal communication efforts that may already be in place and bolster efforts to successfully anticipate and manage change by infusing additional internal communication opportunities into future phases of the Study.

Meet employees where they are

Employees are out in the community, driving vehicles, working both in teams and independently, and being responsive to the needs of customers. That means traditional communication methods like emails and handouts can get lost while prioritizing daily work. Inboxes are often flooded with email, so newsletters can get set aside for any available "me time" that comes along, which may mean they are forgotten.

To reach employees, messages should be brought to where employees spend their time. Using visual management boards in work areas or break rooms can be better for employees who are rarely on email. These boards should be specific to the people who work in this area—they can include team updates, progress toward team goals, recognition of team members and show areas that need attention.

Know your audiences

Information clutter happens when the quantity of information being sent overwhelms the employee. This can happen when there is not a single hierarchy that determines what messages go to all employees and what information is “need to know” vs. “nice to know.” For the “need to know” groups, can the message be tailored so it feels most pertinent? For the “nice to know” groups can the message be sent in a way that doesn’t clog up communication channels and distract from more important information?

Additionally, general meetings with employees about the Study should be very short. Employees need to hear about strategy from leadership, but their managers and supervisors should connect their role to the Study as needed. Develop a way to share updates on the Study at in-person/virtual meetings that is highly pertinent.

Optimize huddles

Huddles are brief touchpoints that occur for an entire team frequently—even daily. Tailgate talks or stand-up virtual meetings are examples. They are effective because they are frequent, brief, in-person (or over the phone) and to the point. They can also be used to gain quick feedback on employee understanding.

Prepare managers as messengers

Trust is important in conveying messages. Those who work most closely with teams are naturally the most trusted sources of information. Managers are often the first line of feedback and can be highly useful for leadership to hear from. Managers should be equipped with the knowledge they need and the tools and structures to communicate effectively with their team. Preparing managers does not replace the need for employees to hear directly from leadership, but it is mutually beneficial.

Communication flow – vertically and horizontally

For the Study to be successful, employees must be engaged across organizations, disciplines and departments. Information typically flows vertically, but in practice, silos prevent information from flowing horizontally.

Think beyond the written word

Use of graphics, charts, photos and video can help draw employees’ attention and make the information easier to digest. Low-cost, simple videos can engage employees in a way that will be difficult for print materials to match, and they are perfect for time-pressed employees.

Establish consistent messaging cadence

To break through information clutter, establish a consistent way that information is presented about the Study. Setting patterns for information-sharing can help keep messages clear and direct.

Communications Materials

Communications materials provide a home for messages, both overarching themes and tailored, and are delivered via the communication channels described on page 7 in this plan. For example, a brief fact sheet for the Study with visuals and infographics could simplify the narrative, separate fact from fiction, address general audience questions, and manage expectations and hearsay. Elements from the fact sheets can be repurposed for other channels to drive people to the websites to learn more.

Similar to visuals and infographics for printed documents, short videos are eye-catching and the most viewed digital content. Creating short informative videos does not require heavy production and expensive videographers. An informative, interesting 90-second video can be created with free or inexpensive software using some images and text and posted to the website and social media and linked in e-news and shared through e-mail. Smartphone video quality continues to improve and is sufficient for quick, timely video content.

The following is an outline of communication materials that would be appropriate to support the goals of the Study:

Material	Description	Stakeholders	Channels
FAQ's	Q&A that describes what the Study is, why it was initiated, and answers questions employees may have	Employees	Meetings Employee Communication
One-Page Handout	Single page that describes what the Study is and why it was initiated	All	Websites Bulletin Boards Employee Communication Employee Orientation Customer Service Counters
Monthly Study Update	Template for a one-page highlight of recent and upcoming activity	Employees Elected Governing Boards Regulators	Websites Presentations Board Updates Employee Communication
Video	Short, 3-4-minute video to recap both studies with status update. Video is more engaging; 80-95% retention rate for video messaging vs written messages.	All Employees Elected Governing Boards Regulators	Employee Communication Websites Presentations Board Updates

Material	Description	Stakeholders	Channels
Case Studies	As the Study moves into future phases and projects are developed case studies showing successes can be shared, video would be a preferred method	All	Web Site Presentations Board Updates Employee Communication
Presentation	Short, 10-15-minute presentation showing the highlights of the Study as it evolves and pulling several case studies in	Business Community Customers Elected Speaker's Bureau Regulators Water Industry Organizations	Presentation Deck PDF on the Website Video Presentation on website, social media, e-news
Infographics	Graphic representation of the process and timeline for the Study and demonstrating case studies of successes as they become available	All	Web Site Presentations E-news Employee Communications

Tactics and Timeline

The following tactics are designed help with acceptance of the Combination Study Communications Plan to achieve the goal of engaging and informing stakeholders and employees giving them the knowledge and inspiration they need to help realize the Study’s next steps.

Tactic	When	Who	Detail
Determine messaging; ensure consistency	August '22	District Staff	Archive references to the previous regional study. Consistent use of “Combination Study.” Determine look and feel for materials (design scheme, how to use logos, etc.), ensure all materials are branded consistently.
FAQs	August '22	District Staff	FAQ to describe what the Study is, purpose, goals, and timeline. Attempts to proactively answer employee, customer, and governing body questions. Committee to brainstorm initial questions, add additional questions as they’re posed. For more interest and engagement, produce a video QA using staff and GMs from both agencies.
One-page handout	August '22	District Staff	Streamlined version of the FAQ. Highlight messaging themes described in this Plan. Include high-level messaging about the Study. Use infographics, images, and color to add interest and readability.
Presentation	August '22	District Staff	Use FAQs and messaging themes to develop an introductory presentation that can be tailored/tweaked for specific audiences. Presentation should be accessible and editable by spokesperson – can be tailored to address any audience.
Presentation Schedule	Ongoing	District Staff	Use stakeholder list to start prioritizing and scheduling presentations to stakeholder groups. Prioritize elected officials, water organizations, business/civic leaders.
Regular communications check-in via 2x2 Committee and Study update template	Every Committee meeting	2x2 Committee	<p>During 2x2 Ad Hoc Committee meetings develop an agenda item that focuses on what messages should be communicated to which audiences and check-in on how communication is progressing.</p> <p>Develop a document template that can be used to share information coming from the Committee on a regular basis for key stakeholders like governing boards and employees.</p>
Employee Road Show	Sept. '22	Both Districts	<p>Tweak standard presentation to include message themes related to employees. Present same presentation at all staff meetings within each agency – if there isn’t a staff meeting for a particular group, set up a specific time to present to them.</p> <p>Include information on current/future communication channels where they can find info and ask questions.</p>
Employee Information Hub	August '22	Both Districts	Put the information somewhere where all employees can access it – preferably an intranet site but if that isn’t available – in a shared file somewhere. Establish a communication channel for employees to ask questions.

Evaluation

Success for this plan will be measured in two ways, outputs and outcomes.

Measurable Output Targets

- ✓ 2x2 Committee to read, reviewed, discuss and approve the Study communication plan.
- ✓ The strategies, tactics, and messages have been shared with all internal staff who may have responsibility to execute or use them.
- ✓ All messages and materials, including the websites and printed materials have been reviewed and updated to ensure they are applying the messages in this plan consistently.

Measurable Outcome Targets

Measuring outcome, or changed behaviors, attitudes, and level of awareness of stakeholders requires having baseline understanding of these items. While a stakeholder survey conducted before the Combination Study could have provided insights and baseline data, it's never too late to gather information and feedback. Once the Study is completed and next steps are known, a stakeholder survey is a valid tool to gain feedback and insights for communications planning moving forward. Other ways to measure change is through focus groups or informal panels, or simple but more frequent polling on social media on specific topics. In absence of a social media presence, electronic news and newsletters can be used.

Google Alerts

In addition to the customer survey, the Districts can track customer knowledge and awareness by monitoring their named and certain key words in social and traditional media. This means listening to what's being said and any other topic that's important.

Website

For website outcomes, each District can set up analytics and look for increases in the monthly web page visits and visits from key sources.

Attachment 2

DRAFT - Outreach Outline for Combination Study between Carmichael Water District and Sacramento Suburban Water District

OUTREACH PHASES AT A GLANCE

PHASE 1: Combination study in progress (now)

- Educate audiences that SSWD and CWD are in the process of identifying collaboration opportunities and that an independent, third-party researcher or consultant is conducting an analysis.

PHASE 2: Once the study is released and accepted as complete (January)

- Educate audiences that the SSWD and CWD Board has accepted the study as complete.
- Educate audiences about the study findings, taking a neutral, fact-based perspective.

PHASE 3: Once the SSWD and CWD Boards takes a position on the study

- Educate audiences about the SSWD and CWD Board's position and perspective on the study, and next steps.
 - If the Board's position is to stop moving forward, then educate audiences about the reasons. Outreach concludes.
 - If the Board's position is to move forward with combination (note that vote must be unanimous), then outline next steps for Board action, including opportunities for audiences to learn more and provide input.
 - Recommend providing ample time, robust outreach and several opportunities for audiences to learn more and provide input.

PHASE 4: Once the SSWD and CWD boards votes on whether to move forward with combination

- Educate audiences about the SSWD and CWD Board's position and perspective on combination, and next steps.

OUTREACH PHASES AND ACTIVITIES

PHASE 1: Combination study in progress (now)

- Educate audiences that SSWD and CWD are in the process of identifying collaboration opportunities and that an independent, third-party researcher or consultant is conducting an analysis.
 - The report considers: Economics (economies of scale), Efficiencies and effectiveness and Enhanced water resource management
 - The draft report is due mid-September
 - Visit the SSWD and CWD websites to learn more and stay updated

Target Audiences

Note that priority levels for target audiences will change depending upon the outreach phase.

Internal

- SSWD and CWD employees
- SSWD and CWD Boards of Directors

External

Priority

- Customers
 - Parks departments within SSWD and CWD service areas
 - Civic and business organizations within the SSWD and CWD service areas
 - HOAs within the SSWD and CWD service areas
- Local elected officials that represent the SSWD and CWD service areas (County Board of Supervisors, CA Assembly and Senate, and Congressional)
- Taxpayer advocacy groups
- LAFCO (already engaged)

Secondary

- Regional Water Authority/Sacramento Groundwater Authority
- Regional water providers, especially those that partner with SSWD and CWD in conjunctive use such as the City of Sacramento, San Juan Water District and Placer County Water Agency
- Water Forum/Water Forum Environmental Caucus
- Vendors
- Regulators, especially the State Water Board Division of Drinking Water (aware of discussions)

EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

Outreach completed

- Regular updates at SSWD and CWD Board meetings and through the 2x2 Committee
- Website updated/on home page—central location for all audiences to find information
- Included in fall newsletter
- Included in October and November bill inserts

Outreach upcoming/in progress

- Foundational materials, including a fact sheet, FAQ and key messages for directors and CS/field staff (to be used by both SSWD and CWD)
- Direct mail postcard with QR code
- Advertising on Facebook
- Social media/Facebook

- Updated stakeholder list
- Staff report for next 2 x 2 meeting
- News release/media story
- CS Monitor
- Outreach to stakeholders on list
- Briefing for electeds
- “Official” update provided at an RWA EC/Board meeting and Water Forum plenary
- “Official” update provided to partnering water providers such as City of Sac, PCWA or SJWD

INTERNAL AUDIENCES

Outreach completed

- Staff research and input gathered as part of the 2020 Sacramento Regional Water Utility Collaboration Study (conducted by SSWD, CWD and five other water providers)
- Regular briefings/updates provided at staff meetings
- Website updated/on home page

Outreach upcoming/in progress

- Foundational materials, including a fact sheet, FAQ and key messages (to be used by both SSWD and CWD).
- Online hub with study information (fact sheet and FAQ) and documents (draft study, final study) for staff to access, learn more and provide questions and comments
- Add information/link to hub on the ADP home page.
- All Hands Meeting/staff update on study and internal hub on September 21.
- Email to staff from the General Manager with link to the online hub.

PHASE 1: SSWD and CWD Combination Communications Plan Timeline

SEPTEMBER

Ongoing
Begin drafting Staff FAQ
Draft copy for customer postcard
Work with graphic designer on graphic for Facebook and postcard design
Begin drafting talking points for staff
Being drafting talking points for Board
Ongoing
Submit Staff FAQ to Combination Communications Committee (CCC) for review
Finalize copy for postcard
Finalize design of Facebook graphic
Finalize design of postcard

Submit draft talking points for staff to CCC
Submit draft talking points for Board to CCC
Ongoing
Submit updated communications plan timeline to 2x2 Committee
Submit FAQ, talking points, and postcard To GM for review
Review Raftelis report
Print postcard
Begin running Facebook graphic
Launch internal page for staff on combination
Ongoing
Update and finalize FAQ and talking points with material from Raftelis report
Update SSWD and CWD website and Facebook page with material from Raftelis report
Mail postcard

PHASE 2: Once the study is released and accepted as complete (mid October to early December)

- Educate audiences that the SSWD and CWD Board has accepted the study as complete.
- Educate audiences about the study findings, taking a neutral, fact-based perspective.

EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

- Update foundational materials, including a fact sheet, FAQ and talking points for directors and CS/field staff (to be used by both SSWD and CWD)
- Update SSWD and CWD website
- Article in bill insert
- Advertising on Facebook
- Social media/Facebook
- CS Monitor
- Outreach to stakeholders on list, including local elected officials
- News release/media story
- Update to RWA Executive Committee/Board
- Update to partnering water providers
- Update to the Water Forum

INTERNAL AUDIENCES

- Update foundational materials, including a fact sheet, FAQ and talking points for directors and CS/field staff (to be used by both SSWD and CWD)
- Update internal central location for staff to learn more and provide questions and comments
- Host a special briefing for managers (who can then serve as communicators to their teams) to take place between the 2x2 in mid-October and the AHM/special staff briefing.

- All Hands meeting/special staff briefing on study data.

PHASE 3: Once the SSWD board takes a position on the study

- Educate audiences about the SSWD and CWD Board's position and perspective on the study, and next steps.
 - If the Board's position is to stop moving forward, then educate audiences about the reasons. Outreach concludes.
 - If the Board's position is to move forward with combination (note that vote must be unanimous), then outline next steps for Board action, including opportunities for audiences to learn more and provide input.
 - Recommend providing ample time, robust outreach and several opportunities for audiences to learn more and provide input.

Outreach Activities

Outreach Activities are TBD but will generally include those above, customized to the Board's decision and opportunities for public/staff input.

If the board moves forward, the expectation is that there will be a robust public outreach process, including another direct mail piece and a "Road Show" (i.e. Speaker's Bureau) by SSWD and CWD ambassadors to further discuss the study findings and board direction and gather audience input.

PHASE 4: Once the SSWD board votes on whether to move forward with combination (TBD)

- Educate audiences about the SSWD and CWD Board's position and perspective on combination, and next steps.

Outreach Activities

Outreach Activities are TBD but will generally include those above, customized to the Board's decision.



OUTREACH PHASES FOR THE SSWD-CWD COMBINATION STUDY

Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) and Carmichael Water District (CWD) have initiated a study that explores combination opportunities. The goal is to examine how combining the two neighboring water utilities might encourage efficiencies, reduce costs, improve water supply reliability, and enhance customer service. The following are outreach phases and options for communicating the study and its findings:

PHASE 1: Combination study in progress (now)

Educate audiences that SSWD and CWD are in the process of identifying collaboration opportunities and that an independent, third-party researcher or consultant is conducting an analysis.

PHASE 2: Once the study is released and accepted as complete (mid October to early December)

Educate audiences that the SSWD Board has accepted the study as complete.

Educate audiences about the study findings.

PHASE 3: Once the SSWD board takes a position on the study (December to TBD)

Educate audiences about the SSWD Board's position and perspective on the study, and next steps.

If the Board's position is to stop moving forward, then educate audiences about the reasons. Outreach concludes.

If the Board's position is to move forward with combination, then outline next steps for Board action, including opportunities for audiences to learn more and provide input.

PHASE 4: Once the SSWD board votes on whether to move forward with combination (TBD)

Educate audiences about the SSWD Board's position and perspective on combination, and next steps.

Agenda Item: 4

Date: December 21, 2022

Subject: Combination Discussion – Next Phase

Staff Contact: Dan York, SSWD General Manager
Cathy Lee, CWD General Manager

Recommended Committee Action:

Direct staff as appropriate on next steps of analysis on Combination Discussions between CWD and SSWD.

Discussion:

The Draft Combination Study Business Case Analysis Report (Report) is slated to be presented to the CWD and SSWD Boards in January 2023. The intent is for the CWD and SSWD Boards to accept the final Report and provide direction moving forward in the Combination Discussions. The intent of this staff report is to have the 2x2 Committee provide direction to staff on what is perceived to be the next phase, and what items will be analyzed in the next phase(s).

Typically in Combination Discussions the initial phase is to determine if there are any fatal flaws. If no fatal flaws are identified, then the next phase is to develop a scope of work to analyze such items as governance structure, water supplies, administrative, Human Resources, financial, operations, etc. Within each of those items are specific areas that need to be analyzed/compared for both CWD and SSWD. If the second phase is determined to be positive, then there can potentially be a third phase, of which is typically near the end of a Combination Discussion where the Boards have enough information to make a decision to combine, or not.

The intent of Phase 1, completion of the Report, of the Combination Discussions was to determine if there were fatal flaws/deterrents identified that would hinder the subject discussions. Based on the results of Phase 1, there were no obvious or compelling deterrents in combining the two districts.

The next option would be to move to the next phase, conducting a detailed analysis. One of the efforts of Phase 2 is the requirements of the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) outlined for the Municipal Services Review (MSR). LAFCo has specific requirements for considering changing, adjusting or modifying service area boundaries. The MSR provides a written determination for the following factors:

- Infrastructure needs and deficiencies
- Growth and population projections for the affected areas
- Financial constraints and opportunities
- Cost avoidance opportunities
- Opportunities for rate restructuring
- Opportunities for shared facilities

Combination Discussion – Next Phase

December 21, 2022

Page 2 of 2

- Government structure options including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers
- Evaluation of management efficiencies
- Local accountability and governance

Other conditions could be, but not limited to:

- Requiring the districts to prepare a joint service plan and fiscal analysis for providing services to their customers. The service plan would address transition of staff, administration building, operations building, customer service center, and designation of a General Manager.
- Plan to reduce the Board down to 5 members, by division.
- Plans and safeguards to ensure consistent and uniform service quality throughout the newly merged district.
- Employment contracts (if necessary), policies/procedures, and human resource issues.

Note: Once the second phase is completed, and support is received from the 2x2 Committee, it is recommended to conduct a joint Board meeting between CWD and SSWD to receive and accept the detailed analysis.

DRAFT
CWD AND SSWD COMBINATION DISCUSSION
SCOPE OF WORK TABLE

ITEMS	Phase 2	Phase 3
<u>Governance</u>		
Consolidation vs. Reorganization	x	
<u>Water Supply Assurances</u>		
CWD surface water rights	x	
SSWD GW / surface water contract rights	x	
<u>Board</u>		
Transition in size	x	
Election district boundaries		x
<u>Administration</u>		
District Transition	x	
General Manager		x
<u>Human Resources</u>		
Benefits	Principle	x
Salaries/compensation	Principle	x
Staffing	Principle	x
Organizational Chart	x	
Office Locations		x
<u>Financial</u>		
Timing of transition to one billing CI system	x	
Timing of transition to one financial system	x	
Rate Structures	Principle	x
Transfer of Assets	Principle	x
Capital Investments	Principle	x
Debt Service	x	
<u>Operations</u>		
Integration of staffing	Principle	x
Continuity of service	x	
<u>Other</u>		
“No harm” to existing customers	x	
Lessons Learned – AWD/NWD	x	
<u>Cost Savings or Reduction in Increases</u>		
Reduction in future additional staffing	x	
Water Transfers	x	
Lost access to surface water	x	

DRAFT
 CWD AND SSWD COMBINATION DISCUSSION
 SCOPE OF WORK TABLE

LAFCO Items		
Infrastructure needs and deficiencies	x	
Growth and population projections for the affected areas		x
Financial constraints and opportunities	x	
Cost avoidance opportunities	Principle	x
Opportunities for rate restructuring	Principle	x
Opportunities for shared facilities	x	
Government structure options including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers	x	
Evaluation of management efficiencies	x	
Local accountability and governance	x	