

Sustained Superior Accomplishment Award

April 2025

EMPLOYEES: See Below

UNIT: Region 5 Administrative

TITLE: See Below

SUPERVISOR/TITLE: Multiple

Nomination for the State of California Sustained Superior Accomplishment Award Nominee: Central Valley Water Board's Administrative Team

Period of Accomplishment: Past 24 months

Group Nominated:

Mindy Bunn, AGPA, Rancho Cordova
Kelli Garver, SSM II, Rancho Cordova
Christine Croyle, SSM I, Rancho Cordova
Denise Hill, AGPA, Rancho Cordova
Brittany Elliott, AGPA, Rancho Cordova
Margie Saldana, SSA, Rancho Cordova
Nicholas Handcock, AGPA, Fresno
Courtney Kasich, SSA, Redding
Ciera Collins, SSA, Redding
Debbie Behnke, SC, Redding
Connie Floyd, SC, Redding

Nomination Summary:

The Central Valley Water Board's Executive Management Group is nominating members of the Board's Administrative Program to receive the sustained superior accomplishment award for their dedication and adaptability in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing return to office protocols, in addition to its outstanding contributions in furthering consistency goals among the Board's three offices and its nearly 300 employees during this challenging time.

For well over two years, the Board's Administrative Team (Admin Team) has demonstrated exceptional dedication, adaptability, and initiative in confronting and developing solutions to countless challenges caused by the abrupt transition to emergency telework. This agencywide transformation drastically affected the way the Board conducted its work; moving from desktops, physical travel, and conference phones to one that is largely digital and fully mobile, almost overnight.

During the pandemic, the Admin Team learned and managed COVID testing, reporting, and cleaning protocols; they were in-office to ensure transmittal and receipt of parcels, proper routing of important communications, and diligent customer service under unprecedented circumstances all while balancing the needs of the Board's technical staff and managers and that of their own families. The Team was also instrumental in developing new electronic transmittal and routing procedures, new document production procedures to support mandated Americans with Disability Act document protocols and accompanying workflows to ensure the agencies mission was not interrupted.

In furthering the Board's strategic goals, the Admin Team developed a robust electronic Office Procedure Manual that covers a wide range of new and essential administrative processes that strive to support a permanent hybrid work environment, ensuring continuity and compliance during a time of frequent and unprecedented changes. This manual has served as an invaluable resource, adapting processes for telework, return-to-office protocols, and various budget and staffing constraints. The team's effort in crafting, updating, and disseminating this manual amid shifting statewide policies has provided Board staff with consistent and clear guidance, greatly enhancing operational efficiency, stability, and region wide consistency.

During this same time, and in addition to their regular duties, the Admin Team has gone above and beyond by serving as the Board's project leads for lease renewals, remodeling projects, and one major construction project involving all three of the Board's offices. In these roles, the Team coordinated heavily between the State Water Board's Division of Administrative Services (DAS), Health and Safety, the Department of General Services (DGS) and property management companies; in doing so the team ensured that necessary facility changes were executed in a manner that avoided disruption to operations. These efforts supported significant cost-saving measures while creating workspaces that better meet current needs. It's worth noting too that some of these construction projects required the Team to design, organize, and execute a full-scale cleanup of legacy files, equipment, and furniture, most of which had accumulated over a decade in over 5,000 square feet of office space. In these instances, the Admin Team worked with DAS and DGS, to direct the efficient removal and disposal of outdated materials. This cleanup not only freed valuable space but also improved overall safety and functionality for staff returning to the office.

The Team continues to establish and maintain high standards. Its annual work plans appropriately identify challenging but pertinent projects and other endeavors that propel the Board forward; its actively creating new digital dashboards that better inform executive management of data and trends regarding personnel, budget, and performance; and its activity assessing and developing new workflows to promote work-sharing opportunities among members of the Admin Team across all three offices that will promote increased efficiencies and a resilient organization long-term.

Throughout these accomplishments, the Admin Team has displayed exceptional perseverance. Faced with sudden policy shifts, increased workload from pandemic-driven changes, and complex interdepartmental coordination requirements, the team has and continues to innovate, streamline, and execute critical projects. Their dedication has resulted in significant improvements in workplace functionality, resource management, and administrative support. The accomplishments of the Central Valley Water Board's Administrative Team exemplify superior performance and a sustained commitment to excellence. Their efforts have created a more adaptable and efficient administrative foundation, yielding lasting benefits for staff and stakeholders alike. For these reasons, the Board's Executive Management Group highly recommends that these members of the Board's Administrative Team receive the Sustained Superior Accomplishment Award.