



Media Release

New appointees bring diverse backgrounds and viewpoints to state's drinking water advisory group

Panel advises State Water Board on drinking water program

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board has appointed 10 members to its [SAFER Advisory Group](#) demonstrating its continued commitment to soliciting public input on spending priorities for the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund (SADW Fund). The fund is aimed at getting an estimated 1 million Californians reliable access to safe and affordable drinking water.

The [new and reappointed members](#) of the advisory group will take the seats of members whose terms expire at the end of the year, plus one new seat that is being added for a tribal representative. Just as with those terming out, new members have diverse backgrounds and experience with drinking water issues, either as representatives of public water systems, local agencies or non-governmental organizations; as technical assistance providers; as residents served by water systems in disadvantaged communities; as members of Native American tribes or the general public.

“The SAFER Drinking Water Program is most effective when we get meaningful input from a variety of perspectives – including those who work directly on drinking water issues and those who live in impacted communities and can provide the kind of personal perspective that gives these projects the urgency they deserve,” said State Water Board Chair E. Joaquin Esquivel. “As we continue to build on the successes in the first two years of SAFER, we welcome the new members of the Advisory Group and look forward to working with them to build a more equitable and just California.”

The advisory group's 20 appointees serve staggered two-year terms and meet quarterly to assess plans and proposals that are part of the board's [Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience \(SAFER\) Drinking Water Program](#). SAFER invests hundreds of millions of dollars every year on drinking water projects that help communities improve their water resiliency. The board administers the SADW Fund, which is one source of SAFER funding, and adopts and publishes a [Fund Expenditure Plan](#) each year. The plan is developed in consultation with advisory group members.



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

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The reappointed and newly appointed members represent communities from throughout California. Listed by county, their hometown and [appointment category](#), they are:

Del Norte County

- **Don James**, Smith River, tribal representative (reappointed)

Fresno County

- **Esther Espinoza**, Riverdale resident
- **Isabel Solorio**, Lanare resident (reappointed)
- **Kassy Chauhan**, member of the public

Kings County

- **Victor Chavarin Jr.**, Armona, public water system

Orange County

- **Camille Pannu**, Irvine, member of the public (reappointed)

Mendocino County

- **James Sullivan**, Mendocino resident

Riverside County

- **Sergio Carranza**, La Quinta, technical assistance provider (reappointed)

San Francisco County

- **Rami Kahlon**, San Francisco public water system

Yuba County

- **Ethel See Winchell**, Dobbins, resident

The new members will go through orientation in January. Their first meeting is expected to be in the spring, when the 2022 [Drinking Water Needs Assessment](#) will be up for discussion and before the 2022-23 Fund Expenditure Plan will be discussed.

The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for current and future generations.