

SAN LUIS REY INDIAN WATER AUTHORITY BOARD ATTENDS CALIFORNIA TRIBAL WATER SUMMIT



San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority (SLRIWA) President Bo Mazzetti and Board Delegates Reuben Rodriguez from the La Jolla reservation, Venessa Brown from the Pauma reservation and Connor Magee from the Pala reservation recently attended the 2023 California Tribal Water Summit in Sacramento. This three-day conference addressed critical water policies and water management issues facing tribal governments today. Leaders from tribal, state, and federal levels attended the three-day event and participated in discussions to find viable solutions.

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“It was great to see leaders from the different levels of government come together to discuss the importance of California’s Water Plan,” stated President Mazzetti of the SLRIWA. “Members from the Department of Water Resources (DWR), US Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, and the California Environmental Protection Agency were all part of this high-level dialogue which addressed the importance of including tribal needs and concerns. The tribes have come a long way and I am proud we have a seat at the table. This is all long overdue.”



“I am thankful that the California Water Plan will finally have a dedicated chapter that addresses tribal needs and concerns - it’s long overdue.”

- President Bo Mazzetti



CA Assemblymember James Ramos

“The content and format of the summit was developed through active Tribal participation beginning with a Tribal Water Summit planning committee to identify the important policy discussions around respect and understanding of Tribal sovereignty, incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge in resource management decisions, and helping define the

concepts of indigenous water rights,” expressed Anecita Agustinez, representative at the California Department of Water Resources. “The summit demonstrated not only the successes from partnerships between California Tribes and state, federal and local agencies, but also the work that remains to be accomplished to achieve the ongoing summit goals.”

The summit’s goal was to include suggestions from tribal leaders in the California Water Plan, which is updated every five years. The plan emphasizes the need for collaboration and direction amongst water management agencies and encourages the open discussion of local solutions to combat the mismanagement of water issues. The plan also acknowledges the importance of

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Opening plenary Day 1 L-R: Martha Guzman, US EPA, Pacific Region Administrator; Anecita Agustinez, DWR, Tribal Policy Advisor; Marco Alcantar, Vice Chairman, Picayune; Bo Mazzaetti, President, SLRIWA; Ron Goode, Chairman, North Fork Mono Tribe; Karla Nemeth, Director, DWR; Yana Garcia, Secretary, Cal EPA

social and environmental understanding when making water management decisions. The DWR plans to work with supporters and legislators to apply the plan's proposals and ensure sustainable water management is possible in California. This year, for the first time ever, the California Water Plan will have an entire chapter dedicated to tribes, tribal needs, and their concerns.

The California Water Plan is a complete guide to managing the state's water resources. The plan tackles challenges such as climate change, population growth, and aging infrastructure in the state. Crucial recommendations include:

- Increasing the efficiency of water use.
- Improving groundwater management.
- Expanding the capacity of water storage.
- Investing in research and advancements in water technology.

"Improving the efficiency of water use and investing in water technology are crucial recommendations in the California Water Plan," stated President Maz-

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zetti. “These efforts can have a significant, and positive, impact on all of our tribal reservations and California’s water resources.”

During the summit’s first day, President Mazzetti participated in a panel discussion with state and tribal leadership. The discussion focused on how tribes can be engaged in statewide water management and planning efforts, what state partners can do to strengthen these efforts, and how to implement tribal priorities into the state’s water policies.

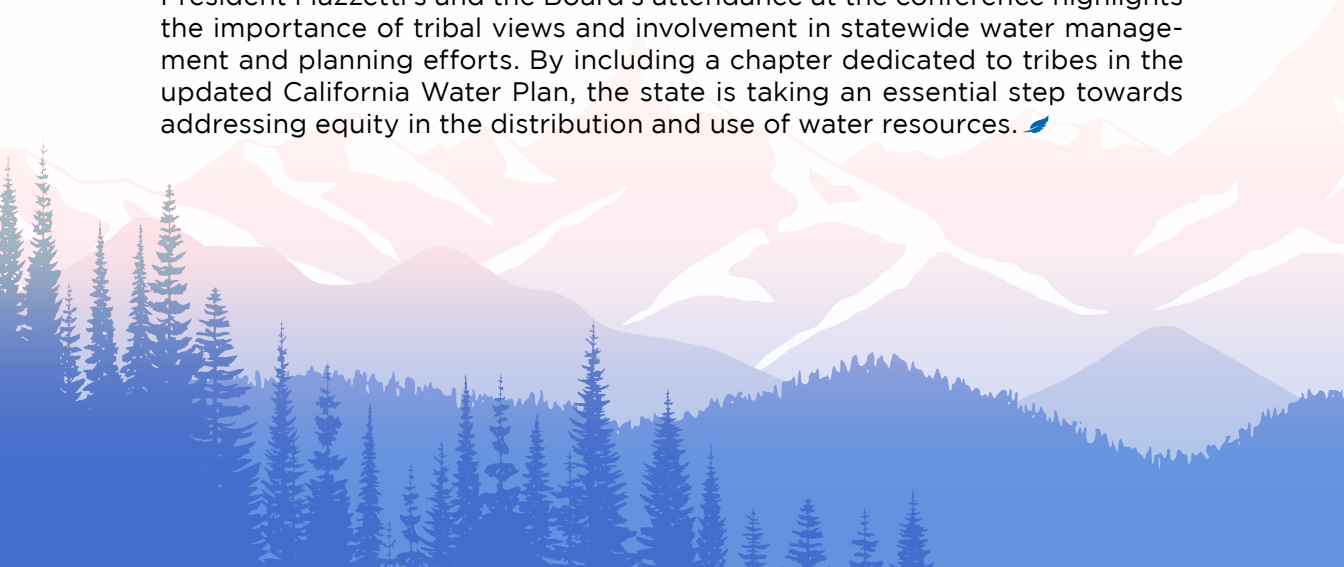
During the second day of the summit, members of the SLRIWA attended a workshop which focused on tribal water rights. The workshop discussed tribal involvement in water management strategies, including the compatibility of economic development with environmental and cultural resource protection by utilizing tribal water rights.

The workshop also showcased tribal case studies from lakes, rivers, and the ocean, highlighting tribal development of programs to protect cultural and continual uses of water. On the summit’s final day, a discussion focused on tribal perspectives on achieving a fair and balanced California Water Plan which will develop sustainable water management approaches to ensure the long-term health and resilience of California’s water resources.

President Mazzetti’s and the Board’s attendance at the conference highlights the importance of tribal views and involvement in statewide water management and planning efforts. By including a chapter dedicated to tribes in the updated California Water Plan, the state is taking an essential step towards addressing equity in the distribution and use of water resources. 🌿



Tracy Stanhoff, American Indian Chamber of Commerce of CA; La Vonne Peck - SLRIWA Consultant; Anecita Agustinez, CA Department of Water Resources





L - R: Moises Moreno-River, Assistant Secretary, CAL EPA, Tribal Affairs, Environmental Justice and Border Relations; Bianca Sievers, Deputy Director, DWR, Special Initiatives (Human Right to Water); Teri Red Owl, Executive Director, Owens Valley Indian Water Commission; Bo Mazzetti, President, SLRIWA; Kristopher Tjernell, Deputy Director, DWR, Integrated Water Management; Anecita Agustinez, Tribal Policy Advisor, DWR



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