

CFEE Water Conference

Hanging Ourselves Out to Dry or The Beginning of a New Beginning?

December 8-9, 2021

PANELISTS

Session 1

Not Your Parent's Drought – A Fresh Look at Our Unprecedented Water Crisis

Karla Nemeth

Director

Department of Water Resources

Karla Nemeth was appointed Director of the California Department of Water Resources by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. on January 10, 2018 and was reappointed by Governor Gavin Newsom on June 28, 2019.

DWR operates and maintains the California State Water Project, manages floodwaters, monitors dam safety, conducts habitat restoration, and provides technical assistance and funding for projects for local water needs. Nemeth will oversee the Department and its mission to manage and protect California's water resources, working with other agencies in order to benefit the State's people and to protect, restore and enhance the natural and human environments.

Nemeth worked at the California Natural Resources Agency as Governor Brown's deputy secretary and senior advisor for water policy since 2014. She was Bay Delta Conservation Plan project manager from 2009 to 2014. Nemeth was environmental and public affairs director for the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District from 2005 to 2009. She was community affairs manager at Jones and Stokes from 2003 to 2005.

She has a Master's degree in public administration from the University of Washington.

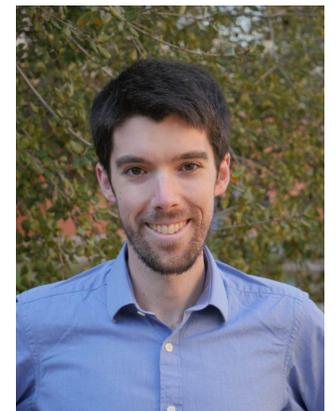


Daniel Swain

Climate Scientist

Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, UCLA

Dr. Daniel Swain is a climate scientist focused on the dynamics and impacts of extreme events—including droughts, floods, storms, and wildfires—on a warming planet. Daniel holds joint appointments as a research scientist within UCLA's Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, a research fellow in the Capacity Center for Climate and Weather Extremes at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, and the California climate fellow at The Nature Conservancy.



Daniel engages extensively with journalists and other partners, serving as a climate and weather science liaison to print, radio, television, and web media outlets to facilitate broadly accessible and accurate coverage surrounding climate change. Daniel also authors the Weather West blog (weatherwest.com), which provides real-time perspectives on California and western North American weather and climate.

Willie Whittlesey

**General Manager
Yuba Water Agency**

Willie Whittlesey oversees all aspects of Yuba Water Agency's operations and management, including flood risk reduction, hydropower generation, energy sales, water rights, water supply and more.

Having grown up in the Sierra Nevada foothills, Whittlesey is also passionate about using his role at Yuba Water to help accelerate the pace and scale of forest management and is leading the agency's efforts to protect the Yuba River watershed from catastrophic fire through innovative partnerships, programs and projects.

Prior to joining Yuba Water, Whittlesey spent 13 years with Pacific Gas & Electric's land and hydro generation departments and six years in private forest management.

Whittlesey graduated from Humboldt State University with a bachelor's degree in forestry and is a registered professional forester in California.



Jay Ziegler

**Director of External Affairs and Policy
The Nature Conservancy**

Jay Ziegler is The Nature Conservancy's Director of Policy and External Affairs. Jay oversees the California chapter's engagements at the federal, state and regional levels. He has also served in communications and policy development roles in state and federal government, including with Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, focusing on endangered species, public lands, water and natural resource management issues across the West and in various senior management positions in electric plant operations.

He holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from California State University, Fullerton, and has completed executive training programs at Pepperdine University and the University of Virginia.



Jennifer Clary
California Director
Clean Water Action

Jennifer Clary is the California Director of Clean Water Action. Before taking on the role of State Director, Jennifer served as a water policy and legislative analyst. Prior to joining Clean Water Action, Jennifer worked in the private sector, including a stint as a San Francisco tour guide, and advocated on environmental issues in San Francisco. She holds a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from U.C. Berkeley.



Enrique Martinez
General Manager
Imperial Irrigation District

Enrique B. Martinez serves as Imperial Irrigation District's chief executive, managing one of the largest irrigation districts in the country and the third largest public power provider in the state.

Leading a workforce of about 1,400 employees, his focus as general manager is to chart a course to take IID where it needs to be in the 21st century. Prior to his role as general manager he led IID's Energy Department for six months.



Mr. Martinez has more than 45 years of experience in the utility sector, assuming ever-increasing levels of responsibility in executive/senior level leadership of administrative, technical and field organizations. His tenure includes nearly 25 years with Southern California Edison, 10 years with the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power and seven years with the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Prior to his work at IID, he served as a senior vice president with Cordoba Corporation, a diversified engineering firm where he headed up business development and client management, developing the corporation's presence in the water infrastructure industry.

His experience includes work on several unique public projects. He was executive/ principal-in-charge on the City of Industry Public Utilities Commission project and capital improvement program and led efforts on projects sponsored by the City of Los Angeles, Department of Sanitation. He also oversaw work in support of the LADWP's Owens Lake dust monitoring and compliance program.

While at LADWP, he served six months as interim general manager and was chief operating officer of the electrical system.

At Edison International/Southern California Edison, Mr. Martinez served as vice president of power production, VP of safety, security and compliance, director of strategic planning, director of grid operations and in various senior management positions in electric plant operations.

He holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from California State University, Fullerton, and has completed executive training programs at Pepperdine University and the University of Virginia.

Adrian Covert

**Vice President, Public Policy
Bay Area Council**

Adrian Covert is Vice President of Public Policy for the Bay Area Council, providing research and advocacy leadership for the Council's committees on Homelessness, Water & Resilience, Commuter Shuttles, and Advanced Communications Infrastructure. Covert has lead numerous successful Bay Area Council initiatives, including legislation to update California's water data systems, regulations over San Francisco's growing commuter shuttle system, and voter-approval of regional Measure AA, a first-of-its-kind regional measure that raises \$500 million for wetland restoration and flood protection projects in the San Francisco Bay. Covert is also leading the Council's California Climate Resilience Challenge, and is a member of the Executive Board of Resilient by Design.



Prior to joining the Council, Adrian served on the research and communications team for Repair California: Californians for a State Constitutional Convention, and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from San Francisco State University. Adrian plays baseball in the Pacific Coast Hardball League, and writes about old bars, including authoring the 2016 book "Taverns of the American Revolution."

William Bourdeau

**Vice President
Harris Farms**

William Bourdeau is from a fourth generation Central Valley family. He was born and raised in Coalinga where he served as a local city councilman. Currently he is the Executive Vice President of Harris Farms Inc, one of the largest integrated farming operations in the Central San Joaquin Valley.

Prior to Harris Farms, William had a rich career in finance and also served as an economics professor at West Hills College. William also served honorably in the United States Marine Corps from 1993 to 2001.

William has served on the boards and committees of numerous community organizations. Currently he serves as the Chair for the Valley Future Foundation, the Chair for the California Water Alliance, the Vice Chair for the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority and is on the board of directors for the Westlands Water District, the Jack Harris Memorial Scholarship Foundation and the West Hills College Foundation.

William earned his bachelor's degree in Accounting from Fresno State and his master's in Business Administration from University of Nevada-Reno. William is also a Certified Public Accountant and Chartered Global Management Accountant.



Session 2

Diving Into Alternative Water Supplies - Desal, Recycling, and More

Peter Fiske

Director

**Water-Energy Resilience Research Institute,
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory**



Dr. Peter S. Fiske is the Director of the National Alliance for Water Innovation (NAWI) and Water-Energy Resilience Research Institute (WERRI) at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. WERRI's goal is to orient and align the water-related research programs at LBNL to address critical gaps in the reliability, efficiency and sustainability of water-energy systems in California and the nation.

Fiske was the Chief Executive Officer of PAX Water Technologies, Inc. from 2008 until January, 2017 when it was acquired by UGSI Inc. in an all-cash transaction. PAX Water pioneered the use of biomimicry to develop innovative and energy efficient technologies to improve drinking water quality and reliability in municipal water systems. He is on the Board of Directors of Kohana Technologies Inc. – which won one of the first ARPA-E awards in 2008 and is presently developing advanced wind turbine technologies with Vestas. He has been an advisor, mentor and friend to numerous early-stage technology entrepreneurs. He is also a frequent writer and lecturer on the subject of career strategy, entrepreneurship and leadership for scientists and engineers. He has been a keynote speaker or guest lecturer at some of the leading research universities in the United States including MIT, Harvard, Stanford, Northwestern, Princeton and the University of California at Berkeley (where he teaches at the Haas School of Business). He is a founding faculty member of the Department of Energy's I-Corps Program. He is the author of *Put Your Science to WORK!*, numerous articles for the American Association for the Advancement of Science's career website ScienceCareers.org, and presently writes an occasional column in the journal *Nature*.

Prior to joining PAX Water, Fiske was co-founder of RAPT Industries, Inc., a pioneer in the field of plasma processing of optics and semiconductors. Fiske led negotiations to license a portion of the technology to a major semiconductor equipment manufacturer, and led the first sales of products. Fiske was CEO of the Company from May, 2001 to April, 2004. Fiske spun the company out of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory where he was a staff scientist.

Prior to starting RAPT, Fiske led a research team in condensed matter physics at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory with applications to materials science, energy storage and weapons. He is the author of 24 technical articles, most in international peer-reviewed journals including *SCIENCE*. He received his Ph.D. from Stanford University in 1994 and an M.B.A. from the Haas School of Business at the University of California at Berkeley in 2002. In 1996, Fiske was one of 18 young professionals selected nationally for the White House Fellowship. He served his fellowship year as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Projects where he led a major personnel policy reform initiative for the Pentagon.

Paula Kehoe

Director of Water Resources San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Paula Kehoe has worked with the City and County of San Francisco for over 27 years focusing on a number of environmental initiatives, including solid waste management, water pollution prevention and water resources management. Currently, she serves as the Director of Water Resources with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) and is responsible for diversifying San Francisco's water supply portfolio through the implementation of conservation, groundwater, recycled water, onsite water reuse and innovation programs.



Paula spearheaded the landmark legislation allowing for the collection, treatment, and reuse of alternate water sources in buildings and districts within San Francisco which has received several state and national awards for innovation. Paula also leads the SFPUC's OneWaterSF Program which has cultivated a shift to a more integrated approach to water, wastewater, and power management and chairs the National Blue Ribbon Commission for Onsite Non-potable Water Systems. Paula holds a BA from the University of Colorado, Boulder and a MS from the University of San Francisco.

John Kennedy

Executive Director Engineering and Water, Orange County Water District

John Kennedy is the executive director of engineering and water resources. He is responsible for engineering, local resources and administrative functions at the Orange County Water District (OCWD).

John's duties include preparing long-term financial projections and capital improvement programs, acting as liaison with the 19 local cities and retail water districts served by OCWD, developing and administering groundwater basin management programs, developing and implementing capital projects, establishing District water rates for groundwater pumping and annual pumping amounts, purchasing imported water to recharge the groundwater basin, overseeing the development and production of OCWD board and committee meeting agendas, and coordinating groundwater storage programs with the Municipal Water District of Orange County and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

John has more than 35 years of experience in the water/civil engineering industry and has worked for OCWD since 1995. He holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in civil engineering from the University of Pittsburgh, and a Master of Business Administration from Pepperdine University. John is also a registered professional civil engineer in the state of California.



Kevin Tilden

President

California and Hawaii American Water

Kevin Tilden serves as the President of California American Water and Hawaii American Water, both investor-owned regulated utilities, where he and his team are responsible for the operation of water and wastewater systems across California and Hawaii serving approximately 690,000 people.



Tilden has served in the water industry for more than 20 years.

In his various roles, Kevin has overseen community and government relations, public and customer outreach, customer communications, business development, conservation, and customer service for California and Hawaii American Water.

Prior to joining American Water in 1998, Kevin managed a campaign for U.S. Congress, served as a public affairs manager for SBC/Pacific Bell (now AT&T), and worked for two leading California public affairs agencies.

Kevin is past chair of the Governance Committee for the California Utilities Diversity Council and served on the board of the National Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund. Kevin currently serves on the Public Affairs Council for the California Chamber of Commerce and the California Water Association Board of Directors.

Kevin holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Washington and a Master of Business Administration from Pepperdine University.

Session 3

What's in Store for Storage? Looking For Answers Above Ground and Below

Wade Crowfoot

Secretary

California Natural Resources Agency

Wade Crowfoot became California's Natural Resources Secretary in January 2019, appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom.



Secretary Crowfoot oversees an agency of 21,000 employees who protect and manage California's natural environment.

This includes stewarding the state's forests and natural lands, rivers and waterways, and coast and ocean, protecting fish and wildlife, and overseeing energy development. As a member of the Governor's cabinet, he advises Governor Newsom on natural resources and environmental issues.

Secretary Crowfoot firmly believes that good natural resources management helps natural places thrive and allows communities and our economy to prosper. His key priorities include:

- Building California's resilience to climate change-driven threats, including wildfire, drought, extreme heat, flooding and sea-level rise.
- Expanding equitable access to parks, natural places and outdoor recreation for all Californians.
- Preserving California's world-renowned biodiversity of plants and animals.

Prior to serving as Secretary, Crowfoot led the Water Foundation, a nonprofit philanthropy that builds shared water solutions across the American West. Before that Crowfoot served in Governor Jerry Brown's Administration as deputy cabinet secretary and senior advisor to the Governor. He also previously served as West Coast regional director for the Environmental Defense Fund and a senior environmental advisor to then-San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.

Secretary Crowfoot received a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1996 and earned a master's degree in public policy from the London School of Economics in 2004, graduating with honors.

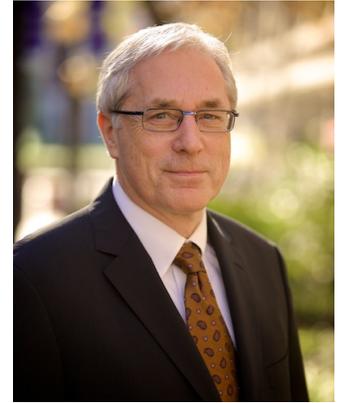
A native of Michigan, Crowfoot grew up spending his summers outdoors at a YMCA camp and at his family's remote cabin in Northern Ontario. When he moved to California in the mid-1990s, he became an avid hiker and backpacker. Crowfoot marks his first time in the redwoods at Big Basin State Park as one of his defining California moments. Now he spends his time outside of work exploring, hiking and camping with his wife, Lisa, and their young daughter.

Joseph Caves

Principal and Founder

Conservation Strategy Group

Joe is an attorney and registered lobbyist in California specializing in environmental and natural resources law and policy. He served in the California State Legislature for more than a decade as a committee consultant and legislative staff director. Joe has extensive experience negotiating, drafting and lobbying legislation, and working the state budget. In addition, he specializes in developing public funding sources and crafting political strategies to advance environmental and natural resource protection.



Joe was the principal author of Propositions 50 and 84, and was also instrumental in the development of Propositions 12, 13 and 40. He has expertise in a wide array of natural resources areas including land use, water policy, land conservation, coastal protection, CEQA, climate change, and forestry. He is a graduate of the University of California, Santa Barbara and of Hastings College of the Law. He is a member of the Environmental Law Section of the California State Bar Association.

Michelle Reimers

General Manager

Turlock Irrigation District

Under the policy-setting guidance of the District's elected Board, Mrs. Reimers directs the day-to-day operations of the District's extensive irrigation water storage and delivery system, as well as the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity within a 662 square-mile service area in Central California.



Reporting to Mrs. Reimers are a Chief Operations Officer and four Assistant General Managers with business unit responsibility in water resources, power supply, financial services, electrical engineering and operations. Also reporting to her are the Director of Human Resources, Director of Water Resources and Regulatory Affairs, the Customer Service Department Manager and the External Affairs Department Manager.

Prior to her current position, Mrs. Reimers served as the District's Assistant General Manager of External Affairs and Director of External Affairs. In those capacities, Mrs. Reimers was responsible for the scoping, planning and implementation of high-profile projects such as: a customer research program, full redesigns of TID's external website, the District's first ever power online outage notification system for customers, and the District's 125th Anniversary Celebration and award-winning commemorative documentary film, *The Irrigationist*. Mrs. Reimers created and coordinated educational campaigns regarding major water issues: the *Worth Your Fight* Campaign and the *Tuolumne River Management Plan*.

Mrs. Reimers advocates on TID's behalf via several state and national professional organizations including the American Public Power Association, Northwest Public Power Association, California Farm Bureau Federation and the Association of California Water Agencies.

Mrs. Reimers holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Communications from California State University Stanislaus and graduated *Magna Cum Laude*.

Jon Parker

**General Manager
Kern Water Bank Authority**

Jonathan Parker is the General Manager of the Kern Water Bank Authority. The Kern Water Bank is a direct recharge project that occupies 32 square miles southwest of Bakersfield, California. Project facilities include 8,500 acres of recharge basins and 88 recovery wells. The project can recharge as much as 560,000 acre-feet per year and maximum recovery capacity exceeds 250,000 acre-feet per year. Mr. Parker joined the Authority in March 1999 and has guided the development of most of the water bank's infrastructure and has provided hydrogeologic oversight for the development of a three-dimensional model to simulate project operations. He is a Professional Geologist (4728) and Certified Hydrogeologist (110) in the State of California, has a BS and MS Degree in Geology from California State University, Northridge, and a Certificate in Hydrogeology from California State University, Bakersfield.



Session 4

A New System for a New Century – Rethinking Water Rights, Infrastructure, Management, and the Coming Federal Investments

Joaquin Esquivel

**Chair
State Water Resources Control Board**

E. Joaquin Esquivel was appointed to the State Water Resources Control Board by Governor Jerry Brown in March 2017 and designated by Governor Gavin Newsom as Chair in February 2019. Previously, he served as Assistant Secretary for federal water policy at the California Natural Resources Agency in the Governor's Washington, D.C. office, where he facilitated the development of policy priorities between the agency, the Governor's Office, the California Congressional delegation, and federal stakeholder agencies.



For more than eight years prior to that he worked for U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer of California, most recently as her legislative assistant covering the agriculture, Native American, water, oceans, and nutrition portfolios, in addition to being the director of information and technology.

He was born and raised in California's Coachella Valley. He holds a BA from the University of California, Santa Barbara in English.

John Laird

Senator

California State Senate



John Laird was elected to the State Senate on November 3, 2020, carrying all four counties in the district with a combined margin of over 145,000 votes, and was sworn in to represent Senate District 17 on December 7, 2020. In the State Senate, Laird chairs and serves on a broad array of committees: Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 (Education), Vice Chair, Joint Legislative Audit Committee, Member, Appropriations Committee, Member, Budget & Fiscal Review Committee, Member, Joint Legislative Committee on Budget, Member, Judiciary Committee, Member, Labor, Public Employment & Retirement, Member, Natural Resources & Water Committee, Member, Rules Committee, Member, Joint Legislative Committee on Rules.

Prior to his Senate service, Laird served as Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency under Governor Jerry Brown from January 5, 2011 until January 7, 2019. Laird also served as a member of the State Integrated Waste Management Board from 2008 to 2009. In 2002, he was elected to the State Assembly to represent the 27th District, which included portions of Monterey, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties, and was reelected in 2004 and 2006. While serving the maximum three terms in the Assembly, Laird authored 82 bills that were signed into law.

Prior to serving in the State Assembly, Laird was an elected as a member of the Cabrillo College Board of Trustees from 1994 to 2002. In 1981, Laird was elected to the Santa Cruz City Council, and served nine years until term limits ended his council service in 1990. He was a two-term mayor from 1983 to 1984 and from 1987 to 1988, making him one of the first openly gay mayors to serve in the United States.

Laird has also served as executive director of the Santa Cruz AIDS Project, taught environmental policy at the University of California Santa Cruz, hosted a news talk program on KUSP public radio, and held analyst positions in budgeting and human resources for the County of Santa Cruz.

The son of teachers and raised in Vallejo, Laird graduated with honors in politics from the University of California – Santa Cruz in 1972. He has been a long-time resident of Santa Cruz with his spouse John Flores. He has traveled extensively, is fluent in Spanish, enjoys conducting family history research, and is a life-long Chicago Cubs fan.

Andrew Meredith

President-Elect

State Building & Construction Trades Council of CA

Andrew Meredith is the Northern California Regional Director of the State Building & Construction Trades Council of California (SBCTC). The SBCTC is an umbrella organization for 180 local trade Unions that represents over 450,000 skilled construction workers, including more than 70,000 registered apprentices.

Prior to this role, Meredith was the President of the Northeastern California Building & Construction Trades Council and the Assistant Business Manager of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local Union

340. In these roles, he negotiated agreements and organized bargaining units in some of California's most rural communities, providing pathways to the Middle Class for countless workers. During his time representing workers in California's far northern counties, trade unions saw dramatic increases in membership and political influence.

Meredith is an electrician by trade and a proud graduate of a Joint Labor Management apprenticeship program. He is also a decorated combat veteran, serving with the California Army National Guard as a UH-60 Blackhawk Crew Chief/Door-Gunner in Iraq in 2005. Upon returning home from Iraq, he was elected to the Galt City Council, serving from 2006 until 2010. In 2008, he served as the youngest Mayor in Galt's history.

Meredith resides with his wife and children in Tehama County, California.

Dudi Balsar

General Manager

Innovation and Ventures Division, Mekorot Israel National Water Company

Mr. Balsar is the General Manager of innovation and ventures at Mekorot National Water Company. He recently joined Mekorot to implement the government resolution and lead the company's investments in water technology companies.



A former professional athlete and a lawyer with international experience working at both corporations (two London-based media companies) and startups (founding and managing two ventures), Mr. Balsar has four academic degrees, including an MBA from INSEAD and Master in Philosophy. He has a multidisciplinary background and well-rounded business skills that include management, sales, marketing, strategy, business development partnerships.
