

# AEP Quarterly Newsletter

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## President's Message

Hello IEC! I Hope you guys have had an opportunity to enjoy some of the great weather that we have been having since the rain has finally held up! I personally have not had any fun in the sun yet, but I definitely plan to get outside so I can work on my tan.



Since you got a double dosing of me in the last newsletter with the President's Message and the Meet a Chapter Member articles, I decided to keep it brief for this edition and just provide you with a few highlights since we last left off:

- We are very excited to have appointed Ruben Salas (from Michael Baker International) as our new Newsletter Editor.
- After approximately 3 years of service as the Coachella Valley Liaison, Nancy Ferguson has decided to step down. The Board appointed Elizabeth Meyerhoff as her replacement and we are eager to work with her so that we can continue to provide programs to our Coachella Valley constituents.
- IE AEP hosted a CEQA Essentials workshop at the Riverside Art Museum, in February. The event was

very well attended with approximately 90 people. The workshop was followed by a complimentary Happy Hour open to all attendees. We received great feedback from the attendees regarding the Program. IE AEP will take into consideration all of the input received when we plan our next workshop. Thanks to everyone who filled out their surveys.

- We are in the beginning stages of planning our 2018 AEP Conference. The Conference will be held in Coachella Valley. Lynn Calvert-Hayes and Nancy Ferguson are the Conference Co-Chairs. If you are interested in helping out in any capacity, please feel free to reach out to either of them or myself and I will make sure you get connected.

- We are always looking for ideas for program topics that our members can benefit from. So, if you have an environmental educational need, please remember that we are here to serve you in any way that we can. Don't be shy about reaching out to us with suggestions for future programs that you would want to attend. Chances are, there are many others who could benefit from the same program and are just waiting for it to be offered.

- If you or someone you know are a subject matter expert whom would like to present at one of our lunch programs, reach out to us and we can arrange to get you on our calendar.

- There is a continuous need for Public Agency personalities (i.e., actual public agency staff, contract staff at public agencies or former/retired public agency staff) that are willing to participate on our CEQA Workshop panels.

Again, thank you all for your continued support. We are now over 100 members strong and growing. And for those of you who I have not had the opportunity to meet yet, I look forward to meeting you at one of our events this year!

Until next time,



Connect with us on Facebook and LinkedIn!  
@aepinlandempire



## Legislative Update

As the legislative session continues to progress, the Inland Empire Chapter of AEP will continue to provide period updates on legislation relevant to the wonderful world of CEQA. This month, we have chosen to highlight several pieces of legislation that are garnering significant attention across the Golden State:

### A. Assembly Bill 890

In 1911, Californians amended the state Constitution to provide that the legislative power of the state is vested in the California legislature, while "the people reserve to themselves the powers of initiative and referendum." (Cal. Const., art. IV, § 1.) In *Tuolumne Jobs & Small Business Alliance v. Superior Court* (2014) 59 Cal.4th 1029, the California Supreme Court relied upon this principle to find that CEQA generally does not apply to situations where a lead agency receives a voter-sponsored initiative petition that otherwise satisfies the requirements of the Elections Code, and which the lead agency chooses to adopt without alteration.

Since 2014, project proponents have relied upon the Court's decision to attempt to expedite CEQA review and insulate their projects from potential challenge. For example, this approach was utilized to approve the Rams' new Inglewood stadium. More recently, a voter-sponsored initiative was circulated and adopted by the City of Moreno Valley to approve the World Logistics Center Project.

Many have expressed concerns about using the initiative process in this way. Reflecting these concerns, AB 890 seeks to change existing law to require that the proponent of an initiative measure—at the time he or she files a copy of the proposed measure with the appropriate elections official—to

also request that an environmental review of the proposed measure be conducted by the appropriate planning department. The bill would require the elections official to notify the proponent of the result of the environmental review, and whether further review may be necessary for the initiative to move forward.

### B. Assembly Bill 239

CEQA defines the terms "urban area" and "urbanized area" to mean, among other things, an unincorporated area that is completely surrounded by one or more incorporated cities and the population density of the unincorporated area at least equals the population density of the surrounding city or cities. This bill would slightly modify this standard to specify that the population density of the unincorporated area be at least 1,000 persons per square mile.

### C. Senate Bill 224

The State CEQA Guidelines provide that the environmental setting as it exists when CEQA review begins should ordinarily be treated as the baseline for gauging the changes to the environment that will be caused by the project. If adopted, SB 224 would prohibit a lead agency from considering modifications to the environment at the project site caused by actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency, or actions that are unpermitted or illegal at the time the actions were undertaken when determining its baseline.

*Legislative Update written by  
Matt Collins, IEAEP Legislative Liason*



### Want up to date bill information?

For a thorough analysis of current legislation, or an up-to-date status of a bill in the California State Legislature, refer to the California Legislative Information Site at the following address:  
<http://leginfo.ca.gov/>



SAVE THE DATE

COMING UP

Upcoming Events

**We are working on putting together our next workshop. For more information, please inquire. Contact information is provided below.**

**Location: TBD**

**Date: November**

Questions or comments on events? Contact Co-Vice President's of Programs Brad Perrine or Christina McAdams at:

[brad@ecotierra.com](mailto:brad@ecotierra.com) or  
[cmcadams@rinconconsultants.com](mailto:cmcadams@rinconconsultants.com)

## Events Update

Our March luncheon program in Riverside, held at Western Municipal Water District, covered CEQA greenhouse gas analysis considering the Newhall Ranch decision, Senate Bill 32, and the California Air Resources Board's Scoping Plan Update. An excellent and timely program presented by Matt Maddox, MESM, AICP, Senior Program Manager with Rincon Consultants.

The program began with an overview of background developments, then, building off these developments, covered steps to take with various approaches in CEQA documents for determining GHG impacts.

If you're not receiving our eblasts on program happenings, you're truly missing out.

If you would like to be added to our email list, contact your VPs of Programs.

Brad at [brad@ecotierraconsulting.com](mailto:brad@ecotierraconsulting.com) or Christina at [cmcadams@rinconconsultants.com](mailto:cmcadams@rinconconsultants.com)

## Meet a Chapter Member: Ruben Salas



Ruben graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with an under graduate degree in English, Literature and Language and continued his education to pursue a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) from Cal Poly Pomona.

Ruben is an Environmental Planner with Michael Baker International (Baker). His work consists in drafting CEQA/NEPA compliance documents, new project proposals, among other tasks. He enjoys his current role at Baker because it allows his involvement with projects at different stages. (I.e., with community members at scoping meetings, and later during public comments periods and finally public hearing stages). Ruben feels privileged to be involved and put in his share in such an important task like protecting the environment.

Ruben got his start in the environmental industry as a Transportation Planning Intern at RBF Consulting (now Michael Baker International). In this position, he was responsible for assisting with traffic impact analysis preparation and plenty of field work which would eventually be used in environmental documents for various cities and counties throughout California. Although Ruben has a passion for transportation planning, he wanted to broaden his horizons and took on an opportunity that opened up as an environmental planner. Environmental planning quickly became a field in which Ruben seeing himself growing professionally.

Another aspect Ruben enjoys about his position is the ability to, from time to time, continue to be involved in community outreach in projects like the San Bernardino County Community Plans Continuum and also active transportation planning projects.

Ruben has been a resident of southern California for a great portion of his life and currently resides in San Bernardino. In his free time, he enjoys going to the gym, dancing, snowboarding, watching and practicing soccer, hiking and many more. Ruben is currently the newsletter editor for our AEP chapter.

## Planner on the Move: Kari Cano



**What company are you with now and what attracted you to the new position?**

Kari Cano is now with Kimley-Horn in their downtown Riverside office. While Kimley-Horn has been in business for 50 years, the Riverside office is just beginning to grow. It is exciting for Kari to be a part of a new and growing office. Many of her long-time clients are in the Inland Empire so she feels she can help grow Kimley-Horn's Inland Empire presence. Kari also loves that Kimley-Horn strives to provide an environment for its people to flourish. She feels that Kimley-Horn's core values are something that align with her work ethic. Additionally, she was able to shorten her work commute, which helps her achieve a better work/life balance.

**What type of projects will you be working on?**

Kari will be working on a variety of both CEQA and NEPA projects throughout California. Kari is currently working on both new development and infrastructure projects in both Northern and Southern California.

**What has been your professional trajectory to get where you are today?**

Kari was able to get a full time internship shortly after she graduated college as an environmental planner, and loved it. She started in this field in 2005, at the height of the economic boom. Development was happening VERY quickly at that time, and agencies were inundated with development applications. It was very fast paced, and she had to learn quickly. Luckily, she had great mentors and was able to jump right in. Kari has been writing and managing CEQA and NEPA documents ever since.

**Where would you like to be in the next 5-10 years?**

At Kimley-Horn of course! Kari looks forward to seeing the Riverside office grow and to continue to gain additional Inland Empire clients. There is a lot of local development and redevelopment potential, and she is excited to be a part of that.

## 3 Random Interview Questions

**If you could only keep 5 possessions, what would they be?**

Coffee X10, cellphone, soccer ball, gym, plenty of food (you can find me eating any time of the day).

**What is a skill you would like to learn and why?**

Although I enjoy singing, I'd be the last person on earth you'd want to hear sing. For that same reason, I would like to take vocal lessons. Not so much for me however, but for my audience's sake when rocking out during karaoke.

**If you could do any profession but your own, what would it be and why?**

I would want to be a pilot. It would provide me with the opportunity to travel and experience the world in a very different way. I believe that traveling allows a person to grow personally and intellectually and I would love to do more of it.



## West Coast Drought Summary for April, 2017



In California, reservoirs are mostly above-average (Percent of Average Reservoir Storage values mostly between 100-170 percent), though there are a few exceptions. One of the more notable exceptions being tracked is the Cachuma Reservoir northwest of Santa Barbara, CA, which is reporting a Percent of Average Reservoir Storage of 57-percent. No changes to the USDM map were deemed necessary in California, Nevada, or Arizona.

*Current Event Provided by  
Ruben Salas, Michael Baker International*

*Source: The National Drought Mitigation Center*

*Have a topic you would like to write about?  
Send us an email and we would be happy  
to include it in our next newsletter!*

A California Drought Monitor Map is provided below which shows the current State's drought conditions.

### U.S. Drought Monitor California

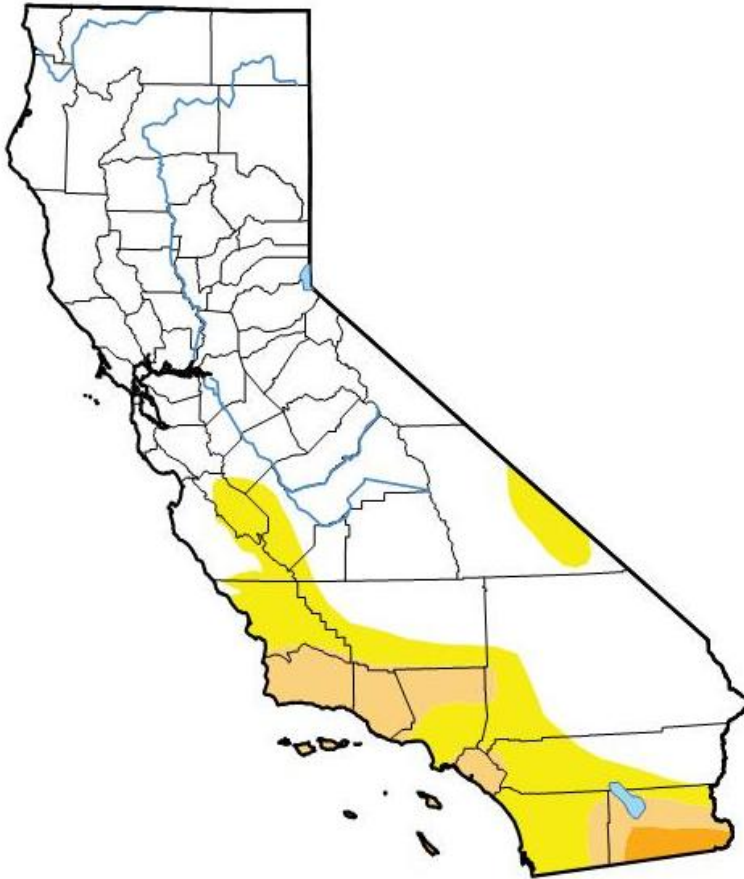
**April 4, 2017**

*(Released Thursday, Apr. 6, 2017)*

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

*Drought Conditions (Percent Area)*

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	76.54	23.46	8.24	1.06	0.00	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> <i>03-28-2017</i>	76.54	23.46	8.24	1.06	0.00	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> <i>01-03-2017</i>	18.07	81.93	67.61	54.02	38.17	18.31
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> <i>01-03-2017</i>	18.07	81.93	67.61	54.02	38.17	18.31
<b>Start of Water Year</b> <i>09-27-2016</i>	0.00	100.00	83.59	62.27	42.80	21.04
<b>One Year Ago</b> <i>04-05-2016</i>	3.55	96.45	90.58	74.37	55.25	31.68



**Intensity:**

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.*

**Author:**

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NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

