



MEMORANDUM

TO: IEDA Board
RE: Water (& Ag) Committee Report
DATE: October 17, 2024

Retirements

It has been a strange month, with multiple people announcing their retirement. Chuck Podolak with WIFA quietly announced his retirement. The hiring process closed on October 15th. There was some interest internally, but it remains to be seen who applied, especially with the lowkey announcement.

Dan Keppen has served the Family Farm Alliance for 20 years. He recently announced that he will be stepping down. Their search is open until January of 2025.

While not water related per se, Jack Murray informed me that he will be retiring in March 2025.

While I'm sure each of us have different levels of exposure to the individuals above, I'm sure we will all feel the impact of these retirements. It is also a reminder of how quickly things can change and of the importance of a succession plan.

Agriculture

As the legislative calendar is coming to a close, there has been an increased effort to get the Farm Bill passed. 140 House members sent a letter to leadership get the bill passed. Drought in the West and flooding in the East underscore the need for this bill. As you may recall, the Farm Bill was supposed to be finished last year but was extended into this year. It remains to be seen if that will occur again, or if they can get a Farm Bill finalized. Former President Trump has

threatened to claw back green funding from USDA, which may motivate some to pass the bill.

California Delta Conveyance

The \$20B project will help move water from Northern California to Southern California. This is a major update to the existing infrastructure to reduce the risk from earthquakes and climate change.

Knowing California, they will try to leverage their concessions on the Colorado River to get funding for this project.

Pacific Northwest Dam Breaches

DOE released regarding breaching the Snake River Dams. With the recent breach of the Klamath Dams, this could be the first step in additional dam removals. APPA will be addressing dam removal in their rounds on the hill.