

How is the working relationship with DWP?

The Committee and the DWP mutually agreed to accept the Water Board decision as the resolution of the decades-long water diversion controversy, and both have oriented on good-faith implementation of that decision. A good relationship has been established while pursuing these restoration objectives because we are working within a well-defined process that allows for discussion, dispute, and resolution of debates. While there certainly are disagreements, there is also commitment from both sides to work together and to resolve issues internally whenever possible. As a last resort, if resolution between the Committee and DWP is not possible, either party has the ability to request a ruling from the State Water Board.

It is clear that the Mono Lake Committee's ongoing and permanent presence has continued to improve the protection and restoration of Mono Lake and its tributary streams. As a result of these efforts, Mono Lake is now a recognized icon of how it is possible to find win-win solutions to save a special place. Today, Mono Lake and its streams are in the process of healing, showing how it is possible to restore an entire watershed that had been significantly degraded. ❖

Lisa Cutting is the Committee's Eastern Sierra Policy Director. With spring in the air, she's ready to hang up her skis and get out her fly rod.

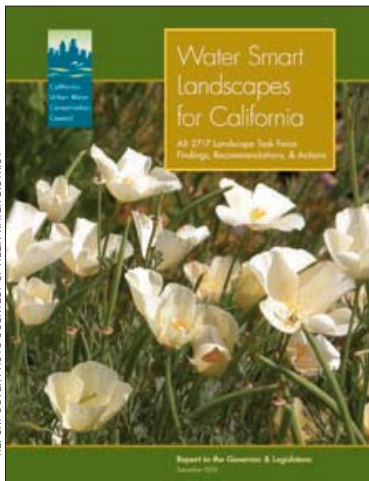
Meeting with DWP Commissioners

On January 31, the new DWP commissioners hosted a workshop on Eastern Sierra issues at their regular meeting. Mono Lake Committee staff presented an overview and status report on Mono Lake restoration and the Committee's youth education program.

The restoration status report included a review of the history of the Mono Lake water diversion controversy and outlined the solutions now being implemented. Committee staff discussed the status of DWP's Mono Lake obligations, including stream restoration, lake restoration, and aqueduct facilities management. Discussion with the commissioners provided the opportunity to underscore the win-win solutions that have been found at Mono Lake, where the water needed to protect Mono Lake has been replaced through conservation and reclamation in Los Angeles. For more information on the DWP commissioners meeting see page 9.

The Committee is looking forward to working with the new DWP commissioners to assure that Mono Lake restoration continues to be successful and to pursue new initiatives that benefit the Eastern Sierra.

Water-smart landscapes for California



REPORT COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF HELIX WATER DISTRICT

The Task Force's recommendations to the Governor and legislature for water-conserving landscapes in California.

What is one of the most cost-effective ways every Californian can help protect Mono Lake and other natural areas that must share water with agricultural and urban areas now and in the future? Turn home gardens and city and business landscapes into beautiful "water-smart" places without high water demands.

The Landscape Task Force was charged by the legislature to evaluate and recommend proposals for improving the efficiency of water use in new and existing urban landscapes in California. The Task Force, lead by Ron Munds, City of San Luis Obispo, and vice-chaired by David Zoldoske, President of the Irrigation Association and Frances Spivy-Weber, Mono Lake Committee Executive Director for Policy, published its recommendations

in December 2005. When these recommendations are implemented, Californians will save 600,000 to 1 million acre-feet of water per year—enough to meet the needs of up to two million households for a year without further damaging ecosystems through water diversions.

The top five recommendations are:

1. Adopt water conserving rate structures. Water consumers should get a price signal when they are using too much water.
2. Reduce the state's recommended landscape water budget and review the budget every ten years. New technology and new research will make gardening more water efficient.
3. Enforce and monitor compliance with local ordinances. Are you familiar with your community's rules?
4. Require dedicated landscape meters. It is hard to know how much water you are using on the landscape if you have a meter than combines indoor and outdoor use.
5. Promote the use of recycled water in urban landscapes. Recycled water is a drought-proof, reliable source of water and it saves potable water for human consumption.

For more the full recommendations, go to www.cuwcc.org or contact Fran (frances@monolake.org) at (310) 416-0041.