



May 16, 2018

## **The Ultimate Water Panel: The Biggest Water Issues Facing San Diego and the South Bay**

(Chula Vista, Calif.) - Join the Otay Water District and Sweetwater Authority Board Chairs to learn more about water issues facing San Diego County and more specifically South Bay. The next Albondigas will be held on Friday, May 17 at Mangia Italiano in Chula Vista from 11:45 p.m. to 1 p.m. Topics to be covered at the event include Governor Gavin Newsom's N-10-19 Executive Order on water supply planning, water recycling for 2019 and beyond, water legislation, and more.

Speakers include Otay Water District Board President Mitch Thompson, Sweetwater Authority's Board Chair Steve Casteñeda, and HDR Engineering Vice President Donna Bloom-Crook. Keith Solar from Solar Parks, LLP will facilitate the panel. Through this water panel, attendees should gain various perspectives from Board members of water agencies as well as an engineering perspective.

Mitch Thompson has served on the Otay Water District's Board since May of 2012 and was elected as Board president in 2019. He serves as the District's Chair of the Finance/Administrative and Desalination Project committees. He also serves on the Ad Hoc Salt Creek Golf Course Lease and Property Disposition Committee. A resident of Chula Vista, he has over 40 years' experience in commercial real estate lending, 12 years in local government, and 17 years in real estate development, investing and consulting, public finance, and housing development. He has served in a variety of leadership positions on the boards of nonprofits and government agencies including the Chula Vista City Council in 2010. In addition, he currently serves on the boards of the San Diego County Water Conservation Authority and the Southwestern Community College Foundation.

Steve Castaneda is the Chair of the Sweetwater Authority Governing Board. Steve was first elected to the Southbay Irrigation District in 2014. Before that he was on the Chula Vista City Council from 2004 - 2012, and was a member of the Metropolitan Transit District from 2010 - 2012. He was Chair of the San Diego County Law Enforcement Review Board from 1996 - 2004.

Donna Bloom-Crook is a HDR Vice President and the Southern California Client Development Leader responsible for client and business development and growth of the firm's \$20M water, wastewater and water resource management program. She was executive director of some of the largest water resources

organizations in the Southwest including the Multi-State Salinity Coalition, California-Nevada Floodplain Management Association, and Nevada Water Environment Association.

Keith Solar has served as special counsel to the City of Carlsbad since 2002 to assist the city and the Carlsbad Municipal Water District in negotiating land use and water purchase agreements, respectively, for the Claude “Bud” Lewis Carlsbad Seawater Desalination Plant. As built, that plant produces up to 54 million gallons per day of desalinated seawater and is the largest desalination plant in the Western Hemisphere. Keith currently represents IDE Americas, Inc., the designer and operator of the desalination plant, in all matters relating to plant operation.

For additional event details, [click here](#).