



**WESTSIDE**  
WATER AUTHORITY

AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION OF

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Recruitment services provided by Ralph Andersen & Associates

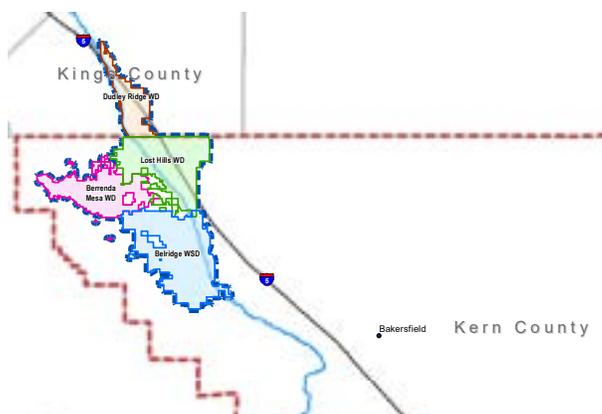
## An Outstanding Opportunity

This is an outstanding opportunity for a high-profile professional position as the Executive Director of a Joint Powers Authority that focuses on the delivery of agricultural water to its landowners in the Central Valley.

The Westside Water Authority (WWA) is a newly formed Joint Powers Authority created to allow for a new management structure of four existing water districts. WWA is now seeking a confident and dynamic leader to guide, oversee, and consolidate the management and operations of its four-member water districts. Ideally, this individual will have broad knowledge of California water issues, be well versed and able to engage with elected officials, regulators, and other stakeholders on policy issues that impact the WWA members. Importantly, WWA's combined 378,000 acre-feet of State Water Project (SWP) Table A contract supply accounts for nearly 10% of the total SWP water supply contracts in the State of California. Recognizing this, the Executive Director will be actively engaged in a wide range of local, regional, federal, and statewide water related matters.

Although WWA's office is in Bakersfield, the Board would consider the Executive Director being based in Sacramento or potentially other locations.

This exceptional opportunity may come only once in a water professional's career and all interested parties are encouraged to further explore this career match with Ralph Andersen & Associates' Search Team.



## Organizational Overview

The WWA was recently created (effective January 2020) and is comprised of four water districts: Dudley Ridge Water District, Lost Hills Water District, Berrenda Mesa Water District, and Belridge Water Storage District. The districts supply irrigation water for agricultural purposes on the western side of the southern San Joaquin Valley. Most of this supply is comprised of surface water deliveries from the SWP.

The WWA Board of Directors (Board) consists of representatives from each of the four districts. Three districts are member units of the Kern County Water Agency (KCWA), which contracts with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for SWP water while the fourth district contracts directly with DWR.

The four districts have been working together for several years on a variety of water resource management issues and have previously created related entities to handle regulatory compliance with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The Board desires further integration and leveraging of its combined water resources, its significant water and energy expenditures, and its combined \$71 million annual operating budget. The WWA has 25 full-time employees.

The Board has created the Executive Director position to maximize the strength of its combined SWP entitlements, to consolidate the management and operations of the four districts, and to influence decisions made at the State and federal level, including developing a significant presence in Sacramento. Various activities in Sacramento affect the WWA such as SWP and DWR decisions and operations, legislative proposals and actions, and regulatory proposals and pronouncements. The Board desires to have an effective presence in Sacramento to positively influence these elements. The successful candidate will modify the organization's structure to further address the Board's goal of expanding the WWA's water resource programs, the efficient operations of the four systems, and the related governmental affairs objectives at the regional, State, and federal levels.

In addition to the WWA Board meetings, each of the four member districts have five directors and generally conduct quarterly Board meetings within their respective service areas. The Executive Director will lead staff efforts for the various Board meetings and create a regional presence as the WWA's leader and representative.

Westside Water Authority's purpose and mission can be summarized in four key areas:

- ◇ Deliver water
- ◇ Preserve water
- ◇ Acquire supplemental water
- ◇ Explore and enhance water resource assets

## The Position

The new Executive Director will develop and lead a team to represent the WWA at SWP, DWR, and other meetings in Sacramento; represent its members with KCWA; and manage operations, Board meetings, and other meetings in the Bakersfield area. The creation of the Executive Director combines two general manager positions and provides the opportunity to restructure the organization for effectiveness and efficiency to further the Board's goals.

The Executive Director position will have the following responsibilities:

- Building a small, yet dynamic team to oversee water resource, administrative, governmental affairs, and operational functions;
- Creating, revising, and filling currently vacant positions to compliment the skills and experiences of the new Executive Director;
- Providing leadership for development and implementation of WWA strategies, policies, and programs for water resource management;
- Influencing activities in Sacramento, at the federal level, and with KCWA for the benefit of the WWA and its stakeholders; being a regional leader;
- Engaging in acquisitions of short- and long-term supplemental water supplies through water transfer and exchange programs;
- Managing existing SWP water supply and groundwater banking programs;
- Exploring new opportunities for water banking and other water-related assets;
- Representing the WWA with landowners, policymakers, regulators, and local, State, and Federal agencies to advance the WWA's interests;
- Overseeing board meetings for the WWA (approximately 10 per year) and with each individual

district board (approximately 3 per year per district);

- Directing and managing WWA staff responsible for regulatory programs compliance (including Sustainable Ground Management Act, Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, and Basin Plan amendments), district finances, and personnel; and
- Overseeing capital improvement projects.

## The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will possess many of the following key attributes:

- Extensive experience with California water issues and ability to work with DWR and SWP issues and personnel;
- An energetic, self-motivated leader with good communication and delegation skills;
- Skilled at building relationships, negotiating transactions, and challenging others;
- Innovative and creative; an entrepreneurial management style; embracing best business practices for a public agency;
- Ability to provide strong leadership to a policy-making Board;
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with all Board members;
- Strong experience developing and managing staff over various organizational departments and locations; and
- Excellent public speaking and interpersonal skills with the ability to present a wide variety of audiences, including the general public, stakeholders, and regulatory personnel in a clear and concise manner.





## Preferred Education and Experience

**Education:** Degree in business, engineering, agriculture, or law is preferred.

**Experience:** Requires a minimum of ten (10) years of relevant professional management experience.

## Compensation

The annual salary for the Executive Director is highly competitive and commensurate with qualifications and responsibilities similar to other agencies of comparable size and scope in the region. Salary will be negotiated based on the candidate's experience and qualifications. The salary will be supported by a benefits package including WWA-provided vehicle; medical, dental, vision and life insurance; 5% contribution to defined contribution retirement and a 5% match to deferred compensation program; and generous vacation, sick, holiday, and personal leave allowances. The WWA is a non-CalPERS agency for retirement and healthcare purposes.

Further details regarding the anticipated compensation and other related questions may be directed to the Ralph Andersen & Associates' Search Team.

**Office Location / Residency:** The WWA office is located in Bakersfield, the preferred area for the Executive Director to be based; however, the Board will consider an option for an ideal candidate currently residing in the Sacramento area or other Valley location to maintain such residence while traveling to Bakersfield for Board and other meetings or functions.

## To Be Considered

This is a **confidential recruitment** and will be handled accordingly throughout the various stages of the process. References **will not** be contacted until mutual interest has been established. This recruitment is considered open until a final selection is made. Candidates are encouraged to **apply early in the process and no later than Friday, February 28, 2020**. Resumes will be reviewed upon submittal and highly qualified candidates will be scheduled for video interviews with Ralph Andersen & Associates. The most highly qualified candidates will be invited for an on-site interview with Search Committee (representatives of the four districts) during March. Top candidates that are invited to continue on in the process will have other follow-up meetings and also receive a tour of the districts which extend over a large geographic area. Final selection and an appointment is anticipated in late March / April with the top candidates (typically 1 to 3) presented to the full WWA Board for final selection. The selected candidate would ideally join the WWA in April / early May or a mutually agreed upon date. A detailed background and extensive reference checks will be conducted during this time period. The Board desires a smooth transition and every effort will be made to ensure that this happens.

**Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit electronically to Ralph Andersen & Associates at [apply@ralphandersen.com](mailto:apply@ralphandersen.com)** and should include a compelling cover letter and comprehensive resume.

Confidential inquiries are welcomed to Mr. John Rossi or Ms. Heather Renschler at (916) 630-4900.

**Westside Water Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer**

