THE ORGANIZATION

The Mojave Water Agency (MWA) is a regional wholesale water provider created by High Desert voters in July 1960. MWA has a service area of nearly 5,000 square miles in San Bernardino County, including Barstow, Lucerne Valley, the Victor Valley, Yucca Valley, and surrounding communities. This area has a combined population of about 450,000. The Agency is also one of 29 State Water Contractors with access to California’s State Water Project (SWP).

As a State Water Contractor, MWA is currently entitled to receive an annual allotment of up to 89,800-acre feet of water from SWP via the California Aqueduct. This facility extends south from the Sacramento Delta and runs locally through the communities of Baldy Mesa and Hesperia. The imported water supply is crucial to the area’s survival because local aquifers have been in overdraft since the early 1950s. For the past four decades, residents have been using more water than is replaced naturally.

The Agency’s essential mission was strongly reaffirmed with the conclusion of the Mojave River Adjudication. The Court’s ruling noted that, at the time, the “Agency area continues to be in severe overdraft.” The Court ordered the Agency to seek sources of water, including supplemental water, and to deliver that water in the most effective fashion to ensure the quality of life within its boundaries. Since that time, through a portfolio of water management efforts, combined with collaboration with key stakeholders and the community at large, MWA has been able to achieve balance in the majority of its groundwater basins.

MWA strives to work with local communities and agencies around the region to assist with water related issues and programs with the goal of harnessing area resources for the benefit of the community. MWA embraces a collaborative approach to engage stakeholders and the community at-large to forge community partnerships benefitting the entire region.

The Mojave Water Agency was appointed as Watermaster in 1993 and the MWA Board of Directors serves as the Watermaster, pursuant to the Court Judgment which adjudicated the rights to pump groundwater in the Mojave Basin Area. The Watermaster’s main responsibilities are to monitor and verify water production for approximately 450 parties (1,700 wells), collect required assessments, conduct studies and prepare an annual report of its findings and activities to the Court. Watermaster also acts as the clearinghouse for recording water transfers, maintains records for all such transfers, and reports changes in ownership of Base Annual Production rights to the Court.

MWA’s mission is, “To manage the region’s water resources for the common benefit to assure stability in the sustained use by the citizens we serve.” Their vision is, “To become a recognized and respected leader in the community we serve through demonstrated knowledge, integrity and the quality of our actions.” Core values include service to the community, integrity, innovation and creativity, teamwork, and employee growth and reward. Goals include:

- Develop sound fiscal and organizational policies that allow the Agency to be effective, innovative and responsive.
- Manage SWP entitlement to meet future demands while maintaining independence during periods of water shortages.
- Coordinate efforts to maintain adequate water quality so that groundwater is safe for drinking and other beneficial uses.
- Develop public awareness so that individuals and stakeholder organizations support MWA’s efforts and understand their role in contributing to the Agency’s mission.
- Advance understanding of the basin hydrogeology to support efficient management of water resources.
- Promote efficient use of the region’s water resources through regional conservation programs.
MWA is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors. The Board serves as the decision-making and policy-setting body for the Agency. MWA has seven divisions, each represented by one Board member. Board members are elected by the public, on a non-partisan basis, and serve four-year terms. The Board uses the committee format where in-depth discussion, debate and deliberation occur on matters which the Board must decide.

The FY2020-21 total budget is $56.7 million (including current capital expenses), the five-year CIP is $123.6 million, and there are 38 staff positions. MWA’s major source of revenue is property taxes, with some revenue also coming from water sales.

THE AREA

The Mojave Water Agency is located in what is referred to as the High Desert – geographic areas of Southern California deserts that are above 2,000 feet and below 4,000 feet in altitude. The San Bernardino County portion contains Victor Valley, along with the Antelope Valley and the Morongo Basin (where Yucca Valley is located). San Bernardino County’s portion of the high desert region contains the most land mass of the four involved counties, making up approximately 70% of the total County’s area.

The High Desert of Southern California is one of the most dynamic and fastest growing regions of California. With an abundance of affordable land, a sizeable workforce, stable transportation funding, and key new facilities such as Southern California Logistics Airport and the High Desert Power Project, it is poised to become one of Southern California’s chief economic engines in the 21st century. The Mojave Water Agency is highly regarded in the water industry, and will be a major factor in shaping the future of the High Desert.

There are many different lifestyles and amenities in the area, including reasonable housing costs (it is the most affordable region in California to buy a home), good schools, outlet shopping, fine medical facilities, light traffic compared to other areas of Southern California, recreational opportunities, and a sense of community.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Key challenges and opportunities facing the Agency include:

- Protect the State’s water allocation from being reduced in order to provide for growth in the MWA service area and ensure long-term economic development of the region.
- As a State Water Contractor, address issues regarding the State Water Project, as well as the risks with the State and regulatory agencies.
- Optimize the use of assets/groundwater.
- Maintain positive relationships with the State Water Contractors and other regional stakeholders.
- Maintain a fiscally conservative and strategic approach for the Agency.
- Complete major projects currently underway.
- Resolve existing environmental lawsuits.
- Continue to receive sufficient and necessary State and Federal grants.

THE POSITION

Under general direction from the General Manager, the Assistant General Manager directs, administers and coordinates Agency activities in accordance with policies, goals and objectives established by the General Manager and/or Board of Directors. He/She performs functions such as representing the General Manager and Agency as needed; may manage or oversee one or more departments; developing plans for long-range water supply; providing fiscal controls; and developing and implementing Agency policy. The Assistant General Manager exercises general direction and supervision over supervisory, professional, technical, and administrative support staff through subordinate levels of supervision.

Powers and duties of the position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Participates in formulating and administering Agency policies and developing long-range goals and objectives.
- Directs and coordinates activities of various departments including fiscal control, budget development, and technology development and enhancement.
- Coordinates the preparation of materials to be included in the Board of Director packets; prepares staff recommendations and analysis and presents to the Board for action; responds to requests from the Board.
**ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER**  
Mojave Water Agency

- Develops and manages long-range plans for water supply, storage and facilities.
- Represents the Agency at meetings with State officials throughout the year.
- Coordinates State Water Project water supply policy and implementation issues with the Department of Water Resources, which may require frequent travel.
- Oversees or collaborates with other departments on major projects involving substantial water use and complex issues; proposes modifications and changes to resolve issues; participates in the development of new programs; may represent the Agency on matters involving on-going litigation.
- Coordinates Agency programs with other public entities and the general public; delivers oral presentations to various groups.
- Answers questions from consultants regarding scope and purpose of projects; provides direction for preparation of the consultant’s report and reviews draft prior to submission to the General Manager.
- Provides administrative support for the Agency, such as participating in Senior Management and general staff meetings, authorizing expenditures, and signing checks.
- Represents the General Manager at meetings, including Board of Director meetings and Board workshops in the General Manager’s absence.
- Performs related duties and responsibilities, as assigned.

The position is open due to the promotion of the Assistant General Manager to the position of General Manager.

**THE Candidate**

*Education, Experience and Licenses*

- A typical way to obtain the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform the job would include a bachelor’s degree in business, public administration, engineering, environmental studies or other related field, plus significant relevant water agency or public agency experience, including having served in a senior management role. However, other experience will also be considered (e.g., as a consultant), with leadership and critical thinking skills of great importance.
- California experience preferred. Should have experience with and/or direct knowledge of the State Water Contractors, as well as working with regulatory agencies in the State.
- Knowledge of California water law and experience in negotiating contracts would be ideal. Having prior experience in engineering and/or environmental sciences, project management, purchasing water rights, water marketing, water supply and demand, flexible financing mechanisms, and grant administration would be a plus.
- Being active with the State Water Contractors (SWC), Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) and other relevant organizations is encouraged, but this should be kept in balance with the needs of the job.
Must possess a valid California Class C driver’s license and current automobile insurance.

It is preferred that the selected candidate choose to live within the service area.

**Knowledge**

The selected candidate should have knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of water resources management, as well as land use planning and development.
- Federal, State and local regulatory agency authorities.
- Principles and practices of leadership.
- Principles and practices of budget preparation.
- Principles and practices of employee supervision, including work planning, assignment review and evaluation, discipline, and staff training in work procedures.
- Public relations principles and concepts.
- Organizational and management principles and practices involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, leadership technique, and coordination of staff and resources.
- Techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.

**Skills and Abilities**

The selected candidate should have strong interpersonal and communication skills, both oral and written, as well as the ability to:

- Provide administrative, management, professional leadership and direction for various departments and the Agency in general.
- Set goals and objectives, organize or schedule other individuals and their tasks, and develop realistic action plans.
- Support and explain reasoning for decisions and include appropriate individuals in the decision-making process.
- Read, analyze and interpret a variety of documents such as business periodicals, professional journals, technical procedures and governmental regulations.
- Write reports, business correspondence and procedure manuals.
- Effectively present information and respond to questions from MWA employees, customers, other water agencies, the general public, MWA Board of Directors, consultants and regulatory agencies; effectively resolve sensitive issues.
- Define problems, collect data, establish facts and draw valid conclusions; interpret an extensive variety of technical instructions in written, mathematical or diagram form and deal with several abstract and concrete variables.
- Perform work in accordance with specific safety procedures to minimize potential for injury.

**Management Style and Personal Traits**

*Mojave Water Agency is seeking an Assistant General Manager who “sees the big picture,” is a strategic and critical thinker, and focuses on long-term planning.* He/She should be innovative and creative (think “outside of the box”), be open to new solutions, and should lead toward unity - define the objective and work towards a common goal.

*This person must be a strong, dynamic and motivational leader who is approachable, embraces the organization’s culture, and will maintain the team atmosphere that has been created.* He/She should provide direction and bring people together. While MWA has a very collaborative culture, including with stakeholders, people must also be able to work independently.

The Assistant General Manager should support staff in growing and spreading their wings by providing opportunities for staff development, monitoring subordinates’ efforts without micro-managing, and giving credit where it is due. He/She should be accessible and also appropriately involve staff in decision-making.
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
Mojave Water Agency

The ideal candidate will know how to operate much like in the private sector, and have a strong sense of business and fiscal responsibility, be flexible and adaptable, and wear many hats. He/She should be politically savvy, articulate, respected, have integrity and be a good listener.

COMPENSATION

The annualized salary range for this position is $166,177 to $232,647, with hiring dependent upon the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate (note: there is potential to go above this range over time, based on performance). In addition, benefits are provided which include:

- CalPERS Retirement with 2% of the highest annual salary at age 62, 5-year vesting. For prior public service before 2013 (PEPRA), the rate is 2% at 55.
- Flexible Benefits Package $17,710 annually to go towards:
  - Deferred Compensation Program (pre-tax and post-tax) available (457 Plan)
  - Medical Insurance - choice of PPO or HMO Plans
  - Employee cost share of PERS
  - Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Plan available
- Additional amounts above what is provided in the Flexible Benefits Package may be contributed by employee into the Deferred Compensation Program (pre-tax and post-tax) available (457 Plan)
- 5% of base pay rate placed into a 401(a) account by Agency (5-year vesting period)
- Vacation: To be determined; with years of service, maxing out to 20 days per year
- Vacation pay out option available
- 40 hours of Flex Time Leave per fiscal year
- Paid Holidays: 13 days per year
- Sick Leave: 12 days per year
- Life, Dental and Vision Insurance: 100% premium paid by Agency for employees and dependent(s)
- Tuition Reimbursement up to IRS non-taxable amount per IRC Section 127, after 12 months of employment
- Employee Assistance Program
- Long-Term Disability: 100% premium paid by Agency with coverage of up to 66 2/3% of salary allowable income in coordination with State Plans
- Interest Free Computer Loan Program up to $3,000 after 12 months of employment
- Professional development, seminars and conferences
- 9/80 Work Schedule
- Automobile allowance
- The Agency does not participate in the Social Security program, except for the mandatory 1.45% Medicare contribution paid by the Agency

HOW TO APPLY

Send resumes (email preferred) by October 5, 2020 to:

ROBERTS CONSULTING GROUP INC
PO Box 1127
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
Telephone: 424.522.2251
Email: robertsrcg@msn.com
Web: www.robertsrcg.com

Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer

Additional information about the Mojave Water Agency can be found on their website at www.mojavewater.org.