



Westlands
Water District

Deputy General Manager – Government & Public Affairs

Filing Period:

Open Until Filled

Annual Salary Range:

\$175,000 – \$200,000 DOQ



559-224-1523



<https://wwd.ca.gov>



An Exceptional Leadership Opportunity

Westlands Water District is seeking an accomplished and politically astute executive to serve as the Deputy General Manager – Government & Public Affairs. Reporting to the General Manager, this position will provide strategic leadership for the District's government affairs, legislative advocacy, public affairs, communications, stakeholder engagement, and external relations program. The successful candidate will serve as a principal advisor to executive leadership and represent the District before policymakers, regulatory agencies, industry organizations, stakeholders, and the media.



ABOUT WESTLANDS WATER DISTRICT

Westlands Water District (District) is one of the nation's premier agricultural water agencies and a recognized leader in water resource management, conservation, and public policy. Formed in 1952, the District serves agricultural water users and rural communities throughout western Fresno and Kings Counties.

The District is recognized for its leadership in agricultural water conservation, innovative infrastructure investments, environmental stewardship, and advocacy efforts supporting California agriculture and water reliability.

District Highlights

The District operates approximately 1,100 miles of enclosed pipeline and 3,000 water meters to efficiently deliver and measure water while minimizing losses from evaporation and seepage. The District supports an agricultural region that produces approximately \$2 billion in annual crop value, contributes an estimated \$5 billion in farm-related economic activity, and supports nearly 35,000 jobs.

The District's primary source of water is the Central Valley Project (CVP), operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The District supplements its CVP allocation through water purchases, recharge projects, groundwater, and other sources. The District also delivers municipal and industrial water to Coalinga, Huron, Naval Air Station Lemoore, and several unincorporated communities within its service area.



Westlands Water District

MISSION AND GOVERNANCE

Mission

The mission of the District is to provide timely, reliable, and affordable water services to landowners and water users in western Fresno and Kings Counties. These services include sustainable water management and delivery, education, advanced technology, and innovative methods for environmental conservation.

Strategic Goals

- Preserve and restore reliable water supplies.
- Secure supplemental water resources through short- and long-term opportunities.
- Examine supply enhancement and drainage mitigation options.
- Support timely construction of cost-effective facilities to enhance water quality and reliability.
- Conduct maintenance, operational, and administrative functions efficiently and effectively.
- Implement and maintain an effective Water Conservation Program for growers.

Governance

The District is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors. The Board establishes policy direction and works with the General Manager, who manages and implements the Board's direction. The Board meets during regularly noticed public meetings and provides oversight of District business and priorities.





THE POSITION

Under the general direction of the General Manager, the Deputy General Manager - Government & Public Affairs provides executive leadership for the District's government affairs, public affairs, communications, stakeholder engagement, and external relations programs.

This position serves as a principal advisor to executive leadership and represents the District before elected officials, regulatory agencies, industry organizations, stakeholders, and the media.

Work Location and Expectations

The position may be headquartered in either the District's Fresno or Sacramento Office. Due to the nature of government relations, stakeholder engagement, legislative advocacy, Board-related activities, and public meetings, the position requires frequent travel throughout the District service area, Central Valley, and California, as well as occasional out-of-state travel. Attendance at evening and weekend meetings and events may also be required.

Key Priorities

- Advance the District's legislative, regulatory, and public policy priorities.
- Build and maintain relationships with elected officials, agencies, stakeholders, and industry organizations.
- Direct public affairs, communications, media relations, and stakeholder engagement efforts.
- Lead advocacy initiatives and strategic partnerships that support District objectives.
- Provide strategic counsel on emerging legislative, regulatory, and public affairs issues.
- Prepare reports, recommendations, and presentations for executive leadership and the Board of Directors.
- Provide leadership for assigned staff, consultants, and division resources.
- Develop and administer division budgets and ensure effective utilization of resources.





THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be a strategic and politically astute leader with experience in government affairs, communications, stakeholder engagement, and public policy, and a demonstrated ability to effectively represent organizational interests in complex public policy environments.

Government and Public Policy Expertise • Experience navigating legislative, regulatory, and public policy environments. • Knowledge of California water policy, public administration, and governmental processes. • Proven success working with elected officials, agencies, stakeholders, and industry partners.	Leadership and Strategic Thinking • Strategic leader capable of advancing organizational priorities and managing complex initiatives. • Experience leading teams, budgets, consultants, and cross-functional efforts. • Sound judgement, accountability, and effective decision-making.
Communication and Relationship Building • Exceptional communication and presentation skills. • Ability to build credibility and influence diverse audiences. • Effective representative before policymakers, stakeholders, industry organizations, media and the public.	Personal Characteristics • Integrity, discretion, and professionalism. • Political acumen, diplomacy, and strategic thinking. • Collaborative leadership style with commitment to public service.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Any combination of education and experience that provides the knowledge and abilities required for the position. A typical way of acquiring the required qualifications would be:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Public Administration, Public Policy, Political Science, Communications, Business Administration, Agriculture, Environmental Studies, Economics, Engineering, or a closely related field; **and**
- Eight (8) years of progressively responsible experience in government affairs, legislative advocacy, public affairs, communications, public policy, water resources, public agency administration, or a closely related field; and
- Of the eight (8) years, at least three (3) years include supervisory or management experience.

Desirable Qualifications

- A master's degree in a related field is desirable.
- Experience working with elected officials, governmental agencies, trade associations, consultants, stakeholders, and public policy organizations is highly desirable.
- Experience in California water policy, agriculture, natural resources, public utilities, or public agency administration is highly desirable.
- Experience managing external consultants, advocacy firms, communications professionals, and government affairs contractors is preferred.

WHY JOIN WESTLANDS?

This is an exceptional opportunity to join a major California agricultural water agency and help advance issues critical to water reliability, agricultural, and resource management. The selected candidate will work closely with executive leadership, the Board of Directors, policymakers, industry organizations, and stakeholders to support the District's mission and long-term strategic priorities.



COMPENSATION, APPLICATION, AND SELECTION PROCESS

Compensation and Benefits

Annual Salary Range: \$175,000 - \$200,000 DOQ. Appointment salary will be based on qualifications and experience and is generally expected to fall within the established salary range.

The District offers a competitive compensation package and comprehensive benefits program, including CalPERS retirement, medical insurance with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) Plan and medical opt out incentive, dental and vision coverage, life and AD&D insurance, short-and long-term disability insurance, paid vacation and medical leave, 11 paid holidays plus one floating holiday, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), flexible spending account options, voluntary 457 deferred compensation opportunities, longevity pay, and other District-sponsored benefits. Detailed information regarding District benefits is available on the District's website or upon request.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit a comprehensive resume and a cover letter, maximum two pages, describing their qualifications and interest in the position.

Application materials should be submitted electronically to resume@wwd.ca.gov. The position is open until filled; however, interested candidates are encouraged to apply early. Applications will be reviewed as received, and only the most qualified candidates will be invited to participate in the interview process.

Candidates invited to interview may be asked to provide six professional references, including individuals who have supervised the candidate, individuals who have reported to the candidate, and professional colleagues. References will not be contacted without advance notice to the candidate.

For questions and inquiries, please contact Veronica Venegas at (559) 241-6205 or resume@wwd.ca.gov. To learn more about Westlands, visit the District's website at wwd.ca.gov.

Conditional Offer of Employment

Any offer of employment will be contingent upon verification of the candidate's legal authorization to work in the United States, successful completion of applicable pre-employment requirements, including a post-offer medical examination and pre-employment drug screening, if applicable under District policy and law, and verification of employment history, education, training, licenses, and other information provided during the application process.

This is an at-will executive management position that serves at the discretion of the General Manager.

Westlands Water District is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants requiring accommodation during the recruitment process should contact the Human Resources Department at (559) 241-6205.

