Scientists agree that California’s droughts are cyclical and appear to be growing worse. While we have developed technologies to address our water challenges, water policy remains a hot-button issue in the Golden State, and not necessarily on traditional Republican-Democratic policy lines. Along with the need for major new infrastructure, deep conflicts divide agricultural and urban industries, Central Valley and coastal communities, environmentalists and fracking proponents, and others. Join us for a timely discussion on how we can build consensus and create bipartisan solutions to ensure a sustainable water future for our state.

Water Policy & the Drought
Balancing Competing Interests to Stay Afloat

Saturday, Oct. 3 | 10:30am - 12:00pm | 145 Dwinelle

Mel Levine
Felicia Marcus
David L. Sedlak
Dick Beahrs

Sponsored by the Goldman School of Public Policy’s Center on Civility & Democratic Engagement
Mel Levine (BA ‘64), Counsel and former Partner, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, Former U.S. Representative, 27th Congressional District

Mel Levine is President of the Board of Commissioners of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Retired as a partner from Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, he continues to act as Counsel. Levine served as a member of the US Congress from 1983-93 and as a member of the California Assembly from 1977-82. He chairs the Advisory Board of the Center on Public Diplomacy at USC’s Annenberg School, is a member of the Advisory Board of the UC Berkeley Goldman School of Public Policy and a Director of the Pacific Council on International Policy. From 1993-97 he served at the request of Vice President Gore, as co-President of Builders for Peace, the private sector effort to assist the Middle East peace process. Levine received his law degree cum laude from Harvard Law School, master’s degree in public affairs from Princeton University, and bachelor’s degree cum laude from UC Berkeley.

Felicia Marcus, State Water Resources Control Board (Board) Chair

Felicia Marcus was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown in 2012, and designated by the Governor as Chair in April of 2013. Previously, Marcus served in positions in government, the non-profit world, and the private sector. As the Administrator of USEPA Region IX in the Clinton Administration, Felicia was known for her work in bringing unlikely allies together for environmental progress on a wide range of issues. Earlier, she headed Los Angeles' Department of Public Works at a time when the City went from garnering lawsuits to garnering national awards for environmental excellence. In the non-profit world, she was the Western Director for the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and was the Executive VP/COO of the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national non-profit devoted to conserving land for people. She also was a private and non-profit sector attorney in Los Angeles, and has served on many non-profit boards and Advisory Councils.

David L. Sedlak, Malozemoff Professor in Mineral Engineering, Co-director of Berkeley Water Center, and Director of Institute for Environmental Science and Engineering (IESE)

Professor Sedlak’s research focuses on fate of chemical contaminants, with the long-term goal of developing cost-effective, safe, and sustainable systems to manage water resources. He is particularly interested in the development of local sources of water. His research has addressed water reuse--the practice of using municipal wastewater effluent to sustain aquatic ecosystems and augment drinking water supplies--as well as the treatment and use of urban runoff to contaminated groundwater from contaminated industrial sites as water supplies. Sedlak is also interested in the developing new approaches for managing the urban water cycle. He pursues these efforts through research coordinated through the National Science Foundation's Engineering Research Center for Reinventing the Nation’s Urban Water Infrastructure (ReNUWIt) and the Berkeley Water Center. He is the author of “Water 4.0”, a book that examines the ways in which we can gain insight into current water issues by understanding the history of urban water systems.

Richard “Dick” Beahrs (BA ‘68), Moderator

Dick Beahrs was a history major and served as ASUC President during his last year on campus. He is currently a trustee for the UC Berkeley Foundation and a member of the Center’s Advisory Board. Now retired, he spent 35 years as a Media Executive at Time Warner, where his positions included the Presidencies of Comedy Central and Court TV. In 2001, he and his wife, Carolyn, funded the launch of the Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program at the University of California Berkeley. This multidisciplinary program has trained over 400 environmental professionals from 90 countries in sustainable development skills. Beahrs’ current business activities include serving on the Board of the San Jose Giants and his role as a Senior Advisor for Revolution Foods, which provides nutritious meals for schools throughout the nation. His wife Carolyn and all four of their children also have Berkeley degrees.

Learn more about the Center on Civility & Democratic Engagement at gspp.berkeley.edu/ccde