

The County of Orange Report

Prepared for the Mesa Water District

May 20, 2022
by Lewis Consulting Group



May Meeting Short But Productive

The May OCLAFCO meeting was adjourned less than 25 minutes after the Pledge of Allegiance. However, the Commissioners crisply dispensed with some important items.

The final 22/23 budget was adopted unanimously after a \$199,000 augmentation for a new total of \$1.556 million. The augmentation financed the hiring of RSG Consulting which was approved in a separate item's unanimous vote. RSG is being hired to help with the collection of data, etc. with the 25 agencies in southwest and west Orange County to process their collective MSR's.

In other action, the Commission unanimously voted to retain Public Commissioner Derek McGregor for another term. It was also announced that the annual strategic workshop has been re-scheduled for July 13th from 8:30A - noon.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fisler, Executive Director Carolyn Ewing noted that a meeting will be held prior to the release of the upcoming fiscal trends analysis. It was officially noted that Special Districts had recently re-elected Commissioner Doug Davert and alternate Katrina Foley. Their term will start July 1.

Lastly, a discussion was held about the possibility of either live streaming or video recording for later playback OCLAFCO Commission meetings. Chairman Davert noted that in the near future, the current meeting room would be "off-limits" and that the Legislature is considering revisions to the Brown Act that might be pertinent. Furthermore, Ms. Emory noted that the meetings now have audio recordings posted on the LAFCO website, so it was decided to hold off on any decision until a future date.

California Primary Enters Home Stretch

On May 9, 2022, the Orange County Registrar of Voters mailed out 1,772,179 absentee ballots to every registered voter in Orange County. This number is comprised of 675,436 Democrats, 602,761 Republicans, 427,826 Independents with the rest scattered amongst minor parties. As of May 19th, 63,335 ballots have been returned in the County.

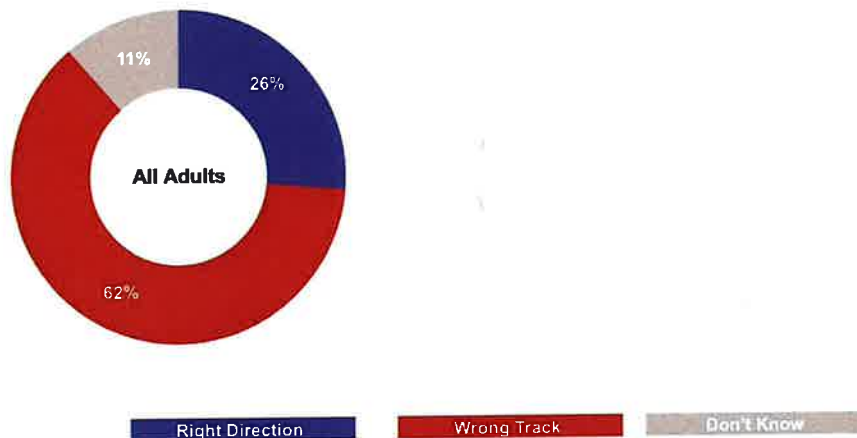


Although most national polls indicate a red wave is building across the country, California's "Blue Wall" should remain intact. One of the reasons Democrats should do well in the Golden State is the fact in the last two years, 900,000 Democrats have been added to the voter rolls compared to a paltry 80,000 for the GOP. Amongst the 63,335 ballots returned, Democrats so far are out voting Republicans 27,509 to 21,417.

Latest National Polls from IPSOS Conducted May 9-10

Right Direction/Wrong Track

Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

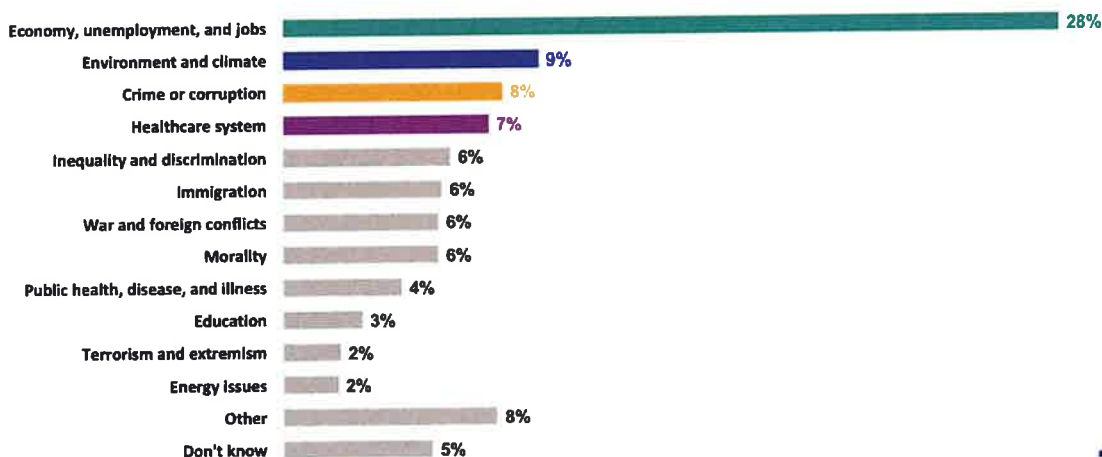


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Most Important Problem Facing America

In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?



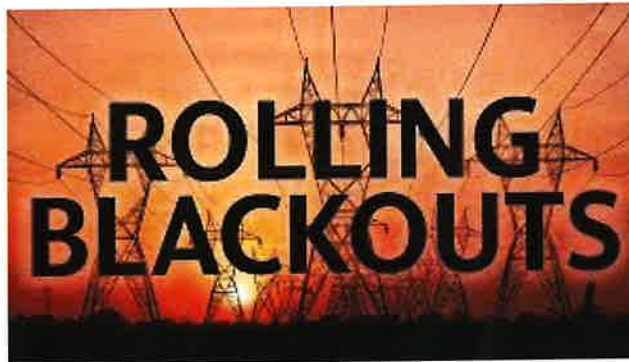
Californians Warned of Summer Blackouts

The state's Independent Systems Operator along with the California Energy Commission and Public Utilities Commission are urging Californians to be prepared for potential rolling blackouts this summer. ISO is predicting shortages of approximately 1,700 megawatts on extremely hot days, but if challenges are magnified by unexpected events, the shortfall could be as high as 5,000 megawatts on our worst summer days. The experts are also saying that on hot summer days, 6PM - 9PM, may be the most troublesome hours due to heat retention coupled with a drop-off of solar generation.

The California drought is not helping, as Lake Oroville (for example) is so low that last year the Hydro Plant was forced to shut down for the first time since 1968.

Potential shortages are forcing regulators and politicians to revisit their goals. For example, Diablo Canyon, the last remaining nuclear power plant in California, is planned to be shuttered in 2025, but now there is momentum building to keep the plant going longer. Diablo Canyon produces 2280 megawatts per year.

California's aggressive green policy to battle carbon emissions is an added economic hardship for California consumers. Since 2013, Southern California Edison's rates have increased by 48%, more than twice the rate of inflation.



B.O.S. Meetings, Much Ado About Nothing

The April 26th and May 10th meetings of the Orange County Board of Supervisors were in today's vernacular "two nothing burgers". Long on resolutions and tributes, but short on substance, the meetings were absent of meaningful or controversial items. Two plausible explanations exist as to why this is occurring. First, they may have cleared the deck in anticipation of the two day, June 14 & 15 marathon meetings reviewing and giving direction on next year's budget. Or, it might be a desire to avoid controversial matters as we close in on the election primary and November balloting.

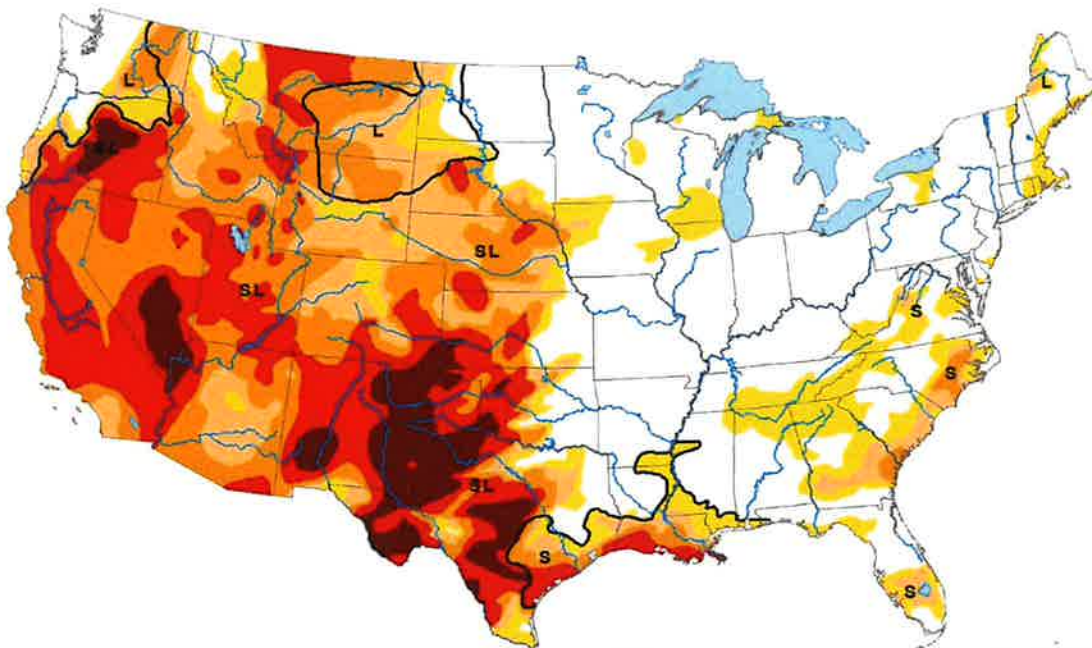
Orange County COVID-19 Update

ORANGE COUNTY COVID-19 STATS	5/16/2022	4/21/2022
CUMULATIVE CASES TO DATE	561,148	550,856
CUMULATIVE DEATHS TO DATE	7,023	6,990
DEATHS REPORTED TODAY	0	24
CUMULATIVE TESTS TO DATE	8,973,525	8,608,383
TESTS REPORTED THIS WEEK	99,305	318,605
CASES CURRENTLY HOSPITALIZED	89 *	64 *
CASES CURRENTLY IN ICU	15	14
CUMULATIVE RECOVERED TO DATE	543,397 *	539,474 *

* = INCLUDES *ICU* CASES

Southwestern Drought Worsens Map released: May 19, 2022

Data valid: May 17, 2022



While the Pacific Northwest is luxuriating in a 124% of normal snow-pack, according to NOAA, California is now down to a meager 22%.

ENSO METER

and in the meantime, La Niña persists. . .

