

CALIFORNIA

2021

WATER

LONG BEACH / SOUTH BAY EDITION

THIS DROUGHT IS EXTREME!

Aerial view at Bidwell Canyon Marina showing Lake Oroville at 27 percent of total capacity. Photo, taken on July 20, 2021, is courtesy of the California Department of Water Resources.

SENATOR FEINSTEIN: State Water Champion

New Metropolitan Leader Builds Bridges

Long Beach Water Marks 110 Years

L.A. County Public Works Leads the Way

Water Replenishment District Taps into Groundwater



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Framework for the Future

Welcome to the fourth issue of the Southern California Water Coalition's partnership with the publishers of **California Water Long Beach and South Bay**. This special magazine focuses on the good work being done by water agencies and others throughout Long Beach and the South Bay area of Los Angeles County – from development of the Los Angeles County Water Plan to Long Beach's remarkable water use efficiency efforts to large-scale efforts to



Charley Wilson

increase stormwater capture and water recycling in southern Los Angeles County. I'm sure you'll agree that this work toward a water resilient future for Southern California is important, one that we often take for granted.

The stories in these pages from Los Angeles County Public Works, Long Beach Water Department and the Water Replenishment District of Southern

California highlight key projects that are working together to bring greater water resilience to our region. From expanding regional water supplies to making the most out of every drop of water have, these agencies are making investments to help us today and in the future cope with the impacts of climate change and our region's natural cycles of drought.

In preparing this issue, I have been amazed by the forward-thinking "all-of-the-above" approach taken by so many community and water leaders in Long Beach and the South Bay. They understand that there is no one size fits all solution to our water supply issues but that all must be considered together. Thanks to them, our region is on the forefront of important efforts to secure water supply resiliency from the impacts of earthquake, droughts, aging infrastructure and more. Their investments in water supply reliability ensure a bright future for generations to come.

I hope you enjoy this look at what's happening with our region's water supply today and continue to join us in our efforts to address California's water issues.

Feel free to send us feedback at info@socalwater.org.

Charley Wilson
Executive Director

The Southern California Water Coalition, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public education partnership is dedicated to informing Southern Californians about our water needs and our state's water resources.



"When you don't have enough water, you quickly see battle lines being drawn. Cities, environmentalists, businesses, homeowners, farmers – they all need their share."

Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator

Sen. Feinstein is California's Water Policy Champion

Longtime Lawmaker Discusses Industry Challenges and Successes

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

In her 28 years representing California, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein has developed a deep understanding of water policy and has been coined the "water referee" for her ability to negotiate with opposing sides.

"Senator Feinstein is a balanced, solutions-oriented legislator who understands the complexities and nuances of diverse interests, regions and needs in California's water balancing act," said Charley Wilson, Executive Director and CEO of the Southern California Water Committee.

Sen. Feinstein has championed settlements and legislation through several drought cycles and continues to push water issues to the forefront in Washington, D.C.

"When you don't have enough water, you quickly see battle lines being drawn. Cities, environmentalists, businesses, homeowners, farmers – they all need their share. I've come to understand just how complex water policy is in California and it has become clear that we have to do more to hold water in wet years to use in dry years," Feinstein said. "So, my effort toward reforming California water policy has been to bring all sides together to try to come up with a long-term solution that we can all live with."

Feinstein has earned the respect of California water leaders from both the largest agencies including Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and smaller districts serving many diverse regions.

"Senator Dianne Feinstein is one of the most accomplished women of our time," said Metropolitan Chairwoman Gloria Gray. "She has established a reputation as a bipartisan leader willing to work with both sides of the aisle to solve difficult problems, none more vexing than California water."

Coming together to address water challenges is the foundation of the One Water Movement, which has led to water management goals and strategies across the region. One Water encompasses all water sources from imported to stormwater to groundwater to recycled water as well as all users of water from municipalities to agriculture.

[See **SEN. FEINSTEIN** Page12]

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CALIFORNIA WATER | LONG BEACH / SOUTH BAY

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For comments or questions, email Sean Fitzgerald at sean@agndm.com.



You see wastewater. We see a resource.



Southern California's local water supplies are so limited that most of our water must be imported.

Since 1962, the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts have been a national leader in recycling water, a critical resource. We supplement local water supplies by converting wastewater (sewage) from Los Angeles County's homes and businesses into recycled water that essentially meets drinking water standards.

Last year, we recycled 34 billion gallons of water — enough to serve nearly a million people. Nonetheless, we want to provide more of this drought-proof water supply and help Southern California be more sustainable.



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SANITATION DISTRICTS**
Converting Waste Into Resources

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Website: www.lacsd.org



A One Water Future, Together

New Metropolitan General Manager Adel Hagekhalil Plans to Bring All Stakeholders to the Table

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer



"It's really about coming together, collaborating and thinking outside the box to find new chapters in the water playbook."

- Adel Hagekhalil
General Manager
Metropolitan Water District
of Southern California

As California faces a historic drought and unprecedented water supply conditions, a new leader has taken the helm of the largest drinking water provider in the state, and nation. His philosophy for managing through this drought and the more extreme conditions brought on by climate change is simple in language, but complex in practice: working together as one, across the state, across rural and urban areas, and across environmental, agricultural and business sectors.

"Metropolitan was formed as a collaborative of agencies in 1928 to build the Colorado River Aqueduct, with the approach that we are stronger when we work together," said Adel Hagekhalil, general manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. "That thinking is what built our resilience over the last 100 years and it will be even more critical as we plan for the next century."

Hagekhalil became Metropolitan's 14th general manager in the summer following the retirement of Jeffrey Kightlinger, who led the agency since 2006. A registered civil engineer and board-certified environmental engineer, Hagekhalil in 2018 was appointed to lead StreetsLA, the department that manages and maintains Los Angeles' vast network of streets and urban forests.

Prior to that, he served for nearly 10 years as assistant director of Los Angeles' Bureau of Sanitation, heading the city's wastewater collection system, stormwater and watershed protection program, water quality compliance, and facilities and advance planning. Hagekhalil helped develop the One Water LA 2040 Plan, a roadmap for connecting plans, ideas, and people for fiscally responsible water planning solutions.

Now, he is leading the nation's largest water wholesaler into the next era to ensure a reliable water future for the 19 million people across Southern California his agency serves.

"Mr. Hagekhalil is a highly respected leader who is helping Metropolitan meet the challenges climate change is bringing to all of our water resources, now and in the decades ahead," Metropolitan



New Metropolitan General Manager Adel Hagekhalil is working with all stakeholders to lessen Southern California's reliance on imported water from the State Water Project, shown at left and right. One major project is the Regional Recycled Water Program being developed in partnership with LA County Sanitation Districts. The demonstration facility is shown above. The full-scale program could produce up to 150 million gallons per day of purified water, which is the equivalent to the water needs of half a million homes. Metropolitan is working with its 26 member agencies, businesses and non-profits to create more regional sources of water, increase water storage and support conservation programs.



Chairwoman Gloria D. Gray said. "His commitment to innovation, sustainability and focus on partnerships in California and across the Colorado River Basin will be critical to our success."

A cooperative of 26 member agencies, Metropolitan provides more than half the water within its six-county, 5,200-square-mile Southern California service area. As the region's water planner, Metropolitan imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California and invests in local supplies such as recycling, storage and other water management programs to ensure Southern California has reliable, safe water. It has also been a critical force in increasing water conservation across the region, through rebate programs for water-efficient appliances, landscaping and devices; education programs; and other resources offered through its water conservation hub bewaterwise.com. Metropolitan has an annual operating/capital budget of \$1.8 billion, about 1,800 employees and more than 30 facilities throughout Southern California.

Going forward, Hagekhalil said he will work as one with all stakeholders, including its member agencies, businesses, environmental organizations, and communities to promote a resilient water supply for everyone. The pillars of his plan are the "three I's: innovation, integration and inclusion."

"It's really about coming together, collaborating and thinking outside the box to find new chapters in the water playbook," he said. "We need to bring everyone into the tent of water management to plan for our future."

That unified message advocates for innovation and investment to expand Southern California's local water resources through recycling, stormwater capture, and more surface and groundwater storage. Efforts by Metropolitan, its member agencies and communities have helped Southern California begin 2021 with 3.2 million acre-feet of water in stored reserves to better respond to the current dry conditions. The success is due to investments in a flexible and resilient water system, and to the conservation ethic of Southern Californians, who over the last 30 years reduced their per person water use by 40 percent.

However, Metropolitan in August declared a Water Supply Alert to call for its service area to voluntarily reduce water use to preserve as much water in storage as possible, if the drought continues into next year. It also supports Gov. Gavin Newsom's call for all Californians to voluntarily reduce water use by 15 percent.

Hagekhalil said the current drought should serve as a wake-up call to do more to prepare for the challenges ahead. For Metropolitan, that means creating a "fourth aqueduct."

"The virtual fourth aqueduct is a combination of many things from recycled water to groundwater storage to new conservation methods, such as addressing leaky pipes in disadvantaged communities," said Hagekhalil. "All these things have to come together in what I call the fourth aqueduct."

He said Metropolitan will also focus on promoting better access to conservation rebates in underserved communities.

As a National Association of Clean Water Agencies board member for more than a decade and a contributor to the Obama Administration's Homeland Security's report on infrastructure and resiliency, Hagekhalil is committed to advocating for state and federal funding.

"The message I'm sending to our representatives in Sacramento and Washington D.C. is that investments in our area is an investment in the future of California. It's an investment in resolving conflicts along the Colorado River and the Sacramento San-Joaquin Bay Delta," he said.

In August, more than 70 officials from cities, water agencies, business and labor organizations and environmental non-profits signed joined Metropolitan in a letter to the governor and state legislative leaders in Sacramento. The letter urges support for investments of more than \$1 billion in water-use efficiency programs, and local supply and groundwater storage projects.

"I believe as a water agency we need to make a splash. We can no longer be out of sight, out of mind," said Hagekhalil. "We need to let people know the issues and challenges, and how we're going to address them." ○



Long Beach is a great example to the state of how a community can transform beautifully with our water-wise lifestyles. We don't have to know the weather to know whether or not to save water. It's just what we do here.

Long Beach Water

A 110-Year History of Exceptional Service



“From the design and construction of new water wells, to the rehabilitation of several existing wells, our experienced staff are busy working on cost-effective ways to secure the future of water in the community.”

– Chris Garner
Long Beach Water Department
General Manager

Long Beach Water Department (LBWD) has proudly and consistently delivered quality water and wastewater collection services to its customers for more than 110 years. In addition to managing 2,400 miles of water and sewer pipelines, the department values its contributions to the community's exceptional quality of life and is proud to uphold a mutual commitment to sustainability, which keeps the Long Beach lifestyle strong.

Reliable, safe and tasty, Long Beach's water is provided by a team of industry experts who have the wellbeing of the community in mind. LBWD is governed by a five-member, independent Board of Water Commissioners who each bring their own unique and diverse perspectives to the agency's vision. They are all long-time residents of Long Beach, and together they guide the department with compassion and a commitment to serve the community they care for. The department's general manager, Chris Garner, has been leading the agency since 2015 and has made his mark on the City for more than 35 years. Starting with a profound commitment to health and quality of life, the department's leadership and staff are forward-thinking, utilize technical expertise, pursue smart infrastructure investments, and are dedicated to hard work on behalf of the customers.

INVESTING IN OUR WATER SUPPLY FUTURE

LBWD is an independent but integrated public utility that values innovation, collaboration and efficiency to safeguard the community's long-term water supply needs.

With both local and imported water in its supply portfolio, the department is proactively undertaking efforts today to maximize less expensive groundwater resources to increase reliability and reduce dependency on more expensive and more vulnerable imported water supplies. LBWD is also working to increase recycled water for groundwater augmentation and industrial uses.

“From the design and construction of new water wells, to the rehabilitation of several existing wells, our experienced staff are busy working on cost-effective ways to secure the





Despite a 40% increase in population, residents of the City of Long Beach use the same amount of water today as they did in the 1960s. Thanks to the water-wise lifestyles of residents, in addition to sound planning and improvements to local storage tanks and reservoirs, Long Beach Water Department is prepared for this year's dry conditions. Remember, every drop of water you save is a drop we don't need to take out of emergency storage!

future of water in the community," said Chris Garner, general manager of Long Beach Water Department. "In addition to improving local pumping capabilities to reduce reliance on imported water, we are also making ongoing improvements to our extensive water and sewer pipeline system, storage tanks, recycled water system, and treatment plant."

LBWD recognizes the needs of the community with long-range planning efforts so they can maintain high level of service and reliability in a cost-effective and financially responsible way.

WATER USE EFFICIENCY IS THE LONG BEACH WAY OF LIFE

With an average residential water use of fewer than 63 gallons per person per day, Long Beach is a leader in water use efficiency. We use the same amount of water now as we did in the 1960s – that's despite a 40 percent increase in our population.

"Southern California, as a whole, and Long Beach Water are prepared for this year's dry conditions thanks to sound planning and major investments by the region," said Frank Martinez, president of the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners. "However, our community still has to continue to be diligent about saving as much water as we can. Every drop of water saved is one drop of water we don't need to take out of emergency storage."

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE WATER

Excellence is the standard for all services: water, wastewater and customer engagement. Long Beach Water Department believes that how we interact with our community is as important as the quality of water and wastewater services we provide. The department is continuously working to develop innovative and equitable water use efficiency programs and outreach campaigns to help our residents and businesses save water.

"Each of the department's customers have different needs, so we design our programs using an equity lens and inclusive approach," said Gloria Cordero,

Long Beach's Director on the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Board. "We're always piloting programs that allow all of our customers to contribute to water savings, such as the Direct Install Gardens (DIG) program which provides a water-wise landscape conversion free of charge to residents with low-incomes living in historically underserved neighborhoods that have been impacted by environmental pollution. Community investment and capacity building are the core focuses of the program."

Another ongoing pilot project is the Direct Installation for Multi-family Efficiency (DIME) program that will retrofit about 1,000 units with water-efficient devices in their homes and produce yearly water savings equivalent to 30 Olympic size swimming pools.

The department's flagship water use-efficiency program is the wildly popular Lawn-To-Garden (L2G) program. Launched in 2010, the L2G program was created with the goal of making the landscapes of Long Beach water efficient and sustainable by providing multiple benefits for the environment including capturing stormwater, reducing runoff and developing habitat for birds and butterflies. To date, more than 3.6 million square feet of water-guzzling turf have been replaced with beautiful, water-wise landscapes.

During a time when a Long Beach water-wise lifestyle is more important than ever, the department is providing customers with new technologies, such as newly installed smart water meters, to help them monitor their water consumption to reduce their monthly water bills.

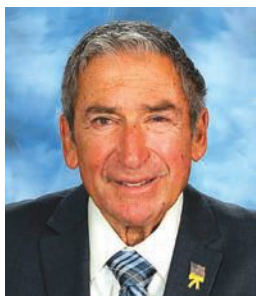
On the business side, the Certified Blue Restaurant program has already rewarded over 70 local restaurants for installing water-saving devices by featuring them on social media and promoting them through annual pub crawl style events.

The department welcomes partnerships and collaborations with our community members to help us prepare for climate change impacts today and in the future. We are all in this together. ○

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS



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MWD Director for Long Beach



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www.lbwater.org

WRD's Albert Robles Center for Water Recycling and Environmental Learning is located in Pico Rivera. It is a 5.2-acre facility with an award-winning sustainable design.



Making Our Groundwater Drought-Proof *The Water Replenishment District Story*

The Water Replenishment District is the largest groundwater agency in California, serving four million people. The District's boundaries cover 420-square-miles in southern Los Angeles County, where nearly half of the drinking water comes from groundwater.

WRD was established in 1959 by a vote of the people to halt seawater intrusion and replenish critically depleted groundwater aquifers caused by over-pumping in the West Coast Basin and Central Basin. WRD nursed the groundwater aquifers back to health by using imported water to refill these basins. In fact, WRD's water supply for replenishment was 100% imported when the agency was in its infancy.

Today, WRD's water supply for groundwater replenishment is locally sustainable and does not require imported water. WRD achieved this by using a mixture of tertiary treated wastewater and advanced treated recycled water.

WRD and its partner agencies accomplished this through the Water Independence Now (WIN) program - a collection of programs that maximized local stormwater capture and water recycling projects. In the past 17 years, WRD completed major water recycling projects:

- Construction of the Torrance Brackish Water Desalter in 2 phases, which now treats up to 5 million gallons per day of brackish groundwater and provides sustainable drinking water for the City of Torrance
- Construction of the Leo J. Vander Lans facility, which treats up to 8 million gallons of water per day for injection into the Alamitos Seawater Barrier in Long Beach
- Construction of the Albert Robles Center (ARC), which produces 14.8 million gallons of water per day for percolation in the San Gabriel Spreading Grounds



- Partnering with the West Basin Municipal Water District and the City of Los Angeles to build and expand Advanced Water Treatment Plants to provide recycled water for seawater barriers — these barriers protect our groundwater basin from seawater intrusion and provide enhanced groundwater replenishment

WRD's Albert Robles Center for Water Recycling and Environmental Learning is more than a water treatment center. It features a learning center with over 40 fully digital and bilingual learning exhibits. The goal of the learning center is to inspire the next generation of water industry leaders and encourage the community to conserve water. At the center, visitors have opportunities to learn about seawater intrusion, ride an "aquivator" to see the inner workings of groundwater aquifers and see how groundwater testing wells are installed.



Left, the Goldsworthy Desalter in Torrance treats salty brackish groundwater. Extracted groundwater is forced through reverse osmosis membranes to remove salts in the water. Water is then disinfected to create fresh, potable water. Above, the Leo J. Vander Lans facility, located in Long Beach, treats recycled water used for injection wells at the Los Alamitos Barrier to prevent seawater intrusion.

While WRD’s ARC exhibits teach visitors about water conservation, WRD is working with regional partners to conserve and reuse every drop possible. Specifically, the District is building on the success of WIN by raising the stakes and setting a higher goal – maximizing the use of empty groundwater storage space to increase our entire region’s sustainability and drought resiliency. This is the goal of WRD’s Water Independence Now for All (WIN 4 All) program. If WIN 4 All is successful, WRD’s entire service area will have access to a locally sustainable water supply by 2040.

WRD plans to accomplish this by:

- Constructing another Regional Brackish Water Reclamation Project in Torrance, which will clean up to 20,000 acre-feet per year of salty brackish water for delivery to local South Bay homes and businesses
- Partnering with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, and Metropolitan Water District to reclaim billions of gallons of water that is currently treated and sent to the ocean
- Storing water in aquifers to build a reserve of drinking water for the future. Currently, there is nearly enough empty space to offset an entire year’s water supply for our service area

Part of making use out of every drop of water means protecting existing groundwater. WRD manages robust water treatment programs to support water providers with system updates and cleanup of contamination. WRD’s Safe Drinking Water Program offers support to water providers

seeking to acquire funding for water treatment. The Disadvantaged Communities Program (DAC) works with water providers in low-income communities to submit competitive applications for grants to remediate wells affected by various contaminants. WRD has secured millions of dollars in grant funds to remediate groundwater ensuring that residents have access to safe and clean drinking water for decades to come.

Recently, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have become an emerging concern for groundwater managers. PFAS are man-made compounds that have been used for several decades all over the world in industrial manufacturing, firefighting foams, and several consumer products including fast-food wrappers, pizza boxes, non-stick cookware, and some clothing. Though the use of these chemicals has been phased out in the United States, it continues to be present in our environment and some has been detected in WRD’s groundwater basins. In response, the WRD Board of Directors approved a PFAS remediation program and invested \$34 million for treating impacted wells. WRD’s approach to water remediation is to act quickly and treat wells affected by contaminants before it spreads. This ensures an uninterrupted supply of high-quality groundwater.

With 95% of the Western United States experiencing drought, it is abundantly clear that advancements in water recycling and maximizing storage space in our groundwater aquifers are key to ensuring a safe and secure water supply for our state. The Water Replenishment District has achieved these goals for the district and is well on its way to bringing water security to the entire region. ○

1. This interactive video game tests students’ ability to manage groundwater basins with real-life simulations, such as droughts and water contamination.
2. Students may ride the “aquivator” to learn about the importance of groundwater management.
3. Projectors display educational content onto exhibit panels. Information can be made available in English or Spanish.





Aerial View of San Gabriel Dam and Reservoir

Did You Know? LA County Public Works is One of the Largest Water Resources Management Agencies in the Nation

Los Angeles County Public Works is a proven leader in long-term strategic planning for 21st century infrastructure and programs. Public Works is comprised of multiple special districts serving the communities of LA County and inspiring others throughout the region and beyond to anticipate and address tomorrow's complexities through community engagement, broad collaboration, robust public safety practices, and modern technologies. One of the largest special districts within the Public Works umbrella is the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD).

Resiliency is key to LA County communities' survival, and the LACFCD is leading the charge to invest in long-term water infrastructure solutions instead of relying on consumers to conserve water when it's too late. Established in 1915 after a regional flood took a heavy toll on lives and property, the District's infrastructure plays a major role not only in flood control, but also in augmenting and protecting local aquifers with storm, recycled, and imported water to maximize resiliency of regional drinking water supplies and mitigate periods of drought.

The LACFCD encompasses more than 2,700 square miles and approximately 2.1 million land parcels within six major watersheds. Its water conservation infrastructure consists of: Fourteen major dams to capture then release storm runoff to maximize groundwater recharge downstream; twenty-seven spreading grounds to divert flow from the

channels into large basins or soft-bottom sections of the San Gabriel River to recharge groundwater and bank local drinking water supplies; and three seawater barriers to prevent the intrusion of seawater into freshwater aquifers.

LACFCD has been providing safe and effective operations and maintenance of critical public infrastructure for over 100 years. Each year, the LACFCD recharges groundwater supplies with an average of 200,000 acre feet of stormwater, 65,000 acre feet of imported water, and 45,000 acre feet of recycled water – equating to approximately 101 billion gallons annually, or enough for more than 2.5 million people each year.



Rubber Dam



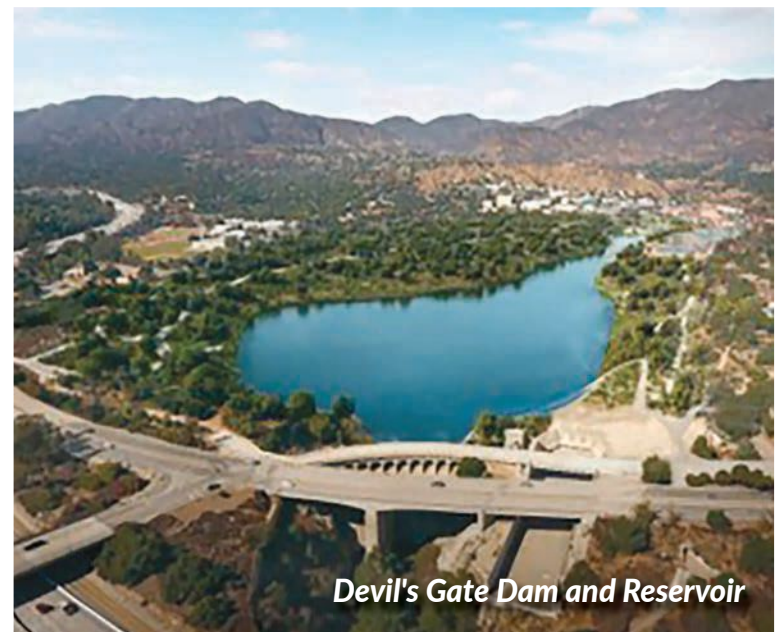
Aerial View of Morris Dam

LACFCD is a national leader in green infrastructure, innovative collaboration, and equity in infrastructure. The LACFCD delivers award-winning programs and projects, including the new Los Angeles River Master Plan (<https://www.larivermasterplan.org/>), a comprehensive and continuous 51-mile plan that recognizes the river as a public resource. The District also leads Greater LA Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) efforts that have brought state resources to the region (over \$144M for 86 projects to date, with over \$210M in other leveraged funds) and fostered a collaborative framework for the 200-plus water agencies and other stakeholders across the region. Finally, the one-of-a-kind Safe Clean Water Program (www.safecleanwaterla.org) ensures transparent and inclusive multi-benefit investments that improve water quality, improve water supply, and enhance communities and public health. In just its first two years, the regional program has funded 78 new infrastructure projects, 12 watershed coordinators, 9 scientific studies, and 35 feasibility studies advancing the goals of the program, including prioritization of Nature Based Solutions and benefits to Disadvantaged Communities. The Program also includes educational programs for the public, schools, and workforce, and is successfully fostering a project planning paradigm shift throughout the region and the industry at large.

Additionally, the development of the LA County Water Plan is advancing the Infrastructure LA initiative (<https://infrastructurela.org/>) and focuses on achieving enhanced infrastructure, livable communities, healthy watersheds, and resource optimization. It builds upon the County's recent Sustainability Plan and is being developed with all interested and willing stakeholders. To learn more about the County's Water Plan and participate in future stakeholder workshops to help develop the plan, visit <https://lacountywaterplan.com>. If unable to access the referenced internet sites, please don't hesitate to call LACFCD at 626-458-6301 and ask to be directed to the proper contact for the program of interest. ○



Water Release at San Gabriel Dam



Devil's Gate Dam and Reservoir



*Pacoima Spreading Grounds
(actively recharging groundwater supplies)*



*Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds
(actively recharging groundwater supplies)*



"There is a broad consensus that droughts will grow more severe, and while we may see nearly the same amount of water, it will come in fewer, larger storms. That means it's absolutely critical that we do a better job of storing water during wet years for use in dry years," the Senator said. "Surface and groundwater storage are a key part of the investments we need to make. Larger-scale water recycling projects, like what Los Angeles is proposing, are another key part of the solution."



Dianne Feinstein

The Regional Recycled Water Program, now in the environmental planning phase, is a significant collaboration between Metropolitan and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts to develop the largest recycled water project in the nation.

"Dianne Feinstein is one of the very few in Washington D.C that have taken an interest and developed an understanding in water," said Sanitation Districts' Chief Engineer and General Manager Robert Ferrante. "Her leadership as the senior Senator from California has been invaluable in helping us diversify our water portfolio and invest in our future."

In addition to her support for new technologies to treat, store and recycle water, Feinstein recognizes the need for new water infrastructure and conservation strategies.

"California's statewide infrastructure was primarily built in the 1960s for a population of 19 million, which leaves us far short of what is needed for our current population of 40 million. Climate change makes the problem significantly worse," Feinstein said. "Our current debates are over who gets how much water. We need to change that to an aggressive "all-of-the-above" strategy for drought resilience. This will include major conservation initiatives and environmental initiatives. We also need to return to an infrastructure construction era like the 1960s, with a focus on ensuring that our investments improve drought resilience for cities, farms and the environment."

Feinstein continues to advocate for the Canal Capacity Conveyance Restoration Act would authorize \$633 million, one-third of the cost to restore the conveyance capacity of San Joaquin Valley canals that benefit Southern California and the valley agriculture. The bill would restore major canals to their original capacity that has been reduced by 15 to 60 percent by subsidence. The bill will also restore a salmon run and help farmers comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, which requires sustainable groundwater pumping by the early 2040s.

Feinstein succeeded in securing \$200 million for drought relief and is advocating for another \$250 million for drought in the broader government funding bill. That continuing resolution also includes \$205 million for some key water storage projects in the state, \$21 million for nine water recycling projects and \$12 million for four desalination projects, all in California.

"Senator Feinstein has been a valuable and trusted champion for California water issues throughout her career in Washington," said Director of Los Angeles County Public Works Mark Pestrella. "Her trusted voice has helped advance significant water infrastructure investments and resulted in a more sustainable water supply future for all Californians."

Finally, Feinstein is advocating for additional federal funding to test and treat contaminated water to ensure a safe drinking water supply today and into the future.



"I have long championed funding for the cleanup of contaminants in our drinking water supply, including tens of millions of dollars for cleaning up perchlorate in the San Gabriel Basin," said Feinstein.

That cleanup has been coordinated by the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority for the past 28 years and 96 tons of contaminants have been removed.

"Senator Feinstein's support is vital as we continue to identify new sources of contamination in the Basin and for the long-term operation of our 32 treatment plants," said WQA Board Chairwoman Valerie Munoz. "We appreciate her dedication to our mission and our region."

"Senator Feinstein has been a valuable and trusted champion for California water issues ... Her trusted voice has helped advance significant water infrastructure investments and resulted in a more sustainable water supply future for all Californians."

Mark Pestrella
Director
Los Angeles County
Public Works

Senator Feinstein also plans to introduce comprehensive legislation with \$100 million in drinking water assistance for disadvantaged communities, and to address water contamination by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a manufactured chemical with adverse health effects.

"In her 28 years in the US Senate, Senator Feinstein developed into the elder statesman, go-to legislator when we needed to get something done," said David Pedersen, General Manager of Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, which serves western L.A. County.

The longtime Senator has seen California weather drought before and trusts in the water leaders and users of the state to continue along a path of resiliency.

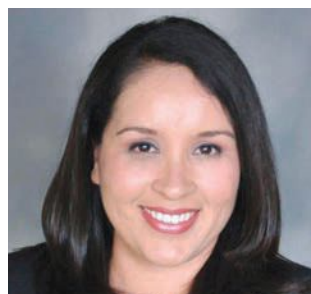
"The eye-opening projections about climate change's effect on western drought should not cause despair but should galvanize us to action," said Feinstein. "We can prepare for the coming droughts through aggressive water conservation and invest in water storage and conveyance to make sure we are using every raindrop and snowflake we get." ○



Gloria Gray
Chairwoman
Metropolitan Water District



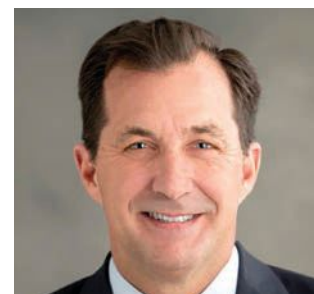
Robert Ferrante
Chief Engineer/General Manager
L.A. County Sanitation Districts



Valerie Muñoz
Chairwoman
Water Quality Authority



David Pedersen, P.E.
General Manager, Las Virgenes
Municipal Water District



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Director, Los Angeles County
Public Works



Charley Wilson
Executive Director, Southern
California Water Coalition



Central Basin
Municipal Water District

After Years of Discourse, Internal Strife and Fiscal Instability, Central Basin Municipal Water District

Ends Fiscal Year on Positive Note in a Sweeping Turnaround

District has achieved fiscal stability, reduced fixed costs for customers, reduced operating expenses, improved customer satisfaction, and lowered imported water rates by 14%

Central Basin Municipal Water District (CBMWD) ended its fiscal year on a positive note with a position of strong fiscal stability, a reorganization that has yielded a significant reduction (\$1.8 million) in operating expenses and vastly improved customer satisfaction. All point to a significant achievement given the District's previous operational and fiscal challenges. Additionally, the District's Board of Directors has coalesced around their vision of an improved and efficient District and are working together to support the new direction of the District.

This positive development for Central Basin did not happen overnight but began with the arrival of the District's new general manager. Selected by the Board of Directors, Alex Rojas came to Central Basin with a reputation as a turnaround specialist who managed to use his prior experience to promote and secure the District's fiscal stability marked by the highest level of operating and cash reserves since 2016, \$22 million to be exact.



Dr. Alejandro Rojas
General Manager
Central Basin MWD

Upon arriving at Central Basin, Rojas immediately implemented a district reorganization resulting in nearly a \$1.8 million reduction in operating expenses by eliminating top heavy and unnecessary positions. Additionally, the District reduced the fixed costs for customers by approximately \$300,000 per year and generated \$1.5 million in grants for recycled water system expansion which will be used to improve local water supply reliability specifically to local disadvantaged communities.

Despite a projected statewide drought, the CBMWD Board of Directors took bold action during its monthly Board meeting on May 24 and approved a 14% reduction in imported water rates for customers in its service area while other districts are raising their rates. Many California counties are currently under a severe drought forecast precipitated by low water levels and little snow in the Sierras. This has been the second dry year in a row, and 2021 might bring some additional changes.

"As a Central Basin customer, we are incredibly pleased the District is working with all its customers to ensure its service areas have a reliable and diverse source of high-quality water at affordable rates, particularly at a time when local governments have been impacted by the pandemic," said John Oskoui, Assistant City Manager, City of Downey. "The Board's actions reflect a new direction for Central Basin which has started to form collaborative partnerships with its customers and take the necessary steps to ensure the District's long-term fiscal stability." ○

"As a Central Basin customer, we are incredibly pleased the District is working with all its customers to ensure its service areas have a reliable and diverse source of high-quality water at affordable rates, particularly at a time when local governments have been impacted by the pandemic."

- John Oskoui
Assistant City Manager,
City of Downey





Located in Carson, this demonstration facility purifies 500,000 gallons of treated wastewater per day by using membrane bioreactors, reverse osmosis and ultraviolet light to remove bacteria, minerals and other chemicals. A full-scale facility would make the region less dependent on imported water. *Photos courtesy of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California*

Regional Recycled Water Program Advances

L.A. County Sanitation Districts and Metropolitan Water District Working Together

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

“This is a significant program that could contribute to water resiliency for all of Southern California.”

Robert Ferrante
Chief Engineer and
General Manager
Sanitation Districts

Environmental review work began this year on what could become the largest recycled water program in the nation. The Regional Recycled Water Program would provide purified water for groundwater replenishment and other uses – enough for 1.5 million people. This program is the result of a partnership between the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts.

“This is a significant program that could contribute to water resiliency for all of Southern California,” said Sanitation Districts’ Chief Engineer and General Manager Robert Ferrante. “Climate change and a large earthquake threaten our imported water supply, so advancing this program is an important step in meeting the region’s water needs.”

In Fall 2019, the two agencies opened a \$17-million demonstration facility, the Advanced Purification Center, at the Sanitation Districts’ Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in Carson. The JWPCP cleans wastewater generated by homes and businesses and currently discharges cleaned water to the





ocean. The demonstration facility purifies 500,000 gallons per day of the JWPCP's cleaned water using an innovative three-step process. First, membrane bioreactors remove ammonia along with other tiny particles. Next, molecules like salts are removed through reverse osmosis, which is the technology used for ocean water desalination. Finally, ultraviolet light and a powerful oxidant destroy any remaining pathogens and trace chemical compounds.



Robert Ferrante

The Regional Recycled Water Program is currently in the planning phase, which includes preparing documents to assess environmental impacts, engineering and technical studies, and public outreach. This phase will take approximately three years to complete. If the environmental document and overall project are approved, design and construction would follow for approximately eight years.

The full-scale program could produce up to 150 million gallons per day of purified water, which is equivalent to the water needs of half a million homes. The program is estimated to cost \$3.4 billion to build and \$129 million annually to operate, resulting in a water cost of about \$1,800 per acre-foot. (An acre-foot of water is enough for three California households.) Purified water would be delivered through up to 60 miles of new pipelines to potentially four groundwater basins in Los Angeles and Orange counties, industrial facilities and possibly two MWD treatment plants. These groundwater basins supply water to 7.2 million people.



The new demonstration facility, above, uses a three-step process to purify treated wastewater into purified water. Data from this plant will be used to meet regulatory requirements for a full-scale facility that could eventually provide water to half a million homes. At top, the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts Joint Water Pollution Control Plant in Carson.

“The [Regional Recycled Water Program] is a major investment to reduce Southern California’s reliance on imported water supplies. By tapping an unused source of [water], we’re continuing to diversify the region’s water sources to ensure we always have reliable water,” Metropolitan Chief Operating Officer Deven Upadhyay said. ○



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

For more information, video tours, or to set up a group or classroom virtual tour of the demonstration plant, visit www.mwdh2o.com/rrwp.



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