

LA COUNTY
WATER PLAN



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
WATER PLAN

2023 Edition | Water Supply Resilience

equity
sustainability
opportunity
local
water
resources
collaboration
relationships
regional
resilience



LA COUNTY WATER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR ROUTE TO RESILIENCE, TOGETHER

Climate change is establishing a “new normal” of more frequent and intense droughts, as well as less frequent and more torrential rains. Recognizing a new climate reality and the need to be thoughtful stewards of future water supplies, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors envisioned the development of a countywide water plan focused on collaborative management of Los Angeles County’s water resources. Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) developed this Los Angeles County Water Plan (CWP), together with water resources organizations, and an array of diverse stakeholders, to secure Los Angeles County’s water future and achieve our collective vision of equitable and sustainable water resources for everyone. The CWP builds upon the 2019 OurCounty Sustainability Plan, establishing the path to realizing our vision that is rooted in cross-sector collaboration and coalition building.

VISION

The CWP articulates a shared, inclusive, regional path forward to sustainably and equitably achieve safe, clean, and reliable water resources for Los Angeles County.

SHARED OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATER RESILIENCE

THE CWP FOCUSES ON ACHIEVING REGIONAL WATER RESILIENCE THROUGH COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES. Over 200 agencies in Los Angeles County manage a complex network of water systems to meet the needs of our communities and environment. To achieve sustainability, resilience, and equity, cross-sector teamwork and a holistic approach to best leverage natural systems and infrastructure are essential. This plan is a living document. The targets, strategies, and actions are a starting point in this effort.

The CWP is not intended to address every water-related issue in Los Angeles County. Instead, it builds upon and complements the many existing local and regional water planning efforts by focusing on four key focal areas where new or additional regional collaboration can add value. These four key focal areas were established through a gaps analysis, which included a review of local and regional planning documents, along with initial stakeholder discussions encompassing a variety of perspectives. For each of the four key focal areas, the CWP describes shared desired outcomes, identified by Public Works through discussions with numerous groups and individuals. During our gaps analysis, Public Works evaluated disparities in water resilience throughout the County and specifically selected a focal area to address a pressing need. The CWP provides an approach for achieving these desired outcomes through collaboration and a platform for measuring progress.

CWP Four Key Focal Areas



REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY

Improving regional water supply reliability by better leveraging our collective local and imported water resources and infrastructure.



GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY

Realizing our shared groundwater management opportunities by sharing expertise and resources to overcome challenges.



SMALL, AT-RISK SYSTEM RESILIENCE AND DRINKING WATER EQUITY

Ensuring a consistently high standard of water service for everyone in Los Angeles County by providing regional support for small systems, with focused attention to under-resourced communities.



WATERSHED SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT

Mitigating the impacts of wildfire on our water supplies through coordinated efforts between land and water managers.

REGIONAL STRATEGIES, REGIONAL BENEFITS

The CWP is organized around a framework of targets and strategies, which are supported by specific actions. Targets measure collective progress toward the shared desired outcomes for the key focal areas of the CWP. These targets are intended to help Los Angeles County achieve regional water resilience by 2045. See Chapter 2 for more on targets. Public Works will publish an interactive dashboard to track progress toward these targets. Strategies provide the overarching approaches to achieving the targets. Actions support the strategies and include specific steps to drive results, along with timing, responsible agencies, and potential participants.

Strategies for a Resilient Water Future



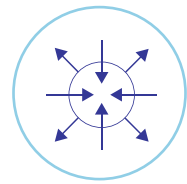
STRATEGY 1

Achieving the most efficient water use possible countywide



STRATEGY 2

Collaborating on consistent drought preparedness and response messaging



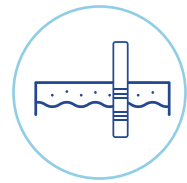
STRATEGY 3

Coupling local supply development with regional conveyance



STRATEGY 4

Managing salt and concentrate regionally



STRATEGY 5

Leveraging regional groundwater storage potential



STRATEGY 6

Collaborating on water quality needs and treatment technologies



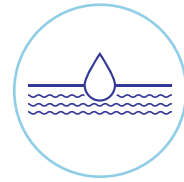
STRATEGY 7

Enhancing cost-effectiveness of pumping and treating impaired groundwater



STRATEGY 8

Protecting coastal groundwater basins from seawater intrusion



STRATEGY 9

Facilitating regional groundwater recharge understanding and initiatives



STRATEGY 10

Facilitating natural infiltration of precipitation



STRATEGY 11

Providing regional support for small, at-risk water systems



STRATEGY 12

Mitigating wildfire effects on water supply and quality



STRATEGY 13

Managing invasive species in riparian areas



STRATEGY 14

Facilitating sediment management and debris removal from flood control facilities

VALUES GUIDING FUTURE ACTION

At the onset of CWP development, Public Works proactively reached out to a diverse group of stakeholders to understand what matters to them. We identified several broad, overarching values for the CWP through these conversations. Some of these values provided core tenets to our overall process for preparing the CWP. Others guided us in establishing targets, strategies, and actions. Other values, while not directly addressed through the actions in the CWP, will continue to inform how water resource management is approached to achieve sustainable and equitable outcomes. Each of these values will guide future iterations of the plan, as well as steps taken throughout CWP implementation.

These values are aligned with LA County's Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative, which aims to guide the County by offering training and capacity building; technical assistance and planning; policy analysis and development; data collection; analysis and reporting; community, tribal, and other stakeholder engagement; and equity-infused resourcing and programming to help reach its goals.

CWP VALUES

- Strive for equitable benefits and impacts of water resource management decisions
- Ensure inclusive, diverse, multigenerational, and sustained tribal and community engagement
- Use data to inform policies, priorities, and practices
- Encourage multi-benefit projects and green infrastructure
- Promote capacity building of a local, skilled workforce
- Incorporate tribal knowledge into water management
- Integrate the knowledge and experiences of local communities in water planning
- Ensure CWP is actionable and adaptable
- Address climate resiliency
- Establish clear communications (outline priorities, listen, incorporate feedback, maintain dialogue)
- Implement vegetated/nature-based solutions



The CWP outlines a path to achieve a resilient water future for all Los Angeles County residents. Everyone has a role in successfully realizing the CWP. By working across County departments and with other partners, actively engaging Tribes and other stakeholders, seeking funding to support CWP implementation, and tracking and reporting on progress, we are committed to facilitating the ongoing collaboration that is core to making the CWP successful.

CENTRAL THEMES FOR A PATH AHEAD

To lead the way on regional initiatives, the CWP was developed with resilience, equity, sustainability, and engagement as central themes. These themes will guide CWP implementation and its future iterations to create reliable water resources for all communities in Los Angeles County.

RESILIENCE

Water resilience refers to the capacity of communities and the environment to adapt to changes in the availability of water resources resulting from extreme and shifting weather patterns, as well as other stressors.

EQUITY

Water equity entails ensuring that all people and communities can depend on water management institutions and infrastructure to provide equal access to clean, safe, high-quality, and affordable water.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable water management involves using water resources in a manner that fulfills current ecological, social, and economic needs without compromising the ability to meet those needs in the future.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement means actively reaching out to and collaborating with a diverse and representative range of stakeholders to develop and implement water management policies and programs.

A FORWARD-LOOKING LIVING DOCUMENT

THE CWP IS A LIVING DOCUMENT. This inaugural 2023 Edition of the CWP marks the first iteration for this regional planning effort and focuses on water supply resilience. As a living document, future iterations of the CWP are intended to evolve and adapt to meet Los Angeles County's changing water resources needs.

WHAT IS IT? The CWP is a forward-looking strategic plan that crafts a vision for the region's water resources management. The CWP articulates strategies to align efforts both small and large in order to launch Los Angeles County on a successful path towards water supply resilience.

WHO IS IT FOR? Water knows no city or county boundaries. The CWP is a plan for the County region as a whole, not a single locality or governing body. The CWP was developed to serve – collaboratively with local agencies and stakeholders – the people and communities of Los Angeles County.

THE CWP FILLS CURRENT GAPS TO ENHANCE THE REGION'S WATER RESILIENCE. Recognizing that there are so many ambitious efforts already underway in Los Angeles County, the CWP takes a bird's-eye view on what else can be done to optimize, leverage, and align programs and processes. While the CWP does not attempt to reinvent the wheel or address every water-related issue, it complements existing efforts and fills in the gaps for matters not currently being addressed at a regional level. The CWP does not address activities best managed at the Federal, State, or local levels, nor does it recommend specific projects subject to environmental analysis or duplicate other ongoing efforts. As a strategic plan, the CWP does not supersede land use plans that have been adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

LA COUNTY
WATER PLAN



sustainability
 opportunity
 water
 resources
 collaboration
 relationships
 regional
 resilience

LA COUNTY WATER PLAN
LACountyWaterPlan.org

Prepared by LA County Public Works with support from Woodard & Curran | December 2023

