



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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METROPOLITAN BOARD ADOPTS UPDATED, LONG-TERM REGIONAL WATER PLAN THAT BUILDS ON ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACH
Water Tomorrow plan looks to stabilize imported supplies, meet future demands through conservation, new local supplies, water transfers/exchanges

Southern California's long-term water resource plan that outlines ways to maintain supply reliability for the next 25 years was updated today by Metropolitan Water District's Board of Directors in the midst of a record statewide drought and increased volatility in the available supplies for the region.

Key points of [Water Tomorrow](#), Metropolitan's updated 2015 Integrated Resources Plan, include identifying resources for future investment to protect the region from potential water shortages. The plan also emphasizes lowering demands through conservation and other actions as well as the need for developing new supplies through more local projects like water recycling.

"The updated plan offers an evolving roadmap for maintaining regional water supply reliability through 2040," said Metropolitan board Chairman Randy Record. "It provides the vision for Metropolitan's strategy to ensure future supply reliability by adaptively managing through change."

Metropolitan General Manager Jeffrey Kightlinger said action and additional investment are essential to ensure water reliability for the Southland's future.

"One of the major findings of the 2015 plan update is that, without further regional investment, supply reliability could significantly degrade to the point where the Southland could face mandatory cutbacks in eight of every 10 years by 2040," he said.

The updated plan builds on the strong foundation of diversification and adaptation fostered in Metropolitan's inaugural IRP in 1996 and through subsequent updates in 2004 and 2010, Kightlinger added.

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“The key to managing risk and future uncertainty is through an adaptive management strategy that stabilizes and maintains the region’s imported supplies through the State Water Project and Colorado River Aqueduct, builds on our successful conservation ethic, and sustains and develops new local supplies,” Kightlinger said.

“We also need to pursue water transfers and exchanges, increase storage to manage drought, and look at other supply actions,” he said.

Today’s decision follows nearly a year of comprehensive technical analysis of regional supply reliability through 2040, while also identifying reliability targets for conservation and local supplies.

Along the Colorado River, the success of Metropolitan’s partnerships and land management programs, including the fallowing program in the Palo Verde Valley which makes conserved water available to urban areas, points to the potential of new collaborations to maximize river supplies, particularly during dry years.

The plan’s goal for State Water Project supplies is a wide-ranging strategy that would effectively manage water flow and export regulations in the near term and achieve a long-term solution to the ecosystem and water supply reliability issues in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Completion of California WaterFix would create the infrastructure needed to move additional supplies in wet years.

While Metropolitan and its 26 member public agencies focus on California’s goal to lower residential per-capita water use 20 percent by the year 2020, the Water Tomorrow plan emphasizes increased outdoor water-use efficiency to achieve greater savings, largely through the region’s compliance with the state’s Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

Following today’s adoption of the 2015 update, Kightlinger said there are remaining policy discussions that will be critical to guiding the development and maintenance of local supplies and conservation.

“Over time, we will begin policy discussions that will be led by the board and our member public agencies to address a variety of questions, including how to meet regional reliability targets, what constitutes local and regional responsibilities and how to finance regional projects,” Kightlinger said.

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving nearly 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.