



October 29, 2020

Metropolitan Water District Main Headquarters  
P. O. Box 54153  
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153

**RE: SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL RECYCLED WATER PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING PHASE**

Honorable Chairwoman Gray and Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District (“MWD”),

We, the undersigned, represent diverse advocates across Southern California, with shared values for an equitable water future: the human right to clean, safe, and affordable water (especially for low-income communities), vital waterways and coastlines, resilient water infrastructure, good jobs performed by a skilled and trained workforce, community engagement, and the health of all people.

**We strongly support MWD Board approval of the next steps for the Regional Recycled Water Program (“RRWP” or “project”),** including environmental planning, taking swift and responsible action to ensure Southern California has a reliable and climate-resilient water supply. With the potential to produce 150 million gallons of clean and safe drinking water each day, over 1.7 million Californians could have their water needs met each year with this project alone. This project would also create thousands of jobs while reducing ocean impacts from discharged water.

Now is the time for the Board to take bold action and move forward on recycled water. In this new era of climate change, we are already experiencing increased risks to our current water system, including droughts, flooding, extreme heat, more intense wildfire seasons, and Colorado River supply-demand imbalance, as well as the ever-present threat of earthquakes. The RRWP can contribute to long-term affordability and create a stable, local source of water and significant economic opportunities at a time of uncertainty. The project will establish MWD as a national leader in water recycling and create a regional innovation hub. The Board should advance the next phase of the RRWP **now** to continue progress towards water resilience, while incorporating the project into the organization's long-term water reliability goals and Integrated Resources Plan (IRP).

MWD is at an important juncture for our region's water future, with pending decisions regarding a new General Manager, the development of the IRP, as well as water infrastructure investments such as the RRWP. We hope MWD's General Manager search and IRP process will prioritize water equity, fair infrastructure investments, good jobs performed by a skilled and trained workforce, community voice, and public and environmental health. The people of Southern California look to this Board's leadership for safe, reliable, and accessible water.

These decisions will help MWD realize its vision to provide "adequate and reliable supplies of high-quality water to meet present and future needs in an environmentally and economically responsible way." We look forward to working with you on these crucial matters.

Sincerely,

Lauren Ahkiam, Water Campaign Director  
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

Corinne Bell, Program Attorney, Water  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

Shona Calzada Ganguly, External Affairs Advisor, California External Affairs  
The Nature Conservancy

Donald Cohen, Executive Director  
In The Public Interest

Belinda Faustinos, Coalition Coordinator  
OurWaterLA Coalition

Belinda Faustinos, Executive Director  
Nature for All

Kyra Greene, Executive Director  
Center on Policy Initiatives (CPI)

Nancy Halpern Ibrahim, Executive Director  
Esperanza Community Housing Corporation

Azucena 'Susy' Hernandez, Co-Director of Community Transformation  
Promesa Boyle Heights

Bill Hickman, Southern California Regional Manager  
Surfrider Foundation

Lauren Jacobs, Executive Director  
Partnership for Working Families

Sheheryar Kaoosji, Executive Director  
Warehouse Worker Resource Center

Maricela Morales, Executive Director  
Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)

Jonathan Nelson, Policy Director  
Community Water Center

Veronica Padilla-Campos, Executive Director  
Pacoima Beautiful

Jonathan Parfrey, Executive Director  
Climate Resolve

Kurt Petersen, Ada F. Briceño, and Susan Minato, Co-Presidents  
UNITE HERE! Local 11

Christine Petit, Executive Director  
Long Beach Forward

Bill Przylucki, Executive Director  
People Organized for Westside Renewal (POWER)

Bruce Reznik, Executive Director  
Los Angeles Waterkeeper

Cynthia Strathmann, PhD, Executive Director  
Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE)

David Weeshoff, Conservation Chair  
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Elva Yañez, Director of Health Equity  
Prevention Institute

Tabatha Yelos, President  
Ground Game LA