

MOTION

Climate change is one of the most significant issues facing Los Angeles. Everyday we see the impacts of climate change on the availability of natural resources, including, most significantly, potable water.

Currently, 90% of the City of Los Angeles' water comes from out-of-basin sources, including the Los Angeles Aqueduct, and State Water Project and Colorado River deliveries through Metropolitan Water District. All three of these water sources have experienced extreme swings in reliability, from severe drought conditions to overwhelming atmospheric rivers that test the limit of aging infrastructure. The importation of water supplies have had direct, negative impacts on the natural environment and populations near the sources of this water, including in Mono County, Inyo County, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and the Colorado River Basin.

Given that the Southern California region is vulnerable to earthquakes and all three of the major water import systems cross the San Andreas and many other seismic faults, our water supplies are at risk of failing when the next large earthquake or other major disruption occurs. This alone is one of many motivations to expand our local water supply efforts. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) has made progress, but more investment is needed to diversify its water supply sources and to ensure clean, reliable sources into the future.

In October 2014, then Mayor Garcetti issued an Executive Directive calling for a reduction in purchased imported potable water by 50% by 2024 and "the creation of an integrated water strategy that increases local water supplies and improves water security in the context of climate change and seismic vulnerability." Additionally, L.A.'s Green New Deal set targets of LA achieving 70% local water supply, recycling 100% of all wastewater for beneficial reuse, and reducing potable water use per capita by 25%, all by 2035. Moreover, in 2018, the voters of Los Angeles County approved Measure W: the Safe Clean Water Program to provide funding to increase stormwater capture through enhanced green infrastructure to recharge local groundwater basins, thereby enhancing local water supplies.

Due to the potentially significant risk of ongoing water supply issues in the immediate and medium terms, the Council has a vested interest in understanding and overseeing any continuation of service plans for water supply for City residents. While the City has adopted lauded goals, the LADWP should be requested to report on the progress made towards them and what projects are on the drawing board that need to be green-lighted now to ensure we stay on track.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council request the Department of Water and Power and the Bureau of Sanitation, with input from the Metropolitan Water District, to report in 60 days on the transition to reducing purchased or imported water and increasing our local water supply, including all planned and existing efforts, as well as infrastructure and conservation projects in the planning and/or development stages.



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I FURTHER MOVE that the report include a review of current sources of potable water, expected local water supply sources, the feasibility of achieving existing targets within the timelines stated in the current Executive Directives and the Green New Deal policies, and include current water contingency plans and the resilience of the water import system if an earthquake causes failures to the Los Angeles Aqueduct, State Water Project, and/or Colorado River deliveries through Metropolitan Water District.

PRESENTED BY: 
KATY YAROSLAVSKY
Councilwoman, 5th District

SECONDED BY: 

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