

Conservation Working Group Recommendations

Voluntary Water Offset Program

Recommendation: Instruct staff to study and report back to the Task Force regarding the feasibility of a voluntary water offset program utilizing significant development incentives.

Modify San Diego Municipal Code Article 7 Division 38: Emergency Water Regulations

Former recommendation approved by Task Force:

Former Level 1 Drought Alert is to become a permanent voluntary water standard.

Recommended new wording: Modify Emergency Water Regulations as required to update and clarify text in the document based on making the former Level 1 Drought Alert and permanent voluntary standard. Examples of modifications may include, but are not limited to:

- Modify former Level 1 Drought Alert to a permanent voluntary standard.
- Modify the other stages of Drought Alert as required to clarify standards.
- Clarify standards for non potable water use during Drought Alerts.
- Include an Alternative Compliance application process for large water users such as parks, cemetery's, and golf courses.

Water Conservation Outreach

Former recommendation approved by Task Force:

Implement permanent and ongoing water conservation and outreach program. We recommend that City leaders, elected officials and others take on the responsibility of helping to create a city wide water conservation ethic. The City should substantially increase funding for public outreach and education on water conservation, beginning with the next municipal budget cycle, in order to promote conservation on an ongoing basis and not only during drought periods. This is a key factor in creating a citywide water conservation ethic.

- *Request that Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NRCC) receive regular updates on conservation efforts and outcomes semi-annually (2x/year), much like the status reports regarding the water recycling efforts and demo project.*
- *City to conduct a case study examining the education and outreach tactics used in Australia to achieve their massive reduction in water use.*

Recommended new wording for bullet one

- Request that Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NRCC) receive regular updates on conservation efforts and outcomes at every meeting, much like the status reports regarding the water recycling efforts and demo project.

Recommendation to add bullet three:

- Coordinate regional water consumer education campaigns using the latest research from social psychology that shows what messaging is most effective in influencing thoughtful water use behavior. Water agencies can also work with the private sector to develop public-private partnerships that can help move the needle on consumer demand.

Decoupling water sales from efficiency

Recommendation: Explore the possibility of working with other water utilities throughout the state to support research on whether/how the sale of water could be decoupled from water efficiency services as is done in the electric utility industry.

Labeling programs

Recommendation: In coordination with the San Diego County Water Authority, consider implementing an outreach and education program that concentrates on larger retailers in the region. Can programs for labeling water conserving products be expanded? Especially in the landscape industry, such as labeling drought tolerant plant materials

Landscape Conversion Programs

Recommendation: Explore the possibility to of expanding "Cash for Grass" programs to effect real change in the landscape.

Rebate programs

Recommendation: Explore the possibility to of expanding rebate programs for indoor or outdoor fixtures and equipment that would be cost effective and successful.

Conservation Working Group Recommendations 2/18/13

Glen Schmidt, Faith Picking, Bruce Rainey, Julia Chun, and Corinne Brindley

A. Unmetered Water Loss

Discussion: The Conservation Working Group is interested in the potential of reducing unmetered water loss through a number of strategies. Staff will be presenting a report to the Task Force that addresses this issue.

Recommendation: Defer this item to a future meeting in order to receive the report from staff.

B. Voluntary Water Offset Program

Discussion: One of the greatest opportunities for water conservation lies in retrofitting existing irrigation systems and landscape plantings. But this requires costly upgrades. Several municipalities in California require mandatory water offsets for new development. These programs require new development to off-set their anticipated water demand by implementing water conservation upgrades to existing landscapes, or pay into a fund that is used to upgrade existing landscapes. This generates conservation improvements or funding for improvements. The Conservation Working Group is interested in the potential to implement a voluntary offset program where new development may receive significant development incentives by offsetting the water demand of their development. An example of a significant development incentive is a density bonus.

Recommendation: Instruct staff to study and report back to the Task Force regarding the feasibility of a voluntary water offset program utilizing significant development incentives.

C. Setting specific goals and performance measures:

Discussion: At the Task Forces January meeting Chair Lowe proposed a number of goals and performance measures for: water consumption, purchases of imported water, recycling, recycling storm water, and conversion of landscaping to drought tolerant planting. The Conservation Working Group is in favor of setting certain goals. The specific numbers need to be carefully studied and should consider goals and performance measures set forth in the Long Range Water Resource Plan (LRWRP).

Recommendation: In the Task Forces final report, include target goals and performance measures for the following:

- Per capita water use by 2020 in excess of goals set forth in SBX7-7 in coordination with LWRWP.
- Reduction of imported water by a specific percentage by 2020 and 2030 in coordination with the LWRWP.

- Increase production of recycled water to a specific percentage by 2020 and 2030, incorporating triggers as set forth in the LWRWP.

D. Modify San Diego Municipal Code Article 7 Division 38: Emergency Water Regulations

Discussion: Previously the Task Force approved establishing former Level 1 Drought Alert to a permanent voluntary standard. The Conservation Working Group has reviewed the document and believes it requires a number of modifications. In addition, specific watering days for large turf areas such as parks, cemeteries and golf courses may provide significant financial or horticultural harm. A provision for Alternative Compliance would allow these large turf areas to conserve while minimizing harm to their existing facilities.

Recommendation:

Former recommendation approved by Task Force: Former Level 1 Drought Alert is to become a permanent voluntary water standard.

Recommended new wording: Modify Emergency Water Regulations as required to update and clarify text in the document based on making the former Level 1 Drought Alert and permanent voluntary standard. Examples of modifications may include, but are not limited to:

- Modify former Level 1 Drought Alert to a permanent voluntary standard.
- Modify the other stages of Drought Alert as required to clarify standards.
- Clarify standards for non potable water use during Drought Alerts.
- Include an Alternative Compliance application process for large water users such as parks, cemetery's, and golf courses.

E. Water Conservation Outreach

Discussion: The Task Force previously approved this item. The Water Conservation Working Group wishes to refine the recommendation of bullet number one and to add another bullet item:

Former recommendation approved by Task Force:

Implement permanent and ongoing water conservation and outreach program. We recommend that City leaders, elected officials and others take on the responsibility of helping to create a city wide water conservation ethic. The City should substantially increase funding for public outreach and education on water conservation, beginning with the next municipal budget cycle, in order to promote conservation on an ongoing basis and not only during drought periods. This is a key factor in creating a citywide water conservation ethic.

- Request that Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NRCC) receive regular updates on conservation efforts and outcomes semi-annually (2x/year), much like the status reports regarding the water recycling efforts and demo project.
- City to conduct a case study examining the education and outreach tactics used in Australia to achieve their massive reduction in water use.

Recommended new wording for bullet one

Discussion: Julia Chun stated that reporting 2x/year is what staff is now required to do and would like us to consider requesting more frequent reports.

- Request that Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NRCC) receive regular updates on conservation efforts and outcomes at every meeting, much like the status reports regarding the water recycling efforts and demo project.

Recommendation to add bullet three:

Discussion: The Water Conservation Working Group wishes to add this recommendation that was part of the Equinox Study.

- Coordinate regional water consumer education campaigns using the latest research from social psychology that shows what messaging is most effective in influencing thoughtful water use behavior. Water agencies can also work with the private sector to develop public-private partnerships that can help move the needle on consumer demand.

F. Decoupling water sales from efficiency:

Discussion: The Water Conservation Working Group wishes to add this recommendation that was part of the Equinox Study.

Recommendation: Explore the possibility of working with other water utilities throughout the state to support research on whether/how the sale of water could be decoupled from water efficiency services as is done in the electric utility industry.

G. Labeling programs:

Discussion: The Water Conservation Working Group discussed opportunities to partner with large retailers in the region to label water conserving equipment and/or plant material.

Recommendation: In coordination with the San Diego County Water Authority, consider implementing an outreach and education program that concentrates on larger retailers in

the region. Can programs for labeling water conserving products be expanded? Especially in the landscape industry, such as labeling drought tolerant plant materials.

H. Landscape Conversion Programs:

Discussion: Conversion of inefficient outdated irrigation systems and high water use plantings such as cool season turf grass to more drought tolerant planting is a significant opportunity. The Water Conservation Working Group would like to expand programs that provide funds for conversion

Recommendation: Explore the possibility to of expanding “Cash for Grass” programs to effect real change in the landscape.

I. Rebate programs:

Discussion: Rebates or giveaway's for toilets, shower heads, cloths washers, etc have been successful in the past. The Water Conservation Working Group discussed whether rebates are potentially still effective and whether this could be expanded.

Recommendation: Explore the possibility to of expanding rebate programs for indoor or outdoor fixtures and equipment that would be cost effective and successful.

Conservation Working Group recommendations approved by Task Force Jan 2013

1. Formal Level 1 Drought Alert is to become a permanent voluntary water standard.
2. To strengthen the code and to encourage more water conserving landscapes in new construction, modify the water conservation code requirement for new landscape construction as follows:
 - a. Reduce the Evapotranspiration factor from .7 to .6.
 - b. Modify the Plant Factors from “ranges” to specific numbers as follows: Very Low Water Use Plantings .1, Low Water Use Plantings .3, Moderate Water Use Plantings .5, and High Water Use Plantings .8.
 - c. Special Use Landscape Areas including Parks and Special Botanical areas should remain 1.0 ET adjustment factor.
3. Implement a water budget based billing program for commercial landscape meters.
4. Implement permanent and ongoing water conservation and outreach program. We recommend that City leaders, elected officials and others take on the responsibility of helping to create a city wide water conservation ethic. The City should substantially increase funding for public outreach and education on water conservation, beginning with the next municipal budget cycle, in order to promote conservation on an ongoing basis

and not only during drought periods. This is a key factor in creating a citywide water conservation ethic.

- Request that Natural Resources and Culture Committee (NRCC) receive regular updates on conservation efforts and outcomes semi-annually (2x/year), much like the status reports regarding the water recycling efforts and demo project.
- City to conduct a case study examining the education and outreach tactics used in Australia to achieve their massive reduction in water use.