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**Date:** November 17, 2021  
**To:** State Clearinghouse, State Responsible Agencies, State Trustee Agencies, Other Public Agencies, Interested Parties  
**From:** The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California  
**Subject:** Notice of Availability of the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Climate Action Plan (CAP) (SCH No. 2020060450) and the draft CAP, and Notice of a Public Engagement Workshop

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has prepared a draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Climate Action Plan (CAP) (proposed project). This Notice of Availability (NOA) is being sent to responsible, trustee, other public agencies, and interested parties as part of the review process required under CEQA (Section 21080.4 of the Public Resources Code). The proposed project location is not on any of the lists enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (hazardous waste). The description and location of the proposed project and information on the potential environmental effects resulting from the proposed project are provided in this NOA. Due to the time limits mandated by state law (*State CEQA Guidelines* §15087 - Public Review of draft EIR), written comments must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than the end of the public review period, which begins November 18, 2021 and ends January 7, 2022.

**Project Title: The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Climate Action Plan**

**Lead Agency: The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**

#### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT**

To ensure public access to the draft PEIR and draft CAP, copies of the document are available online at Metropolitan's website at: <http://www.mwdh2o.com/CEQA>

Copies will also be made available at Metropolitan headquarters and at select major libraries:

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California  
700 North Alameda Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Contra Costa County Library 740 Court Street Martinez, California 94553	Imperial Public Library 420 South Imperial Avenue Imperial, California 92251
L.A. County Libraries - West Hollywood Library 625 North San Vicente Boulevard West Hollywood, California 90069	Orange County Public Library - Brea Branch 1 Civic Center Circle Santa Ana, California 92703-5000
Riverside County Library – Woodcrest Library 5840 Mission Boulevard Jurupa Valley, California 92509	Sacramento County Library – Central Library 828 I Street Sacramento, California 95814

San Bernardino County Library 777 East Rialto Avenue San Bernardino, California 92415	San Diego County Library 5500 Overland Drive San Diego, CA 92123
Ventura County Library – E.P. Foster Library 651 East Main Street Ventura, California 93001	

Written comments should be sent to the address shown below or via e-mail at [EP@mwdh2o.com](mailto:EP@mwdh2o.com) (in the subject line reference “NOA - CAP Draft PEIR” for comments on the PEIR or “NOA - Draft CAP” for comments on the CAP) and should include the name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address, if available, of a contact person.

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Please contact Malinda Stalvey via telephone or email at [EP@mwdh2o.com](mailto:EP@mwdh2o.com) to make arrangements for viewing or to receive a hard copy if you are not able to access the document online or view a copy at the location listed above.

**Public Engagement Workshop:** Metropolitan will hold a virtual public engagement workshop in conjunction with the NOA to present the draft CAP and the draft PEIR. The workshop will provide an opportunity for agency representatives and the public to ask questions on the draft CAP or draft PEIR, and provide oral comments associated with the content of the environmental analysis for either document. The public engagement workshop will be held online on December 1, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. To participate in the workshop, please register here:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_b4aAsiT9QkOA1C4nF-jZZQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_b4aAsiT9QkOA1C4nF-jZZQ)

The public can submit written comments via e-mail at [EP@mwdh2o.com](mailto:EP@mwdh2o.com) (reference “NOA - CAP Public Engagement Workshop” in the subject line) or can provide oral comments during the workshop.

## INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan is a regional wholesaler that provides water for 26 member public agencies to deliver either directly or through their sub-agencies to nearly 19 million people, across a 5,200 square mile service area in six counties in Southern California. On average, Metropolitan moves more than 1.7 billion gallons of water daily through its distribution system, which includes an extensive water system including the Colorado River Aqueduct, 16 small hydroelectric facilities, nine reservoirs, 819 miles of large-scale pipes and five water treatment plants, four of which are among the 10 largest plants in the world. Metropolitan imports water from the California Department of Water Resources' State Water Project and the Colorado River to supplement local supplies. It also helps its member agencies develop water recycling, storage, and other local resource programs to provide additional supplies and conservation programs to reduce regional demands.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Metropolitan has prepared a CAP to outline a strategy for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with future construction, operation, and maintenance activities. The CAP is a comprehensive roadmap that analyzes historical GHG emissions, prepares a forecast of future GHG emissions, sets a GHG reduction target for reducing emissions consistent with applicable state policies, and identifies a suite of specific reduction actions that Metropolitan can implement to achieve the adopted target consistent with Section 15183.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The CAP is a customized roadmap for making informed decisions and understanding where and how to achieve emissions reductions that conform to Metropolitan's mission/goals in a meaningful and cost-effective manner. While a CAP identifies potential projects that may be implemented to meet GHG reduction goals, the draft PEIR analyzes impacts that could result from construction and operation of the proposed projects implemented to meet GHG reduction goals. As project details are developed for the individual projects identified in the CAP and PEIR, the individual project will undergo further CEQA review to ensure consistency with the impacts analyzed in the PEIR. Additional CEQA documentation will be prepared, if necessary.

### *Emissions Inventory*

Metropolitan's operations inherently result in GHG emissions. Understanding the processes that generate these emissions is essential to identifying strategies to reduce GHG emissions and achieve the identified GHG reduction target. Metropolitan's activities are categorized into the following GHG generating sectors:

- **Water Conveyance and Treatment.** A majority of Metropolitan's emissions are a direct result of the energy consumed to pump, treat and deliver water throughout Metropolitan's extensive service area.
- **Buildings/Infrastructure.** Infrastructure including offices, facilities, control buildings, lighting, computers, air conditioners, and other equipment that is required to support the treatment and delivery of water.
- **Transportation.** This includes the transportation of employees and equipment to and from offices and worksites. Emissions stem from both Metropolitan's fleet vehicles and employee commutes.
- **Waste Disposal.** Waste falls into three categories: mixed solids waste, mixed recyclables, and organics. Metropolitan generates waste from various sources, ranging from employee lunches to office waste, which results in indirect GHG emissions as waste decomposes in landfills.
- **Water Use.** Water sector GHG emissions by Metropolitan result from water use in facilities and for irrigation.

- **Construction.** As Metropolitan’s infrastructure ages, there is a continued need for construction of new facilities and infrastructure or rehabilitation of existing facilities and infrastructure. Construction activities result in direct GHG emissions from fuel combustion associated with construction equipment use and transportation of workers and materials.

The CAP includes an inventory of Metropolitan’s emissions, from 1990 through 2020. The inventory describes methodologies used to calculate Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 emissions. Scope 1 emissions include those from direct fuel combustion, including natural gas, propane, welding gases, and gasoline and diesel used to power Metropolitan’s vehicle fleet. Scope 2 emissions include indirect GHG emissions associated with the purchase and consumption of electricity. Scope 3 emissions are indirect emissions resulting from employee commute, waste generation, water consumption in Metropolitan-owned buildings, and construction projects. The emissions inventory also provides a forecast of future emissions based on current operations and construction of capital improvement projects.

### ***GHG Reduction Target***

The CAP establishes a GHG reduction target aligned with applicable state GHG reduction policies including Senate Bill 32, which establishes a statewide GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2030, and Executive Order B-55-18, which sets a statewide goal of carbon neutrality by 2045. Metropolitan will measure and track its emissions inventory using:

- **Per Capita Emissions Calculation.** Per capita emissions uses Metropolitan’s calculated mass emissions and divides by the service population.
- **Carbon Budget Tracking.** Sets a carbon budget that is incrementally reduced over time to reach the adopted target.

In addition to establishing a reduction target, the CAP provides a detailed analysis of the emissions reductions necessary for Metropolitan to achieve its target based on the emissions inventory and forecast described above.

### ***Reduction Measures***

The CAP identifies a suite of GHG emissions reduction measures that can be implemented to achieve the adopted emissions reduction target. GHG reduction measures are grouped into nine strategies including:

- Phase Out Natural Gas Combustion
- Zero-Emission Vehicle Fleet
- Alternate Fuels
- Utilize Carbon-Free Electricity
- Improve Energy Efficiency
- Incentivize Sustainable Commutes
- Increase Waste Diversion
- Increase Water Conservation and Local Water Supply
- Investigate and Implement Carbon Capture and Sequestration Opportunities

A majority of the GHG reduction measures are administrative in nature and, consequently, would not result in physical impacts to the environment. GHG reduction measures with the potential for environmental impacts are evaluated in the draft PEIR.

## **PROJECT LOCATION**

The CAP includes reduction measures to reduce GHG emissions from Metropolitan’s construction, operation, and maintenance activities. Most reduction measures would be implemented throughout a six-county Southern California region that comprises Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura counties. These counties include all of Metropolitan’s service area and most of its infrastructure facilities. The CAP involves implementation of GHG emissions reduction measures or programs at Metropolitan land holdings in Imperial County, specifically within the Palo Verde Irrigation District; as well as land holdings in San Joaquin and Contra Costa counties, specifically on lands commonly known as Bacon Island, Bouldin Island, Holland Tract, and Webb Tract in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region. Figure 1 shows the project location.

## **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

The draft PEIR includes an analysis of all required impact areas, as well as feasible mitigation measures and a reasonable range of alternatives to avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts, if any. The draft PEIR identifies potentially significant impacts (i.e., Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources) with proposed mitigation measures. Environmental resource areas where it is determined that the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact are summarized in the “Effects Found to be Less than Significant” section of the draft PEIR (i.e., Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gases, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire).

