



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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METROPOLITAN HELPS CALIFORNIA PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE *Agency joins California Resilience Challenge, statewide adaptation initiative*

A new initiative to help California confront the challenges of climate change received a big boost today from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

Metropolitan's Board of Directors voted unanimously to become a leader and board member of the [California Resilience Challenge](#), a statewide effort to build local resilience to the droughts, floods, wildfires and sea-level rise that climate change will bring to California. As part of its commitment, Metropolitan will contribute \$200,000 to the initiative, which will use the funding to provide grants to community-level climate change adaptation projects.

"We're already living in a changed climate. Our policy decisions, investments and priorities need to reflect that," Metropolitan board Chairwoman Gloria Gray said.

California has become a global leader in the effort to cut carbon emissions and reduce the extent of future climate change. But new approaches and investments are needed to plan and adapt to the impacts of climate change that are already unavoidable. The California Resilience Challenge has an initial goal of raising \$3 million, and ultimately \$10 million, to support such planning.

Metropolitan joins a growing partnership of public, private and non-profit organizations supporting the initiative, including Climate Resolve, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Environmental Defense Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Pacific Gas and Electric and Pillsbury law firm. The initiative is administered by the Bay Area Council.

"Climate change doesn't just threaten Northern California or Southern California, coastal California or the state's inland communities. It threatens cities, farms and ecosystems up and down the state. The threats may vary from community to community, but everyone is at risk,"

said Jim Wunderman, president and CEO of the Bay Area Council. “We have to work together and learn from one another to prepare for and recover from these threats.”

“One of the most profound impacts of climate change will be to our water supply,” Wunderman continued. “Few agencies understand that as well as Metropolitan. So we are thrilled to have the district bring its expertise and leadership to the California Resilience Challenge.”

Over the past decade, California has experienced the driest four-year period in state history, followed a year later by the wettest water year in history. In addition to the increasing extremes in droughts and flooding, the California Department of Water Resources predicts that Sierra snowpack – a valuable source of water storage for the state – will decline by up to 65 percent by the end of the century.

“The good news is, Metropolitan has been planning for this new reality for more than a decade, taking steps to ensure the region’s water supply remains reliable under these extreme and changing conditions,” Metropolitan General Manager Jeffrey Kightlinger said. “We are eager to identify adaptation strategies that can benefit the entire water sector.”

The California Resilience Challenge will award grants for up to 10 climate change adaptation projects, reflecting the state’s diverse geography and challenges. The winning projects will be innovative, locally supported and replicable across the state and globe.

As a board member, Metropolitan will help determine which projects should receive funding, ensuring the needs of the water community and Southern California are represented.

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