



Water & Wastewater Conceptual Measures Workshop

San Diego County Climate Action Plan Update

Introduction

As part of the public involvement process for the **Climate Action Plan Update** (CAP Update), the County of San Diego (County) is conducting intentional engagement centered on conceptual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction measures.



Wednesday June 15,
2022
6:00 p.m.
Zoom

On Wednesday June 15, 2022, County staff held a virtual public workshop to discuss conceptual measures in the Water & Wastewater sector, the first in a series of meetings focused on each emissions reduction sector. In advance of the meeting, staff promoted the event through e-blasts, social media posts, and direct emails to relevant and interested stakeholders. During the event, 19 participants joined representing environmental, economic, and community organizations as well as individuals. This summary documents meeting objectives and format, how input was solicited, and what was learned from the participants.

Objectives

The meeting was organized and conducted to accomplish the following objectives:

- Create a comfortable, engaging environment where all participants have an opportunity to provide meaningful input and share concerns.
- Obtain input to help develop the Climate Action Plan Update GHG reduction measures and the vision statement for the Water & Wastewater sector.
- Explore opportunities and challenges related to greenhouse gas reduction measures that may be considered for the Climate Action Plan Update.
- Provide an overview of the Climate Action Plan Update in a clear and easy to understand way, including the purpose, process, outcomes, timeline, and future opportunities to provide input.

Format

At the virtual meeting, community members participated in a staff-led presentation and polling questions. The workshop was centered around three topics: Basics of Water & Wastewater sector emissions; Draft equitable, net-zero vision statement for the sector; Strategies and conceptual measures to reach the draft vision. Throughout the workshop, community members were invited to share their perspectives through the chat, polls, and open discussion. The workshop and prompts were designed so that staff could learn more about community members' perspectives about climate change and potential actions to reduce greenhouse gases.

An interpreter was in attendance for community members whose primary language is Spanish. The meeting materials were also offered in Spanish.

Major Themes

Major themes common to all the input received from participants are listed below. The ordering does not reflect importance or frequency.



- Financial incentives for water-efficient appliances and turf replacement, prioritized among multi-family and low-income residents, were popular among participants
- Ensuring plumbers arrive in a timely manner and certifying they will fix leaks efficiently was offered to reduce water use.
- Stakeholders stated that increasing recycled water availability in the backcountry, sourcing recycled water from new sources, encouraging native plant landscaping, and providing free rain barrels would help irrigate outside areas.
- Stakeholders were generally concerned about drought conditions in the state and region, and what the County is doing to ensure water availability in the long-term.

Feedback on Conceptual Measures

Three conceptual measures were presented to participants:

1. Develop policies and programs to increase water efficiency, retention, recycling, and reuse in County operations.
2. Develop policies and programs to increase indoor and outdoor water conservation in new and existing construction in the unincorporated area.
3. Develop policies and programs to increase retention, recycling, and reuse of stormwater and wastewater.

Stakeholders expressed interest in all conceptual measures, with a slight preference for the second measure above when asked which one was most exciting to them. Other topics that came up when asked if there were any other strategies, measures, or actions the County should consider were renewable fuels from water, experimenting with innovative water capture systems such as fog fences, and support for plumbers to fix leaks.

Poll Everywhere Responses

Staff asked 13 questions throughout the workshop, and a total of 8 workshop participants responded.

Welcome! What brought you here today?

Total responses 6
Unique participants 4

Climate Concerns:

The climate crisis

I am committed to finding a solution to our environmental problems

Water-Specific Concerns:

On-site water reuse

I'm concerned about the drought and want to see the plan for saving water

Concerns with waste water treatments

Misc.:

Sustainable aviation fuel



I am a...

Total responses 6
Unique participants 5

Responses:	Count	Percent
resident of the unincorporated county	4	66.67
resident of an incorporated city (e.g., City of San Diego, Poway, Encinitas...)	1	16.67
resident of a Native American reservation	0	0
resident of another area (outside of SD County, on a military base, etc.)	0	0
Water service / utility professional	0	0
community-based organization representative	1	16.67
County employee	0	0
other	0	0

Did we get it right? Does "Water quality and adequacy is maintained, and emissions associated with the transportation of water are reduced through indoor and outdoor water conservation programs, efficient delivery pipelines, and reuse of stormwater and wastewater." reflect your prior comments?

Total responses 5
Unique participants 5

Responses:	Count	Percent
Yes, this Vision Statement reflects my prior comments	0	0
Almost There	3	60
Not Quite	1	20
No, this Vision Statement does not reflect my prior comments	1	20

For those of you who think we're almost or not quite there, what else do you think should be included?

Total responses 9
Unique participants 6

Water Conservation:

We are less than a year before Lake Powell and Lake Mead dry up completely. Does the County have a water emergency plan in place if we lose our access to Colorado River water?

There will probably be no Colorado river and no snow pack. Rain will be unreliable.

You must state that if we destabilize our climate, all bets are off. We will go extinct, one way or another. I'm confused because you said that this was only about emissions, but it should be about overall water conservation.

Alternative Water Sources:

Desalination

Easier access to ground water

On-site water reuse is a great idea!

Wastewater Reuse:

Waste water to renewable fuels

Sustainable aviation fuel from waste water sludge.



Are there additional ways you think we could decrease potable water use in County operations?

Total responses 4
Unique participants 4

Responses:

	Upvotes	Downvotes
High-efficiency heat pumps	2	0
On-site water reuse	2	0
Admit that we live in a desert and stop promoting lush greenery.	1	1
Committing to adopting ordinances for water conservation for all municipal buildings	1	0

What would make it easier for you to reduce the amount of potable water you use?

Total responses 12
Unique participants 6

Responses:

Develop a regional stormwater harvesting and reuse plan.
If a plumber says they will come out a fix a leak, they should be required to do it within some time, or help get another plumber to do it.
Creating a license for plumbers in the county
Utilizing licensed plumbers to minimize errors and leaks
Water quality standards
Financial incentives to change out toilet.
state money for stormwater recapture
Educational and certificate programs for landscapers to learn about natives
Rebates not only for replacing turf, but also replacing high- and moderate- use plants with native plants
Subsidize paying for plumbers. Leaking pipes need to be fixed ASAP.
new construction to promote composting toilets, hot water circulators, xeriscaping.
Residential on-site water reuse grant

How can we help decrease potable water use in your community?

Total responses 6
Unique participants 6

Incentives:

Prioritize rebates for affordable housing units
Free rain barrels

Community Considerations:

Apartment complex on-site water reuse to community gardens
Find new sources of recycled water for outdoor use
Bring recycles water to the east county, not just the coast

Requirements:


On-site water reuse ordinance across the county

Total responses 5



Which action would you most like to see implemented in your community?

Unique participants 5

Responses:	Upvotes	Downvotes
License plumbers to ensure the systems are working correctly and delivering clean water	1	0
The County should partner with CWA and local water agencies to develop and fund emergency plans in case we lose access to Colorado River water.	0	0
reduction/eliminatyion of watering for the sake of appearances only.	0	0
Help with replacing high-use landscaping	0	0
On-site water reuse 	2	0

Why does reducing potable water use matter to you most?

Total responses 6
Unique participants 4

Drought concerns:

California faces the loss of water from the Central Valley Project and the Colorado River. When the Colorado River runs dry, all of the County Water Authority's water rights will become useless.

Coastal California water usage has increased 15% recently

It's scary how little it has rained this spring

Inland California is severely affected by the drought and does not have access to desalination

Water Logistics:

We need to decrease water usage but also increase our supply

Realizing how much distance is involved in getting our water should scare everyone.

Of all the measures we shared, which one is most exciting to you?

Total responses 6
Unique participants 6

Responses:	Count	Percent
Develop policies and programs to increase water efficiency, retention, recycling, and reuse in County operations.	1	16.67
Develop policies and programs to increase indoor and outdoor water conservation in new and existing construction in the unincorporated area.	3	50
Develop policies and programs to increase retention, recycling, and reuse of stormwater and wastewater.	2	33.33

Are there any other Water & Wastewater strategies, measures, or actions the County should consider?

Total responses 6
Unique participants 5

Wastewater to Energy:

Renewable fuels from water- fertilizer, etc

Sustainable Aviation Fuel

Innovation and Labor:

Experiment with innovative water capture systems, i.e. fog fences, etc.

The County should figure out a way to help get plumbers to fix leaks.



Question:

Is agricultural water use included?

Given what we just discussed, which co-benefits are important to you? Select all that apply

Total responses 34
Unique participants 6

Responses:	Count	Percent
Improve community health	3	8.82
Conserve farmland	1	2.94
Save money on utility bills	4	11.76
Save public tax dollars	1	2.94
Improve air quality	2	5.88
Increase energy security/resilience	2	5.88
Conserve water	6	17.65
Conserve habitat	4	11.76
Create green jobs	4	11.76
Reduce noise	1	2.94
Promote environmental and social justice	4	11.76
Improve access to electric vehicles	0	0
Improve walking, biking, rolling, and transit options	2	5.88

Given the following list, what other criteria are important to you when evaluating measures? Rank the following: support co-benefits; support equity and environmental justice; reduce GHG emissions quickly; reduce costs to residents and businesses; save taxpayer money

Total responses
Unique participants

Responses:	Rank
Support co-benefits	2
Support equity and environmental justice	4
Reduce GHG emissions quickly	1
Reduce costs to residents and businesses	2
Save taxpayer money	5