



# REPORT TO COUNCIL City of Sacramento

# 36

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Consent  
June 23, 2009

**Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council**

**Title:** Approval of the Updated Water Conservation Element to the 2000 Water Forum Agreement

**Location/Council District:** City-wide

**Recommendation:** Adopt a resolution approving the updated Water Conservation Element to the 2000 Water Forum Agreement.

**Contact:** Julie Friedman, Water Conservation Administrator, (916) 808-7898  
Marty Hanneman, Assistant City Manager, Director of Utilities, (916) 808-7508

**Presenters:** N/A

**Department:** Utilities

**Division:** Water Conservation

**Organization No:** 14001441

## **Description/Analysis**

### **Issue:**

The City of Sacramento, as a signatory to the 2000 Water Forum Agreement (WFA), committed to implementing a comprehensive water conservation plan. The plan consists of a series of individually negotiated Best Management Practices (BMPs) and calls for five year updates for addressing new or revised BMPs. The City and other signatories to the WFA have been working since 2004 to update the conservation element. The updated Water Conservation Element is complete; staff recommends its approval and adoption.



**Policy Considerations:** This recommendation is consistent with the Mayor and City Council's mission to protect, preserve, and enhance the quality of life for present and future generations. The Water Forum Successor Effort has employed the collaborative principles and methods used in developing the WFA (City Agreement No. 1999-222).

**Environmental Considerations:**

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):**

CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3)). Adoption of this resolution approving the updated Water Conservation Element to the 2000 Water Forum Agreement will not cause any significant environmental effects. In addition, under CEQA Guidelines § 15378(b), continuing administrative activities do not constitute a project and are therefore exempt from review.

**Sustainability Considerations:**

Approval of the updated Water Conservation Element for the Water Forum Agreement is consistent with the City of Sacramento's Sustainability Master Plan Goals.

Sustainability Goal No. 7 - Parks, Open Space and Habitat Conservation are promoted by the second co-equal objective of the Water Forum Agreement "To preserve the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the lower American River."

Sustainability Goal No. 8 - Water Resources and Flood Protection is supported by the first co-equal objective of the Water Forum Agreement "To provide a reliable water supply for planned development to the year 2030."

Water conservation in the Sacramento region is important not only for maintaining and protecting our water supply during dry years, and reducing the City's carbon footprint by reducing the demand for water diversion and treatment, but also benefits California's river resources by reducing the region's surface water demand.

**Commission/Committee Action:** This updated Water Conservation Element has been reviewed and developed by the Water Conservation Negotiation Team of the Water Forum Successor Effort (WFSE) and approved by the WFSE on May 14, 2009.

**Rationale for Recommendation:** Approval of the updated Water Conservation Element will allow the City of Sacramento to continue implementation of its commitments in the 2000 Water Forum Agreement. The Water Conservation Element of the *Agreement* is essential to meeting both of the co-equal objectives of the Water Forum. It helps meet the region's water supply needs, and minimizes the need for increased groundwater pumping and increased use of surface water, including diversions from the American River. The new water conservation element makes changes to the original agreement in that signatories agree to replace current water conservation plans with the CUWCC MOU

including its BMPs, schedules, targets, procedures and requirements. As the City is currently a member of CUWCC and has agreed to implement its BMPs, this change will simplify current reporting requirements.

**Financial Considerations:** There will be no additional financial impact.

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):** Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted by: Julie Friedman  
Julie Friedman, Water Conservation Administrator

Approved by: Marty Hanneman  
Marty Hanneman, Assistant City Manager, Director, Department of Utilities

Recommendation Approved:

Marty Hanneman  
Ray Kerridge  
City Manager

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**Background Information:**

In April 2000 representatives of over 40 business, environmental, public and water interests in the Sacramento region signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the *Water Forum Agreement (WFA)*. The stakeholders agreed to a series of actions, or elements, including water conservation, to achieve the *Agreement's* two co-equal objectives:

- Provide a reliable and safe water supply for the region's economic health and planned development to the year 2030; and
- Preserve the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the lower American River.

The Water Conservation Element of the *Agreement* is essential to meeting both of the co-equal objectives of the Water Forum. It helps meet the region's water supply needs, and minimizes the need for increased groundwater pumping and increased use of surface water, including diversions from the American River.

Each water supplier in the region committed to implementing a comprehensive water conservation plan consisting of a series of individually negotiated Best Management Practices (BMPs). Water conservation plans were designed with a three-year "ramp up" to full implementation. Several of the BMPs had a calculated number of "interventions" or actions (based on the number of customers) to be completed annually. Agencies agreed to implement the full number of interventions by year four (2004) with years one to three used to prepare staff, budget and program design.

The WFA called for five year updates to water conservation plans for addressing new or revised BMPs as a future "changed condition" discussion.

Water Forum signatories began the process of updating their conservation plans in 2004. The Water Conservation Negotiation Team was convened for the negotiations. It included members of the Water Forum business, water, environmental and public caucuses. The City of Sacramento participated as a member of the water caucus.

Between 2004 and today the negotiations have gone through several iterations; but there have been some key principles which have guided the discussions.

- All parties seek to maximize water conservation in a way that is accountable, easy to monitor and track and is effective.
- A water conservation program has merit and all Water Forum purveyor signatories agree to implement a water conservation program that is consistent with the California Urban Water Conservation Council Memorandum of Understanding (CUWCC MOU).
- Recognizing that many of our purveyors are not yet fully metered, there may need to be flexibility in how purveyors implement certain water conservation actions.
- While we are seeking a broad "universal" solution that applies to all purveyors, we recognize that each purveyor has unique water sources, decision-makers and structures, and constraints/opportunities.

**New Conservation Element**

- Water Forum signatories purveyors will replace current water conservation plans with the "California Urban Water Conservation Council Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California," (CUWCC MOU) including its Best Management Practices (BMPs), schedules, targets, procedures and requirements.
- If Water Forum signatories choose to follow the CUWCC's BMP track, they will implement all cost-effective BMPs. If a BMP is not locally cost effective, the purveyor may choose to defer implementation of that BMP and instead, invest an equivalent level of funding into another water conservation activity.
- Water Forum signatories agree to changes and modifications to CUWCC processes and BMPs as they evolve over time, including the 2008 revisions and subsequent revisions. Water Forum signatories further agree that signatory purveyors without land use authority can not be required to implement programs or processes that they do not have legal authority to implement (i.e. landscape requirements).
- Water Forum signatories are encouraged to become members of the CUWCC in order to be actively engaged in discussions regarding revisions to the MOU and the BMPs, and to take advantage of the CUWCC's resources and expertise.
- Water Forum signatories recognize that the CUWCC has existing procedures in place to enable members to request exemptions from BMPs. Water Forum signatories agree that this process does not result in a clear decision and does not ensure full compliance of BMPs. To address this shortcoming, the Water Forum will use its own procedure for considering BMP modifications known as deferrals.

**RESOLUTION NO.**

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**WATER FORUM AGREEMENT WATER CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

**BACKGROUND**

A. In April 2000 the City of Sacramento signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the *Water Forum Agreement (WFA)*. The City agreed to a series of actions, or elements, including water conservation, to achieve the *Agreement's* two co-equal objectives:

- Provide a reliable and safe water supply for the region's economic health and planned development to the year 2030; and
- Preserve the fishery, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic values of the lower American River.

B. The Water Conservation Element helps meet the region's water supply needs, and minimizes the need for increased groundwater pumping and increased use of surface water, including diversions from the American River.

C. The City of Sacramento committed to implementing a comprehensive water conservation plan as a signatory to the Water Forum Agreement. That plan consisted of a series of individually negotiated Best Management Practices (BMPs). The Agreement called for five year updates to water conservation plans for addressing new or revised BMPs as a future "changed condition" discussion. The City and other signatories to the Agreement have been working since 2004 to update conservation plans.

**BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The Updated Water Conservation Element to the 2000 Water Forum Agreement is adopted and approved.

To view the updated Water Forum Water Conservation Element, please access the City of Sacramento's website at [www.cityofsacramento.org](http://www.cityofsacramento.org) or to view a hard copy, please visit the City Clerk's office.