

Sustainable water is key, but not happening fast enough

"[T]he key environmental challenge of the 21st century may be the globally sustainable management of water resources" according to a NASA study released in May 2018. (Study at <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-018-0123-1>; reviewed at <https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060086059/print>.)

State LWV positions support water conservation and encourage wastewater reclamation to minimize reliance on water exported through and around the Delta. Unfortunately, local water district wholesaler (Santa Clara Valley Water District, "SCVWD") is still looking to imported, rather than local, water to satisfy the county's needs. SCVWD says it already does water recycling, but only about 20,000 afy (acre-feet/year). A similar Southern California agency is increasing its capacity from 103,000 to 145,600 afy.

As the California State Water Resources Control Board observed in 2009, we should "move toward clean, abundant, local water for California by emphasizing appropriate water recycling, water conservation, ... and the use of stormwater...; these sources of supply are drought-proof, reliable, and minimize our carbon footprint and can be sustained over the long-term."

Legislators, university professors and NGOs have concurred: local projects and water sources can yield more reliable water and substitute for water previously imported from the Delta. A SCVWD survey even showed that 67% of county voters prefer to pay for local recycled water and stormwater reuse, as opposed to less than half of surveyed voters willing to pay to maintain imported water that comes through the Delta.

WaterFix costs continue to increase (~\$20 billion estimated to date), yet SCVWD continues to risk million dollars of ratepayer money to support the two 40'-wide tunnels that would take water from the already-threatened Delta, while acknowledging the tunnels could only "potentially protect the District's water supply reliability".