

WATER

The League studied water and updated the position in 1982, 1995, 2003 and 2007.

POSITION

- Achieve measures to insure an adequate supply of water of high quality to the Monterey Peninsula that recognize water as a finite resource.
- Coordinate water resource planning with land use planning to provide for future needs without encouraging non-sustainable growth.
- Protect the natural environment in areas of both water origin and water use.
- Reserve stream flows for protection of fish, wildlife habitat, and the riparian environment.

OBJECTIVES

Water Supply

1. Encourage a variety of water supply sources such as conservation, including saving "lost water" and reclamation.
2. Support water supply alternatives that:
 - a. Secure a long-term water supply;
 - b. Provide for drought protection;
 - c. Allow for the orderly accommodation of population growth included in general plans consistent with the evaluation and weighing of impacts described below (3.a-f).
3. Support assessment of economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of proposed water projects. The following impacts shall be evaluated and weighed by the League when considering action on a water supply alternative:
 - a. Direct and indirect costs in comparison to other alternatives;
 - b. Direct and indirect benefits in comparison to other alternatives;
 - c. Environmental costs and benefits (e.g., corrects existing environmental degradation of the Carmel River, allows for adequate flows year round, protects the fishery, vegetation, wildlife, and wetland resources, and allows for recreational uses.);
 - d. Impacts on community services (e.g., police, fire, schools, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, streets, and highways;
 - e. Impacts on aesthetic values and cultural resources;
 - f. Impacts on public safety (e.g., dam inundation and flooding).
4. Establishment and periodic review of a priority system of customers' rights to water service that would protect current users during drought conditions.
5. Support policies within the boundaries of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) that create a hierarchy of customers having a priority claim to water service in the following order:
 - a. Existing customers within the existing service area of a retail water purveyor;
 - b. Future, expected customers associated with approved new development within an existing service area of a retail water purveyor;
 - c. Future, expected customers associated with potential new development outside of, but contiguous to the existing service area of a retail water purveyor.

6. Support policies to insure that findings of availability of water quantity and quality be required before an application for development is deemed complete and prior to further planning.
7. Support policies at the city and County levels to require that the source, quantity, and quality of water be assured (i.e., existence of adequate water supplies or water supply capital improvement program is in progress) by the water supplier before adoption of or amendments to general plans that would result in future water demand.

Water Quality

1. Support the continuation of the present monitoring system of the septic systems in the MPWMD.
2. Request an up-to-date estimate of the cost of sewerage the Carmel Valley, including the ratio of cost to benefit received per user.
3. Promote inclusion of the septic waste mitigation problems in any Master Plan of the Monterey Peninsula.
4. Maintain the present high quality standards of our drinking water, using 1981 analysis, as supplied by the Water Management District.

Reclamation and Reuse

1. Encourage the MPWMD to budget adequate funds for continuing reclamation and reuse of wastewater on the Peninsula.
2. Continue to promote the increased use of wastewater on the Peninsula.

Water Management

1. Continue to support the coordination of the MPWMD with water related agencies.
2. Continue to promote responsive representation through mandatory rotation of the MPWMD Board Chair and appointed representatives, and the use of citizen advisory committees.
3. Continue League Observers at the meetings of the Water and Sanitary Boards.
4. Support the MPWMD's adoption of a priority system for customers' rights to water service.
5. Support the MPWMD's authority to make findings regarding the availability, quantity, and quality of water for future development within its service area or sphere of influence.
6. Support of the existing County Health Department and Monterey County Water Resources Agency roles to determine the source, quantity, and quality of water available for development within the county area outside the MPWMD.

Governance

The LWVMC believes that an agency responsible for planning and implementing a water supply project should be directly elected. League members believe that the agency should be local and have boundaries that generally coincide with the service area boundaries of the water purveyor and water supply sources, i.e., Carmel River and Seaside Aquifer. The League believes that planning and implementation for "new water supplies" should be the primary responsibility of one agency. The League supports the requirements of voter approval for major water supply

projects.

Carmel River

Maintain a healthy riparian habitat along the Carmel River, including reasonable protection of the steelhead.

Ownership of Water Distribution Systems

The League studied ownership of water systems in 2007

1. Water is a necessary resource for human life. As such, any entity responsible for the management, safety, and distribution of water should fulfill these criteria.
 - a. Maintain the viability of the resource. This includes meeting or exceeding water quality and environmental standards mandated by regulatory agencies and maintaining a sustainable water supply.
 - b. Maintain the physical assets including the water distribution and storage systems. This includes having comprehensive and long-range plans for such maintenance and improvements.
 - c. Set fair and responsible rates. This includes addressing low-income users, encouraging conservation, addressing only local and immediate needs. It should not include costs that address unapproved future projects. Rate setting should also be conducted in an open and transparent manner, with information to support the rate setting easily available to the public.
 - d. Maintain an efficient and well-run local office. This includes responding quickly to complaints, having a well trained staff and a responsive management team, having an open and transparent decision-making process.
2. Purchasing a privately owned water system with public funds could be considered if:
 - a. a significant number of the criteria in 1) are not met
 - b. sufficient funding is available.
3. The processes for purchasing a privately owned water system are in this preferred order:
 - a. Willing buyer and seller
 1. b, Eminent domain via a local public agency
 2. c, Eminent domain via the PUC
3. Assets of a water provider that should not be purchased would be sewers internal or external to the local watershed and wells and separate water systems that are external to the Monterey Peninsula Water system.
4. Any public agency overseeing the Monterey Peninsula water system should have a publicly elected governing board and be as local as possible and co-located with the water source and service area.
5. Water is a resource and not a commodity. Ownership of a water system by an international corporation is not supported.