



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

*"Parks Make Life Better!"*

Norma E. García-González, Director

Alina Bokde, Chief Deputy Director

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June 30, 2026

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**WATER PRODUCTION AGREEMENT TO DISCHARGE TREATED WATER INTO THE WHITTIER  
NARROWS RECREATION AREA'S LEGG LAKE  
(SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 1) (3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

Approval of the recommended actions will delegate authority to the Director of Parks and Recreation, or designee, to execute amendments to extend the term (duration) of the existing water production agreement with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster until a new a long-term agreement that is beneficial to the County and the Department of Parks and Recreation is finalized, and to execute the new long-term agreement.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:**

1. Find that the proposed actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act, for the reasons stated in this Board letter and the record.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Parks and Recreation, or designee, to execute amendments to extend the term (duration) of the existing water production agreement with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster, upon approval as to form by County Counsel, until a new long-term agreement is executed.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Parks and Recreation, or designee, to execute a new long-term water production three-party agreement consistent with the draft terms of Attachment I, upon approval as to from by County Counsel, with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster that is beneficial to the County and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

## **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (LA County Parks) is a partner in a three party Water Production Agreement (Agreement) with the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Watermaster) and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Under this Agreement, DTSC operates the Whittier Narrows Operational Unit (WNOU), a state of the art groundwater contamination treatment facility that extracts, treats, and pumps clean water into Legg Lake (Lake) at the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area (WNRA) located at 750 South Santa Anita Avenue, South El Monte, CA 91733. The Lake, comprised of three interconnected basins, has historically relied on approximately 1,300 acre feet of treated water annually from the WNOU.

To inform negotiations for a new long term agreement, LA County Parks retained Geosyntec Consultants (Geosyntec), recognized experts in water management and hydrologic systems. Through hydrologic modeling and a comprehensive water budget analysis, Geosyntec determined that maintaining optimal lake levels for recreation and climate resiliency purposes requires approximately 1,800 acre feet of water annually.

In prior years, DTSC discharged more than 1,300 acre feet of treated water into the Lake, and the Watermaster waived assessments on water volumes exceeding 1,300 acre feet. However, on July 1, 2023, the Watermaster eliminated this exemption, making LA County Parks financially responsible for assessments on water discharged, regardless of volume. Absorbing the cost of assessments on excess discharges would place an undue financial burden on LA County Parks. As a result, the maximum volume of water that can be discharged into the Lake, without causing financial harm to LA County Parks must remain capped at 1,300 acre feet annually.

Although DTSC must continue depositing excess treated water to support WNOU operations, the agency is unwilling to assume the Watermaster's assessments on discharges beyond LA County Parks' 1,300 acre feet threshold. This conflicting operational and financial need has resulted in a temporary negotiation impasse.

Approval of the recommended actions will authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation, or designee, to execute amendments to extend the term (duration) of the existing Agreement that preserves the annual delivery of 1,300 acre feet of treated water to the Lake while negotiations continue for the new long-term agreement that advances the best interests of the County and LA County Parks.

Attachment I provides the draft terms that protects the County and LA County Parks operationally and financially. The draft terms establish a predictable water supply for Legg Lake, set clear annual volume limits, allow seasonal operational flexibility, and permit increases only when they do not create a financial burden on the Department's Operating Budget. The terms also allocate assessment responsibilities in a manner that safeguards the County by limiting LA County Parks' costs to water volumes it specifically requests, while requiring DTSC to cover assessments associated with any excess water delivered beyond those requests.

## **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The recommended actions uphold the County's Strategic Plan Goals to Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities, by sustaining and supporting thriving ecosystems, habitats and biodiversity (North Star 2.D.iii); Manage and Maximize County Assets, by maximizing the use of County assets, guide strategic investments (including real estate and space management) in ways that are fiscally

responsible and align with the County's highest priority needs (North Star 3.G.ii).

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

There will be no impact to the County General Fund.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Board is authorized by the provision of Government Code Section 31000 to contract for special services that are consistent with public park and recreation purposes within Whittier Narrows and pursuant to the provisions of the Department of the Army Lease for Park and Recreational Purposes Whittier Narrows Flood Control Basin No. DAC W09-1-86-43 granted to the County by the Secretary of the Army under authority of the Flood Control Act of 1944, Section 4, as amended. The proposed recommendations are consistent with said purposes.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

The recommended actions are not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because they are activities that are excluded from the definition of a project by Section 21065 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 15378(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines. The recommended actions authorize interim term-only extensions of an existing agreement and delegate authority to negotiate and execute a future long-term agreement but do not authorize any specific physical changes to the environment, expansion of facilities, or increase in water discharge volumes. Any future agreement or actions that may constitute a project under CEQA will be evaluated separately, as appropriate.

### **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

On March 10, 2009, the Board approved a long-term agreement with the Watermaster and EPA to continue the discharge of treated water into the Lake. As required by the State of California, DTSC took full responsibility of the WNOU after a ten-year period. In May 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) transferred the operation and function of the WNOU to DTSC.

On June 18, 2013, the Board approved a ten-year agreement with the Watermaster and DTSC to continue to discharge water into Legg Lake from the WNOU, which expired on June 30, 2023, and was amended to extend the term through June 30, 2024, for the sole purpose of negotiating a new long-term agreement.

On June 27, 2023, the Board delegated authority to the Director to execute an amendment to extend the Agreement for an additional six months and six additional month-to-month options for a maximum extension period of 12-months, and to change the terms of the Agreement as necessary to limit the water discharge volume to an amount not to exceed 1,300 acre-feet per year. The term expired on June 30, 2024.

On June 25, 2024, the Board delegated authority to the Director to execute an amendment to extend the Agreement for an additional one-year term and 12 additional month-to-month options, for a maximum extension period not to exceed 24 months for the sole purpose of negotiating a new-long term agreement. The term expires on June 30, 2026.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

There are no anticipated impacts to the current County services and/or projects associated with the proposed actions.

**CONCLUSION**

Please instruct the Executive Officer of the Board to forward three adopted copies of the action taken by the Board to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Should you have any questions please contact Ms. A'lana White at (626) 550 3674 or via email at [awhite2@parks.lacounty.gov](mailto:awhite2@parks.lacounty.gov) or Mr. Ruben Lopez at (626) 561-0251 or via email at [rlopez@parks.lacounty.gov](mailto:rlopez@parks.lacounty.gov) or Ms. Johanna Hernandez at (626) 596-8365 or via email at [bjl@parks.lacounty.gov](mailto:bjl@parks.lacounty.gov).

Respectfully submitted,



Norma E. Garcia-Gonzalez

Director

NEGG:AB:MR

RL:AW:rc

Enclosures

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
California Department of Toxic Substances  
Control  
Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster

**Water Production Agreement  
New Long-Term Agreement  
Draft Terms Benefiting Los Angeles County Parks**

## **1. Parties**

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC); Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Watermaster); and the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (LA County Parks).

## **2. Term**

Minimum of Ten (10)-years with two (2) additional five (5)-year extension.

## **3. Water Volume Limits**

Annual water volume for the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area's Legg Lake shall be limited to 1,300 acre-feet, as requested by LA County Parks.

## **4. Assessment Allocation**

- LA County Parks shall be responsible to pay only for assessments associated with the annual 1,300 acre-feet or any additional water volume specifically requested by LA County Parks. Funding for assessments shall be covered by LA County Parks' Operating Budget without creating an undue financial burden.
- DTSC shall be responsible for any assessments associated with excess water pumped into Legg Lake that is not requested by LA County Parks.

## **5. Operational Flexibility**

- LA County Parks may increase or decrease the monthly volume of water pumped into Legg Lake based on seasonal needs, provided the total annual volume does not exceed 1,300 acre-feet.
- LA County Parks may request an increase in annual water volume above 1,300 acre-feet if it determines such increase will not create a financial burden on its Operating Budget.