AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH August 11, 2026

Protecting Los Angeles County Residents for the 2026-2027 El Niño Storm Season

El Niño has arrived and, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center, there is an 81% chance the 2026-2027 storm season will become a "very strong" El Niño. El Niño is a climate pattern that can last 9-12 months and emerges from warmer tropical Pacific Ocean water migrating to the cooler eastern Pacific, combined with changing atmospheric conditions that interrupt the typical east-to-west trade winds, and increased ocean temperatures and levels. A stronger El Niño means a stronger jet stream that, for Southern California, can lead to storms that produce heavier than average rainfall and high-tide flooding. Two very strong El Niño years in 1982-83 and 1997-98 led to a more than doubling of the usual yearly rainfall in parts of Los Angeles County.

A very strong El Niño will potentially threaten our communities and county infrastructure, particularly near wildfire burn scars that face the risk of landslides. Communities like the Santa Monica Mountains and Altadena – still reeling from the Palisades, Franklin, and Eaton Fires – could experience intense flooding and landslides

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due to the heavy rainfall. Additionally, wet El Niño winters – which lead to robust wildland plant growth – are often followed by intense dry years, which present an exacerbated fire risk when vegetation dries out. Marine life and ecosystems might suffer, especially in relation to the food chain, since a marine heat wave is already hitting California's coast, exacerbating algal blooms. Warmer waters also lead to stronger storm surge, threatening damage to coastal infrastructure and accelerated sediment loss at county beaches.

Several County departments play a role in keeping residents safe from extreme weather events, like El Niño, including:

- The CEO's Office of Emergency Management provides leadership on disaster planning and emergency response coordination for the County, coordinating with local, state, and federal entities when necessary. In partnership with CEO Countywide Communications, they also provide public education campaigns and emergency communication to residents in advance of and during an event.
- The Department of Public Works and LA County Flood Control District operate dams, reservoirs, pump plants, basins, spreading grounds, storm drains, catch basins, and flood channels that protect our communities from floodwater. They also deploy non-structural measures including risk modeling, sandbag distributions, and land-use reviews. In unincorporated communities, Public Works keeps roads safe and clear of hazards caused by extreme weather.
- The Department of Beaches and Harbors protects coastal infrastructure from flooding and is implementing the County's Coastal Resilience Initiative

and Regional Coastal Strategic Adaptation Plan, a long-term coastal resilience plan to align all coastal cities to keep shorelines resilient to erosion hazards.

- LA County Sheriff's Department coordinates with public safety agencies to ensure timely and effective evacuations are administered prior to and during an active emergency. LA County Sheriff-HOST teams and the LA County Department of Homeless Services and Housing work with contracted service providers and community-based organizations to ensure the safety of individuals experiencing homelessness in our disaster impacted communities.
- The LA County Homeless Services and Housing Department has developed emergency protocols and activated emergency housing resources, and will work with the Department of Public and Social Services, the Red Cross, and other agencies in supporting the standup of shelters.
- LA County Fire Department works with our public safety agencies to respond to life safety operations in a natural disaster emergency, including through paramedics and lifeguards.
- The Internal Services Department ensures County facilities remain operational and available as resources for the community during disruptions from a disaster. They also support departments with emergency response logistics and provide support to the County's emergency communication networks.

LA County's ten million residents look to their government to keep them safe by

effectively preparing for dangerous weather and responding in the case of an emergency. Now is the time to act to ensure our County infrastructure, our cities, and our residents are prepared.

I, **THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors suspend Section 22.1 of the Rules of the Board for the limited purpose of considering this motion.

I, FURTHER, MOVE that the Chief Executive Office – Office of Emergency Management in coordination with the Department of Public Works, Sheriff's Department, Fire Department, Department of Homeless Services and Housing, Department of Beaches and Harbors, Department of Public Social Services, and other relevant departments make an oral presentation to the Board of Supervisors at the September 1, 2026 Board Meeting, with a summary of potential impacts and planned strategies to mitigate El Niño during the 2026-2027 storm season.

I, FURTHER, MOVE that Office of Emergency Management, Public Works, Department of Beaches and Harbors, Sheriff's Department, Fire Department, Department of Homeless Services and Housing, Department of Public Social Services, and other relevant departments:

1) Conduct a tabletop exercise, prior to the start of the 2026-27 storm season, with board offices, impacted cities, and key local, state, and federal government partners, including entities that operate reservoirs, basins, and related water-management facilities affecting Los Angeles County communities in high-priority areas, to practice emergency coordination and response, and to develop El Niño storm preparedness strategies and procedures, and report

back to the Board before October 15, 2026 regarding outcomes and key takeaways from the completed exercises.

2) Report back to the Board in writing every 30 days until the end of the 2026-27 storm season regarding emergency preparations and status of implementation of the various strategies identified in the previous instruction.

3) Provide information and resources for cities and local government partners on best strategies to prepare for this storm season including, but not limited to, communications, home and facility hardening, and how to request State and Federal disaster assistance.

I, FURTHER, MOVE that the Department of Homeless Services and Housing and Department of Public and Social Services report back in 30 days on resources and plans to support residents displaced from El Niño storms, including strategies for establishing temporary shelter and availability of emergency hotel vouchers.

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