



PURE WATER PROJECT LAS VIRGENES-TRIUNFO

Bringing Our Water Full Circle

Public Outreach Plan

DRAFT

Prepared by:



For:

Las Virgenes – Triunfo Joint Powers Authority

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Attachment: Timeline – 6-month outlook with suggested tactics and assigned roles.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Las Virgenes – Triunfo Joint Powers Authority (JPA) is a partnership between Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) and Triunfo Sanitation District (TSD), established to cooperatively treat wastewater for these two bordering areas that share the Malibu Creek watershed. The JPA has been a pioneer in the development of recycled water as a renewable resource, operating the Tapia Water Reclamation Facility (TWRF) since 1965. All of the recycled water produced at the facility is used for irrigation during summer months; however, surplus recycled water must be discharged to Malibu Creek in winter months.

The JPA also has a goal of improving the health of the Malibu Creek Watershed. This has required a multi-pronged approach to address stringent US EPA water quality standards when recycled water must be discharged into the creek. However, compliance with standards has proven to be expensive and impactful to sewage treatment rates for customers, without fully protecting the creek or the species that live there. The JPA has expressed its commitment to creek stewardship, but with common sense solutions to water quality issues.

As part of a robust, 18-month stakeholder participation process, the JPA evaluated a number of options to beneficially use this “surplus” recycled water so that it will not need to be discharged into the creek. The top two options included indirect potable reuse using advanced purification followed by discharge to the Las Virgenes Reservoir, and repurposing the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Encino Reservoir for recycled water storage.

With two alternatives identified, from July through September 2016, Katz & Associates conducted in-depth discussions with 15 JPA stakeholders – individuals who live and/or work within the LVMWD or TSD service areas and/or are involved in the communities served by the districts. The purpose of the interviews was to gauge awareness and perceptions about water, wastewater and recycled water, and JPA services, as well as to obtain feedback on maximizing the beneficial use of the region’s recycled water from TWRF. It was clear from the majority of participants that, should either alternative move forward, extensive community engagement and information sharing would be critical, and should the potable reuse project move forward, additional communication will be important to raise awareness and understanding about the water quality/safety and benefits of potable reuse.

Advanced Water Treatment Facility for Indirect Potable Reuse

On August 1, 2016, the JPA Board approved the indirect potable reuse project, which would create a local, reliable water supply for the region, as the preferred alternative. This new local source of water will reduce dependency on imported water but will also effectively eliminate surplus recycled water discharged to the ocean through Malibu Creek.

While the science of water purification is solid, people are just now starting to accept and embrace the idea of using it to augment drinking water supplies. Great strides have resulted from necessity (for instance, drought), concerted water industry education efforts and positive experiences at other water agencies. However, questions and misunderstanding persist, so it is important for the JPA to expand their comprehensive education and information campaign on behalf of the project.

While the science is irrefutable, it is the emotion and lack of understanding about potable reuse than can delay and even defeat such projects. Getting the attention of busy residents in the service area to tell them about this high-quality local water source will take a significant amount of time. Outreach must start long before a project is constructed for the best outcome in terms of public understanding and acceptance. The outreach activities identified in this plan allow the JPA to introduce the potable reuse concept in an assortment of venues and in a variety of ways and lay the groundwork for the opportunity of touring the advanced water purification facility after its construction to see the purity and safety of the product water first-hand.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Public Outreach Plan is to ensure that the JPA conveys timely, accurate and clear program information to local leaders, stakeholders and residents. This plan includes strategies and tactics that will maximize public awareness and understanding of the project and is a living, working document that will be reviewed and revised as the project and associated analyses proceed. At the time of revision (Spring 2021), the project is currently approaching the CEQA and pre-construction phase and the outreach plan is geared toward conducting communications that will address the specific needs of this phase.

OUTREACH GOAL

The goal of this plan is to raise awareness and obtain support among JPA stakeholders, including regulators, about the importance and benefits of the Las Virgenes-Triunfo Pure Water Project (Pure Water Project) and increase comfort with and support for its use.

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

- Implement a public outreach program that transparently explains the Pure Water Project, the high quality and safety of the water it produces, and its benefits.
- Provide consistent and complete information to all stakeholders, including multicultural communities, so there are no surprises throughout the multi-phased development process.
- Foster understanding and acceptance of the science and advanced technology behind recycled water and indirect potable reuse.
- Minimize any confusion, opposition and discomfort with indirect potable reuse.
- Ensure consistency of information among all representatives and spokespersons.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- **Program identity** – Continue to establish the Pure Water Project with a recognizable program throughout all JPA and individual agency communication vehicles.
- **Program messages** – Help focus communication efforts using understandable terms and cut through the information clutter.
- **Science** – Incorporate information about technology to address health and safety concerns through clear articulation of advanced treatment steps, description of monitoring procedures and facility tours.

- **Consistent, sustained and multifaceted communication tools** – Employ a variety of general and tailored materials and tools, in multiple formats and appropriate translations, to clearly communicate project history, purpose and other relevant information to an array of audiences.
- **Transparency** – Demonstrate transparency by discussing pertinent aspects of indirect potable reuse, such as water quality, cost, regulatory oversight, safety and environmental issues with all stakeholders.
- **Two-way communication** – Create an environment for open dialogue with key audiences and track sentiment of interactions.
- **Alignment with technical work** – Schedule outreach activities and informational materials to stay on track with technical preparation of reports, recommendations and facilities design.
- **Visuals** – Use engaging graphics and visuals to communicate messages and complex information about potable reuse.
- **Partnerships** – Continue to team or start new partnerships with civic, environmental, academic and other groups to raise awareness with diverse audiences about potable reuse and empower others to carry Pure Water Project messages and, potentially, develop support statements.
- **Varied levels of technical detail** – Provide a range of technical details about potable reuse from those appropriate to the layperson to more in-depth and technical information as needed for other audiences, and address varied information needs from simple to complex.
- **Media relations** – Strengthen relationships and provide up-to-date media outreach activities in a variety of formats including print, electronic and social media.
- **Rapid response** – Quickly address misinformation or information gaps that might arise about the Pure Water Project.
- **Evaluation and course correction** – Measure efforts, accomplishments and feedback, and adjust as needed to reflect the evolution of the project and program.
- **Experience** – Refer to successful projects elsewhere.

ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES

While the public is becoming more accepting of the idea of indirect potable reuse, situational and communication challenges still exist. Below are several potential challenges that will probably be encountered along the way that could impact the program.

“Toilet to Tap”

The fact that purified water was once municipal wastewater continues to generate a “yuck” factor with some. The “toilet to tap” phrase has been used negatively in political campaigns, by the media and by oppositional interests as “shorthand” to express opposition to potable reuse as being unsafe to drink or even hazardous to the public. Calling the project “toilet to tap” or using imagery of toilets as “shock” images can create a strong negative influence on the public and serve to stigmatize the program.

Water Quality Concerns

In recent years, the issue of pharmaceuticals present in wastewater has been a drinking water quality concern raised in the media and by members of the community. Emotional fears exist about the health effects of pharmaceuticals and other “unknown contaminants” in drinking water.

Lack of Public Trust

Research has shown there is a significant portion of the public that has a general mistrust or lack of confidence in government. This lack of trust can translate into a concern that a governmental agency is not capable of successfully operating such a high-tech, advanced program.

Technical Information

The water purification process involves many treatment steps of a very technical nature. The information will need to be communicated in clear and relatable terms.

Construction Route

The proposed project pipeline will travel through a highly urbanized area which has previously experienced and expressed concerns about LVMWD construction.

Different Population Groups

The program will need to address the communication preferences of each unique group. An additional element to consider is the fact that some multicultural groups may have direct negative experiences with water systems and water quality in other locations that may hinder support of potable reuse.

Cost Concerns and Personal Economic Impacts

A public concern over the cost and funding sources for a large-scale, multi-year program is an anticipated challenge with the Pure Water Project and must be addressed.

Media and Social Media Misinformation

The media, social media, blogs and online discussion boards can all be vehicles for misinformation about the Pure Water Project. Networks of followers and interested parties can increase negative publicity or opinions with astounding speed and volume. There are no checks and balances or accountability to ensure data, facts or claims are accurate.

Attitudinal vs. Behavioral Change

There is no behavioral change associated with the Pure Water Project other than people pledging their support. There is not a cause or specific issue to rally behind, such as asking someone to conserve water, not litter, etc. A call to action is often what triggers engagement for members of the public and that is not expressly present with this project.

OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to challenges that need to be addressed, there are many opportunities to aid in enhancing and building program understanding, momentum, visibility and support. Below are several key opportunities that can contribute to the success of the program.

Recycled Water Discharges to Malibu Creek

The JPA is committed to environmental stewardship and delivering cost effective projects and services to customers. For both reasons, substantially reducing or eliminating discharges to the Malibu Creek watershed is beneficial and possible through completion of this project.

Continuation of JPA's Cutting Edge Reputation

The JPA has been a pioneer in the development of recycled water as a renewable resource. Since 1965, the JPA has operated the Tapia Water Reclamation Facility. The recycled water program is expansive and well received; the Pure Water Project is another opportunity to cement that innovative reputation.

Continuation and Expansion of Already Established Stakeholder Engagement

The JPA conducted an in-depth stakeholder engagement process with more than 25 agencies and interest groups represented to identify options to maximize use of recycled water. This is an informed, involved group that can and should continue to be engaged as the program and project move forward.

The "Green" Movement

Sustainability is a widely accepted and motivating concept. The environmental benefits and sustainable characteristics of the Pure Water Project can be emphasized, including energy savings compared to importing water, a low carbon footprint, the reuse of a scarce natural resource and more. Leaders of local environmental groups are important potential allies who can provide support and confirmation of the environmental benefits to be achieved with the Pure Water Project.

Successful Southern California Potable Reuse Project

The Groundwater Replenishment System (GWRS), operated by the Orange County Water District, uses the same water purification process as that proposed for the Pure Water Project. The GWRS project opened in January 2008 and has received national and international recognition and strong public acceptance. The Orange County project is an excellent example of the technology at a publicly owned and operated advanced water treatment facility. The Pure Water Project can point to the GWRS's proven track record of treatment process safety and consistently high water quality, as well as take residents to the Orange County facility to tour the project and see the purity of the water produced for themselves.

Heightened Awareness about Drought

California has experienced its lowest rainfall in recorded history, and there is increasing attention on the dire drought conditions in California. The reliability of imported water supplies is also a significant concern, as is the rising costs for this water. Developing complementary messaging and partnering with the JPA's water conservation staff can provide a better understanding as to why the Pure Water Project opportunity comes at such an important time for the region.

Positive Public Opinion

Recent surveys conducted by state agencies and other utilities indicate that more people are accepting of indirect potable reuse projects than in previous years.

Media Attention

Attracting positive media attention includes working more with science and environmental reporters and reaching out to more online publications, which offer the added benefit of a comments section where community members can post their opinions and feedback. Story pitches can also be accompanied by editorial briefings, interviews in a variety of formats, media advisories and media tours.

Social Media

Social media provides an opportunity to increase program visibility, and supporters can be encouraged to share the Pure Water Project updates and information with their communities through it. The Pure Water Project's presence on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other social media channels (Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.) will continue to be an important communication channel to keep the program's progress top-of-mind for interested community members.

AUDIENCES

Through its previous stakeholder engagement process, one-on-one discussions, ongoing capabilities for information signup through the LVMWD website and significant public outreach conducted heretofore, the JPA has already prepared a solid stakeholder database. To ensure comprehensive coverage of all stakeholders and groups, the Outreach and Communications team will take a two-pronged approach: focusing on customers, local organizations or groups and local leaders, while concurrently sharing information about the program with industry professionals, regulators, funders and other related stakeholders. A broad and comprehensive database will be foundational to ensuring consistent, sustained and targeted communication based on stakeholder interests and information requests. Using the audience category list included below, the stakeholder database will be broadened even more to incorporate those not previously engaged, and to update any contact information that has expired. This database will include email addresses whenever possible, but may also include purchased direct mail lists. The following lists the wide variety of stakeholders that will be reached with a comprehensive outreach program and is organized based on the aforementioned approach:

Industry and Regulatory

- Internal (board and staff, as well as their families)
 - All JPA staff, leadership, and Board members
- Government and elected officials (local, city, county, state and national)
 - Senate and House of Representatives delegations
 - State senators and assembly members
 - Elected officials from partner agencies
- Governmental and regulatory agencies (regional, state and national)
 - Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - California Department of Public Health
 - California Department of Water Resources
 - California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - California Department of Transportation
 - Air Quality Management District
 - US Environmental Protection Agency
 - US Army Corps of Engineers
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Other water purveyors and industry groups/associations

Local

- Academia/education
- Agency ratepayers
- Business organizations
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Local businesses including consultants and contractors
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- Environmental organizations and other NGOs
 - Bay Keepers
 - Sierra Club
 - Save the Bay
- Homeowner Associations and Community Groups
 - Individual homeowners' associations
 - Multi-cultural groups
 - Faith-based organizations
 - Civic and service organizations
- Landscaping, gardening and related industries
- Media
 - Newspapers
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Online publications/blogs
- Medical, public health and water quality experts
- Recycled water customers
- School boards and parent-teacher groups
 - Pepperdine University
 - Community College
 - School District
 - High School District
 - Girl Scout/Boy Scout troops

PUBLIC OUTREACH APPROACH

The outreach activities identified in this Public Outreach Plan are organized into the following categories:

- Program Messages
- Data Collection and Research
- Stakeholder Engagement and Participation
- Informational Materials and Branding
- Media Relations and Social Media
- Construction Relations

- Tracking and Measurement

All approaches and activities listed are recommendations. As the Pure Water Project evolves, the JPA should revisit the plan and recommendations, and appropriately implement as resources allow. Many recommendations are focused on the nearer term as analyses results solidify, a demonstration project moves forward, outreach increases and financing options are explored.

Program Messages

The following messages are recommended as the foundation of the Pure Water Project Message Plan:

- **Reliable and Environmentally Sustainable:** The project will address two major challenges facing the community: it will improve local water supply reliability and drought resilience, and effectively eliminate discharges to Malibu Creek, a current practice that is not sustainable.
- **Proven Technology to Produce Safe Water:** Advanced water treatment using the latest, proven technology will produce the purest, highest quality water that can be blended with existing sources and placed in the drinking water system.
- **Affordable and Cost-Effective:** The new supply of water will be economical, with costs competitive to those projected for imported water supplies over the long term.
- **Evaluating Project Options:** Currently, the Pure Water Project is in the pre-design and environmental phase, during which studies are done to analyze technical components, space requirements, the proposed site(s), environmental and regulatory conditions, and the funding needs.

An attachment to this plan includes these messages with supporting facts and sub-messages. The Pure Water Message Plan will be a living document for the use of spokespersons and in development of materials and will be updated as opportunities and challenges require.

Data Collection and Research

- **Stakeholder Interviews:** The JPA has already undertaken stakeholder interviews to grasp perceptions more fully about water, water reliability and water reuse. As the program and project evolve, the JPA should continue to schedule these informal discussions to gauge opinions and perceptions and to identify potentially emerging issues.
- **Online Secondary Research:** Potable reuse projects continue to evolve throughout the world and particularly in the western United States. The JPA should conduct information research, such as article searches and analysis, to provide monthly updates and to stay current on emerging issues.
- **Formalized Survey(s):** Preliminary research has been conducted by Pepperdine University. As project plans proceed and as new information becomes available, the JPA should conduct a statistically valid, representative baseline survey of people within the JPA service area(s) to identify awareness levels, perceptions, existing knowledge, convincing messaging, and interest areas. If conducted early enough, this will create a solid foundation and can be followed by regularly scheduled inquiries to measure change and inform future outreach and communication efforts.

Informational Materials and Branding

Branding:

All materials and communication going forward will include the approved logo and theme line to establish a recognized identity for this regional water supply sustainability and environmental protection effort.



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Informational Materials:

Informational materials moving forward will be tailored to different audiences, address specific concerns and needs, be written for a varying knowledge base and convey important messages in a consistent manner. All materials will also incorporate descriptions of the science of potable reuse in easy-to-understand language. Materials and communication tools will be reviewed for cultural sensitivity and appropriateness for different age groups. They will be distributed in a variety of ways and include both electronic and non-electronic outlets to reach multiple audiences. To address immediate needs, the project team should review and update the following for the current project phase:

- Malibu Creek Watershed Beneficial Uses
- “One Page Summary”
- Stewardship Brochure
- Project Brochure/ Fact Sheets (tailored to the current project phase)
- Program Messages (to include current phase messaging and supporting facts)
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Newsletter/E-newsletter template
- Presentation Template (with modules for a range of audiences, from laypersons to technical audiences)

We also recommend moving forward with creating the following materials:

- Quick Facts Card (for use by field personnel and at presentations)

Finally, consider providing materials translated into Spanish or other common languages in the service areas. Additional understanding of local demographics and language requirements is needed.

Website Presence

Currently, JPA information is hosted on a joint project website – www.ourpureh2o.com and as part of the branding initiative, establishes identifiable and easily accessible informational resources. The site is linked through prominently featured links on the home pages of both districts and includes the Pure Water Project logo. It also includes sub-pages that support key topics with concise content in easily understood, non-technical language. The website also houses fact sheets and FAQs and other relevant Pure Water Project documents, supported with appropriate graphics. The website offers an opportunity

for visitors to submit questions or comments on the project that can be answered in subsequent public communication as well.

The website has been minimally updated since its development and is due for significant updates and upgrades to align with the current project phase and milestones.

Stakeholder Engagement and Participation

Key Stakeholder Briefings

A JPA priority should be to conduct immediate and then periodic individual briefings with elected officials and previously identified representatives of stakeholder groups, as well as with participants of the JPA's stakeholder engagement efforts to date. The purpose will be to ensure elected officials and others in the service area clearly understand what the Pure Water Project is, are aware of the purity of the product water and have a pathway to make sure their questions are answered. This effort will include development of a briefing presentation for JPA spokespersons to use. Following a slow-down in 2020 due to COVID-19, a renewed sense of urgency and enthusiasm is necessary in preparation for CEQA.

Project Liaison

Identify and promote a project liaison who can address all manner of recycled water questions. The liaison will act as a customer representative, guide to JPA services, on-site resource for customers, information presenter and more. This individual will need to be knowledgeable about recycled water uses; impacts of recycled water on buildings and equipment; recycled water quality and any fluctuations in quality ahead of time so customers can adapt; and potable reuse background, project examples and where one can go to see an operating potable reuse project and taste the water.

One-on-one Meetings

One-on-one meetings have been hosted in the past and should be initiated again as the project continues to progress and updates are available. The team may choose to re-engage previous interviewees or select to meet with new ones. The meetings are crucial for engaging stakeholders, uncovering challenges or issues, and keeping them informed. The goals of these meetings are as follows:

- Build awareness, trust and confidence in the potable reuse technology processes among community leaders and local elected officials, and inform them of water supply demands and shortages, as well as how potable reuse can meet demands while being responsive to concerns related to project implementation.
- Determine sentiment around the project by prominent leaders.
- Provide potable reuse information to key business, environmental and community leaders to ensure they are informed about the safety and reliability of this water source.

Speakers Bureau

Presentations about the Pure Water Project have been opportunistic to this point. The JPA has launched a proactive, targeted and broad-based speakers bureau effort throughout the region served by the JPA agencies, as well as to industry and professional associations and organizations. This practice should continue virtually until the status of the COVID-19 pandemic allows for in-person meetings. Project presentations will be beginning in May 2021 and continue throughout the entire project life span. This

will include civic and business groups as well as elected bodies that might share an interest in staying current with project developments.

- **Presentations:** Based on the updated message plan and materials, a PowerPoint presentation will be prepared and will offer, in approximately 15 minutes, a concise explanation of the Pure Water Project, including purpose and need, technical details (in lay language), cost and timelines. This will include graphics and animation to visually describe the potential project. It will also be beneficial to ensure that potable reuse content is part of all presentations by the JPA's speakers bureau.
- **Spokespersons:** When naming spokespersons, ensure all speakers are effective presenters and confirm that all speakers will have an opportunity to practice presentations and use consistent messages. JPA spokespersons should be identified and should participate in a presentation workshop that will include presentation review and FAQ practice. Spokespersons should include both board and staff as well as, potentially, third-party spokespersons.
- **Scheduling:** Presentation scheduling will be proactive, broad and organized and includes calls and inquiries to targeted groups regarding the opportunity to present at an upcoming meeting, logistics coordination, and spokesperson preparation and support, as well as collection of questions received and coordination of timely responses to questions or requests for additional information. It can also include a partnership-building effort that, for instance, provides a Pure Water "badge" that can be displayed on the websites of organizations that support the project. Broad outreach to stakeholders will ensure that speakers bureau presentations reach a wide variety of groups and multicultural audiences.
- **Publicity:** The speakers bureau's availability will be publicized in a variety of ways to a broad audience. A promotional flier can be emailed to key stakeholders and community organizations and distributed at community events, information can be posted on the website, elected officials can be encouraged to offer Pure Water presentations to their constituent groups and more.
- **Support cards:** Speakers bureau presentations provide a timely opportunity to collect names of program supporters and to allow audience members to request additional program information. Each speaker will have a supply of support cards to distribute, as appropriate, following presentations.
- **Speaker tracking form:** Each speaker or support staff will complete a tracking form immediately following each presentation. This provides key information about the presentation, such as any needed follow up, audience size, audience questions and commentary. Information will be included in the ongoing communication metrics assessment.
- **Presentation evaluation form:** A presentation evaluation form will be distributed to the group leader or program chairperson immediately following the presentation. Staff will conduct follow up to obtain the completed form, if needed. The presentation will be revised, as needed, based on feedback and project progress.

Events and Forums

Existing community events within the JPA service area are good examples of grass roots tactics that reach ratepayers directly. LVMWD attends events such as these and staffs booths throughout the year. For 2017, special information and promotions to support event participation occurred during the first

half of the year. In some cases, sponsorship of certain events may be useful. A detailed plan will include research of event opportunities, specific recommendations and logistics for JPA inclusion that will likely require the continued participation of JPA staff.

CEQA

The environmental review process spans many audience groups with various levels of interest and direct impact. It is clear the local community, however, needs to be formally and repeatedly invited to participate in the CEQA process so as to avoid future miscommunication or misinformation. Involvement and participation from the community must come with, and even before, CEQA and should even be sought out.

- **Public Meetings in Support of CEQA:** Public participation is an essential part of the CEQA process (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15201) and is a required component of Programmatic EIR preparation. The requirements interwoven into the CEQA guidelines have two purposes: 1) Fully inform the public of the environmental effects of a proposed project and 2) Provide the opportunity for public comment on the environmental issues, impact conclusions, and the mitigation and project alternatives evaluated in the PEIR. Public meetings in support of the CEQA process will help inform the public of the environmental review processes respective to each of the three proposed projects and provide opportunities to solicit comments as required by CEQA.
- **“Above and Beyond” CEQA Requirements:** Ideas listed below include suggested tactics for going “above and beyond” CEQA noticing and public meeting requirements and can be implemented to achieve greater levels of participation and, therefore, a more defensible environmental document. It may also help uncover additional concerns, challenges or issues that can be mitigated through actions of the Project Management Team (PMT).
 - Notices
 - Direct mail notices
 - Electronic notices on via social media including Nextdoor, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
 - Electronic newsletter
 - Website postings
 - Advertisements on community papers and other local publications

With each notice listed above, all community members and stakeholders interested in participating in the project should be able to register their contact information into a stakeholder contact database hosted on the www.ourPureH2o.com.

- **Stakeholder Advisory Group:** A dedicated working group of carefully selected community leaders can provide a more meaningful dialogue between the PMT and the community. Genuine two-way dialogue requires listening and listening requires mutual respect. To learn from what we hear requires humility, especially when what we hear challenges our assumptions. It is advised to form a stakeholder advisory group only in the case where their input can be received, their opinions valued and their suggestions potentially implemented.
- **Additional/Alternative CEQA Meetings:** With the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic both behind and in front of us, it will be important to consider the best approach for encouraging public participation throughout the CEQA engagement process. One option is to allow

attendance at the required public meetings virtually through a video call platform. Another option is to host multiple scoping or draft release meetings to give stakeholders additional opportunities to attend. Hosting these at different times of the day and week will also maximize opportunity to participate. It is suggested to incorporate both additional and alternative forms of participation.

Partnerships

One way to increase the reach of the Pure Water Project is to partner or collaborate with other governmental agencies, community and stakeholder groups, schools at various educational levels and others. This may take the form of an exhibit booth at an event or festival, developing educational curriculum, sponsoring a forum with a focus on a topic such as the environment or public health, or placing an article in a publication.

- Research opportunities to provide articles and other content for stakeholder groups and partnering agencies' publications, websites and newsletters. Additional options for greater engagement with partners are producing template articles for their use and participating in their sponsored events or activities such as key meetings or events, to increase visibility of the program. When possible, engage the audience with interactive activities.

Construction Relations

Well before construction begins, the project team will need to initiate pre-construction planning efforts to ensure the needs of businesses and residents affected by construction are met. Construction projects will often be “the face of the program” and must be carefully managed to ensure onsite efforts adhere to the program-wide outreach goals, including minimizing impacts to residents and neighbors.

To ensure a seamless transition into construction, the following activities may be considered before, during and after construction:

- Alert or notify all impacted stakeholders or audiences of future construction, with plenty of notice to allow for alternative plans.
- Establish a consistent program of news and information.
- Minimize inconveniences by preparing early and communicating often.
- Conduct business “pop-ins” – have staff stop by each business that will be impacted and request to speak with the owner or manager to inform them about the project and the construction schedule.
- Provide information packets (including project fact sheets, other appropriate informational materials and a business card) and/or a poster describing the project to business owners and employees.
- Reinforce the purpose and need of the program and its associated projects.
- Conduct project-specific construction outreach, communicating directly with the residents, businesses and community stakeholders in areas where construction is taking place.
- Keep neighbors informed as construction progresses or of any delays that are to be expected.
- Establish procedures to regularly monitor and respond to construction-related e-mails received.
- Create an e-mail inquiry log to record and document questions, comments and responses received.

- Resolve problems (i.e., access to driveways, business impacts, traffic control).
- Make amends (i.e., car wash certificate, thank you letter).
- Use appropriate communication technology, including a website, e-mail and social media to stay in touch cost-effectively.
- Conduct small group or one-on-one meetings in any areas of particular concern with regards to construction.
- Hold events such as groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings to share project milestones and successes with the community.
- Consider special “thank you” events for communities or neighborhoods that have been impacted by construction.
- Use social media to post construction-related updates, such as traffic detours and street closures.
- Seek local media coverage to raise awareness about the program.

Media and Social Media

- Enhance traditional and social media outreach.
- Provide media with continuously stimulating and newsworthy content related to water supply diversity and indirect potable reuse.
- Cultivate working relationships with local and regional media representatives, bloggers and specialty reporters to facilitate accurate and balanced media coverage.
- Develop short video presentations featuring indirect potable reuse descriptions and benefits that can be shared with the media and stakeholders.
- Engage multicultural publications and media outlets that reach a diverse readership.
- Increase the presence, audience and level of engagement on social media.
- Establish and implement a rapid response program to address misinformation that might arise about potable reuse.

Tracking and Measurement

The effectiveness of the communication program will be measured by a variety of performance indicators. It will be important to track progress to identify program successes as well as opportunities for improvement. The outreach program should remain flexible to allow for change as program elements are evaluated or new elements are initiated. Some of the methods that can be used to measure effectiveness include:

- Level of social media engagement using online analytic tools
- Number of news/media mentions
- Number of support cards collected/number of letters or resolutions of support gathered
- Number of meetings held with stakeholders
- Website traffic and e-newsletter open rate and sharing analytics
- Comprehensive records of speakers bureau activities, including number of attendees and

feedback

- Number of event participation and the audience reach for each event
- Number of conferences and industry forums participated in
- Number of tours conducted and volume of attendees

TIMELINE

A schedule of activities to launch the Pure Water Project Public Outreach Plan for six months following May 2021 is included as an attachment to this document and indicates roles and responsibilities for each item. After six months have passed, a meeting of the outreach team will be set to review progress to date and set course for the following six months.