

UNDER THE SEA

With Our Urban Green Turtles



Photo courtesy of Robin Riggs / Aquarium of the Pacific

2023 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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It begins with me!

By Chris Lancaster
Publisher, Civic Publications

Before the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, there was no EPA, no Clean Air Act, no Clean Water Act and no legal way to protect the environment.

So Senator Gaylord Nelson introduced Earth Day as a way to show the political leadership of the country that there was broad and deep grassroots support for the environmental movement. Celebrations



and peaceful demonstrations were held in cities across the U.S., and by the end of that year, congress created a new federal agency to take on environmental issues – the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Since then, Earth Day has been an annual recognition of the achievements of the environmental movement, and a reminder of our responsibility to future generations to preserve Earth's natural resources.

In recognition of that commitment to the next generation, I often wonder what I can do to minimize my carbon footprint. I do my best to participate in "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Conserve" programs in my community; I hope my participation makes a difference.

I've installed a high-efficiency washer, a low-flush toilet, a smart sprinkler system and I fix my leaky faucets. I also

"The great lesson of Earth Day is that it must never be forgotten."

participate by recycling food waste, metals, plastics and cardboard.

I pick up litter when it crosses my path to keep it from entering storm drains and ending up in our oceans. I don't litter, but even more than

that, I don't want to see litter from other people marring the environment and making its way into our waterways.

Being a better steward of our natural resources and of my own surroundings keeps it top of mind that there are things in life greater than me. Being a steward of the environment makes me a better person, a better neighbor and therefore a better citizen.

The great lesson of Earth Day is that it must never be forgotten. Our survival depends on our ability to preserve, protect and defend our environment.

In my world, Earth Day begins with me! ○



A Hawaiian green sea turtle swimming the Pacific Ocean. Green sea turtles spend time off the Southern California coast and nest in Mexico.

Doing Swimmingly on Los Angeles' Shoreline

Green Sea Turtles are Surviving at the Mouth of the San Gabriel River

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

In some Indigenous peoples' folklore, North America is known as Turtle Island based on the belief that their land was formed on the back of a turtle. Today, on the edges of the bustling Los Angeles metropolis, residents can spot sea turtles.

"It is so fascinating to see the connection to history and the natural world and to know these urban sea turtles are living right alongside one of the biggest cities in the world," said Cassandra Davis, manager of volunteer services at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach. "It's a reminder of how close we are to the natural world and it resonates hope."

The urban sea turtles Davis is referring to are Eastern Pacific green sea turtles and their northernmost known home is the San Gabriel River

[See **GREEN SEA TURTLES**, Page 18]

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Make Every Day Earth Day

The South Coast Botanic Garden is built on a closed landfill maintained by the Sanitation Districts.

We all have a role in protecting our planet. The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts help protect the environment by converting sewage into clean water and waste into recycled commodities and green energy.

You can help by:

-  Properly disposing of your household hazardous and electronic waste at one of our free local roundups (www.lacsd.org/hhw).
-  Keeping trash off of streets by placing in trash cans.
-  Putting paper, cans, bottles and other recyclables in the bin for recyclables.

For more ways to be green, visit www.lacsd.org/earthday.



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"California sets the example for the nation – and often the world – through our ambitious climate goals and efforts to tackle some of the toughest environmental challenges."

Yana Garcia
CalEPA Secretary

Secretary Yana Garcia Connecting Californians

*New CalEPA Head Focused on Equity,
Climate Resiliency and Economic Progress*

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer

The well-being of Earth, or more specifically the piece we call California, is top of mind every day – and some nights – for California's newest Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Yana Garcia.

"California sets the example for the nation – and often the world – through our ambitious climate goals and efforts to tackle some of the toughest environmental challenges," said Garcia.

"Earth Month, for me, is a time to double-down on these commitments and bring renewed urgency to the work we're doing to reduce pollution burdens in vulnerable communities, improve drinking water access and affordability, and transition to a circular use economy that removes some of the most toxic chemicals from our consumption and waste streams."

Garcia, who was appointed as the first Latina CalEPA Secretary by Gov. Gavin Newsom in August 2022, oversees the state's efforts to fight climate change, protect air and water quality, regulate pesticides and toxic substances, achieve the state's recycling and waste reduction goals, and advance environmental justice.



Gov. Gavin Newsom

"Yana's deep connection to communities, her strong track record as an environmental attorney in holding polluters accountable, and her commitment to bringing diverse interests together make her uniquely matched to the challenges facing California," said Gov. Newsom in announcing her appointment.

In her new role, Garcia is focused on improving communication, transparency and accountability, especially as the state faces increasingly more frequent climate disasters.

"We have to have boots on ground all across California communities from rural to urban. We have to notice who is in the room and who we are not reaching, and we have to convey information in a way all Californians can understand," she said. "It's our responsibility to make sure we communicate to everyday Californians in a way that makes sense to them and resonates with them."

Her appointment came as the state went from severe drought and wildfires to unprecedented snow, rainfall and flooding.

"What we're seeing is that even our best models don't quite accurately predict the weather whiplash that we're experiencing. We're seeing hardship all across the board with floods and wildfires," said Garcia. "I envision climate resiliency as a state of being in which Californians can feel safe in the environment that surrounds them. That means that when we are facing wildfires, drought, floods and the like we are able to rapidly deploy emergency response and recovery resources that people can readily access and trust. It also means inherently that neither race nor income should determine relative



Yana Garcia was named CalEPA Secretary in August 2022. Above, she is sworn in by Gov. Gavin Newsom as her father Sergio Garcia holds the California Constitution and looks on. Garcia will lead state efforts to combat climate change, improve air and water quality, regulate toxic substances and more.
Photos courtesy of the State of California

access to that sense of safety and the ability to recover from increasingly frequent disasters."

As head CalEPA Garcia oversees the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). She recognizes the importance of partnering with each of these departments and following through on commitments promised with tangible and beneficial results.

"Yana's deep connection to communities, her strong track record as an environmental attorney in holding polluters accountable, and her commitment to bringing diverse interests together make her uniquely matched to the challenges facing California."

Gov. Gavin Newsom

Garcia, who served from 2021 to 2022 as Special Assistant Attorney General to California Attorney General Rob Bonta, is nationally known for her work to uplift the voices of those from disadvantaged communities. In her tenure as an Assistant and Deputy Secretary at CalEPA she led three Environmental Justice Task Force Initiatives in the communities of Pomona, Imperial County and Stockton. She also led the program that delivered more than \$1 million in Environmental Justice Small Grants to 28 organizations to combat pollution, improve health outcomes and increase public engagement in some of California's most pollution-burdened communities. That program has now grown to a multi-year \$20 million investment program to increase capacity in some of the state's most pollution burdened areas.

"One of biggest lessons I learned early in my career is that all too often communities, particularly low-income communities and communities color, are



As CalEPA Secretary, Garcia leads many departments from water resources to toxic substance control. At left, Garcia speaks at a Coalition for Clean Air event in Sacramento. Above, she addresses the press in the farm community of Dunnigan northwest of Sacramento when Gov. Newsom lifted some drought restrictions.

Photos courtesy of the State of California

[SECRETARY YANA GARCIA, Page 6]

faced with this false choice between economic growth and stability and access to clean, safe jobs and environmental quality," she said. "Our communities deserve both. I tend to approach decisions by taking a big step back from the notion that economic growth should come at the cost of environmental quality and health, or vice versa."

Garcia is proud of her accomplishments on the environmental justice front because she's witnessed the movement grow in power and influence in such arenas as drinking water quality, pollution and the oil and gas industry. Now, she is looking forward to crafting policy implementation strategies with a wide array of stakeholders.

"It's so important to notice who is at the decision-making table, and who is absent. My experience has been focused on marginalized communities who have all too often been left out," Garcia said. "But I'm equally committed to understanding where we may have a business perspective lacking or that of any stakeholder who is necessary in finding a particular solution."

Garcia is already working closely with her cabinet colleagues including Secretary of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency Lourdes Castro Ramírez and Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture Karen Ross because she recognizes how education, housing, farmworker health and safety, the environment, and other concerns all intersect and impact Californians.

"We're pressed to find solutions that don't water down some of the groundbreaking environmental protections we've long been known for in the state of California," she said, citing the importance of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). "We have to keep our residents safe and our ecosystem safe. We can't compromise on the protections we've worked hard to implement in this state, but we do have to recognize that certain types of development provide an environmental benefit and should be able to move forward swiftly. The overall benefit of building new housing units, for example, can create a net positive result in terms of enabling us to reach our climate goals."

What is it that keeps Garcia up at night? Two things: a resilient water supply and waste management. "Despite the heavy rain and snowpack we're seeing now, we always have to be ready for drought, and we have to remain vigilant of water quality impacts caused by the prevalence of contaminants. The less water we have, the more potent the impact of those contaminants.

"We also fill our landfills with 41 million tons of waste a year. That's more than a ton of trash for every Californian. We have a real challenge in terms of being able to manage, treat, store, dispose of waste here in California," she said. "One of the goals I have is to ensure that we're able to do that. Our carbon-neutral economy is not a waste-neutral economy, so we have to consider how we are planning for the waste streams that come from our renewable energy economy, our zero-emission vehicle transportation sector, and more. It's going to take a lot of creative minds to think through how we're building in secondary uses for everything from batteries in vehicles to wind turbines."

California's water supply strategy, released the same month Garcia was appointed, aims to help California prepare for a possible 10 percent long-term reduction in our water supply by 2040. "That is still a goal worth achieving," said Garcia. "While storage may come to mind immediately for a lot of folks as a way to get us there, we need to keep our focus on conserving water through better land use practices and meeting efficiency standards."

The state has also invested over \$8 billion to enhance the state's water resilience and nearly \$850 million in the last two budget cycles to build the nation's first circular use economy where goods are produced, used, reused and recycled. But Garcia emphasizes that such a change requires not only new infrastructure but a change in the way we all think about how goods are produced and consumed. ○

Her Earth Day Challenge:
Waste not. Make conservation
a way of life.



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ORGANIC WASTE and the ENVIRONMENT

It's no secret that California is already feeling the effects of climate change – with extreme weather, rising sea levels, and hotter summers.

One of the best ways to make an impact in the fight against climate change is by eliminating organic waste.

Organic material comes from living organisms and includes food scraps, food-soiled paper, wood, paper products, cardboard, and yard waste. These materials can be upcycled or recycled to create useful products like compost, fertilizer, renewable electricity, and biogas.

The problem is that organic waste is too often improperly disposed of and ends up in local landfills. In fact, organic waste comprises a significant portion of waste generated in households and was a third of California's waste in 2018.

Organic waste decomposes in landfills over time and produces methane gas, a climate super pollutant 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Methane and other greenhouse gases can lead to more extreme weather events, including heat waves, storms, droughts, and wildfires. It is estimated that 20 percent of California's methane is generated from landfills.

Organic waste can be reused for a variety of things. Inedible food waste can be composted or used to generate renewable energy. Yard waste is ideal for composting. Lumber can be turned into mulch or renewable energy. Paper products and food-soiled paper can be composted or recycled.

It is crucial to properly dispose organic waste, whether at home or at work. Your waste hauler has specific information on how they collect organic waste such as separating it from your regular trash and placing it into a separate container.



Small changes in behavior will have a big, measurable impact when we all do our part. It starts with making conscious choices about the products we buy and the way we consume them. After all, the best way to manage your organic waste is to not create it in the first place.

A lifestyle change can seem daunting but there are resources available to everyone looking to do their part to create a cleaner Los Angeles.

Visit **CleanLA.com** or
call **(888) CleanLA / (888) 253-2652**
for resources on County programs including trash and
recycling services, composting, and more.

*If you have questions regarding organic waste collection,
contact your waste hauler.*

FIGHTING FOOD WASTE *at Home*



Food waste is a major obstacle when it comes to living a sustainable life and reducing organic waste. It is estimated Californians throw away nearly six million tons of food waste each year, which makes up about 18 percent of all the material that goes to landfills.

When food is improperly disposed, it not only affects our wallets, but our environment and the fight against food insecurity. Like all organic waste, when food decomposes over time in our landfills it releases harmful methane into the air.

By reducing food waste, we can reduce the number of resources used in food production such as water, land, fertilizers, and energy. When food is wasted, it is also a waste of these precious resources.

Food scraps, like fruits, vegetables, eggshells, and coffee grounds, are great materials for composting and can be turned into nutrient-rich soil for gardening. Excess edible food can also be donated to local food banks or shelters. This is a great way to not only limit your waste but help those fighting food insecurity.

Ways to Minimize Food Waste:

- Plan meals with food you already have before buying more and turn leftovers into new meals.
- Make a list before grocery shopping and stick to it.
- Store food properly to keep it fresher longer, like putting fruits and vegetables in the crisper drawer of your fridge and keeping dry goods in airtight containers.
- Freeze meats, breads, and vegetables you do not plan on using right away to keep them from spoiling. Be familiar with “best by” and “sell by” date labels on food products to reduce premature disposal of edible food.

Visit **FoodDropLA.com** for more information and resources.





Hoping to Turn Words into Action in Water Industry

Three Valleys MWD Leadership Breakfast Features Keynote Speaker Charley Wilson

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer



"The industry is changing. It has to change given the climate impacts, including extended droughts."

Charley Wilson
Southern California
Water Coalition
Executive Director
and CEO

Charley Wilson, Executive Director and CEO of the Southern California Water Coalition (SCWC), issued a call to action for San Gabriel Valley water industry and city leaders in his address at the tri-annual Three Valleys Municipal Water District Leadership Breakfast.

"The industry is changing. It has to change given the climate impacts, including extended droughts," Wilson said. "It's not the change that people oppose, but rather the transition. You have to be willing to make the effort. We usually agree on change as a desired outcome or need. What we don't like is the disciplined work it takes to make the transition a reality."

The Three Valleys breakfast was held on Feb. 24 at the Mountain Meadows Golf Course event center in Pomona. Representatives from more than 15 regional water agencies and six San Gabriel Valley cities were in attendance, along with U.S. Congresswoman Grace Napolitano and representatives for state Senator Bob Archuleta and state Assembly Members Freddie Rodriguez and Blanca Rubio.

"I commend Three Valleys Board of Directors for assembling water leaders to discuss California's ongoing drought," said Napolitano after the event. "The drought is not over. These discussions are critical for addressing current and future water needs for Southern California. We must now work to inform the general public about this reality. Even with the recent rain and snow storms, California's aquifers and water storage sites are still far from being full."

Wilson, whose nonprofit organization SCWC is a nonpartisan, public education partnership between cities, counties, business, industry, labor, disadvantaged communities, agriculture, and water agencies dedicated to securing reliable, affordable, high-quality water for Southern California, was the keynote speaker at the event attended by more than 80 people.

Event sponsor Three Valleys MWD, a Metropolitan member agency, is a wholesale water agency with 13 member agencies serving 133 square miles and a population of over 500,000 residents in the Pomona, Walnut and eastern San Gabriel valleys.

"Charley (Wilson) is a very dynamic speaker and we were glad to have him at such a well-attended event. I talked to many colleagues and they commented on how he gave us our marching orders," said Three Valleys Board President Jody Roberto. "It is up to us in the water industry to get the message out to the public. Some people think the drought is over, but while the rain helps take us out of extreme drought, we could easily be right back there if we don't work together and take action."

"I commend Three Valleys Board of Directors for assembling water leaders to discuss California's ongoing drought."

Grace Napolitano
U.S. Congresswoman



At left, Three Valleys Municipal Water District Leadership Breakfast attendees listen to Charley Wilson of the Southern California Water Coalition (SCWC) at the Mountain Meadows Golf Course event center in Pomona. Above, from left to right: TVMWD Directors Mike Ti, Jody Roberto (President) and David DeJesus next to Wilson and TVMWD General Manager Matthew Litchfield. At right, from top to bottom: Roberto and Ti flank U.S. Congresswoman Grace Napolitano; TVMWD Director Bob Kuhn with Napolitano; Ti, Rowland Water District Director Anthony Lima and DeJesus (back row from left), and Rowland WD Director Szu Pei Lu-Yang, Lily Woo, Walnut Valley Water District Directors Henry Woo and Scarlett Kwong and Litchfield (front row from left).



Wilson, who has been a leading public affairs professional in Southern California for more than 30 years and is a recognized leader in the industry, centered his message on spring as a time of renewal and focused on solutions to the many challenges facing the California water industry.

"Some people think the drought is over, but while the rain helps take us out of extreme drought, we could easily be right back there if we don't work together and take action."

Jody Roberto
Three Valleys
Board President

"There's an old Japanese proverb: 'When you're dying of thirst, it's too late to dig the well.' It's important that we move forward on important work and address and balance the challenges of supply, conveyance, efficiency, quality and cost," Wilson said. "We need to invest and work together. We are a long way from having the kind of consensus we need to move forward."

Wilson reviewed the major water initiatives familiar to the attendees including statewide water conveyance improvements, recycled water projects, stormwater capture, as well as quality and affordability of water. He gave examples of public outreach efforts including SCWC's "lawn dude" advertising campaign to encourage turf removal.

Some participant questions following the presentation sought guidance on how to create effective educational outreach for the public and affect change going forward.

Roberto said she almost immediately had a discussion with Three Valleys General Manager and Chief Engineer Matt Litchfield and hopes the regional agencies can collaborate on a uniform message. She was also honored to have Congresswoman Napolitano in attendance as she is already working with agencies to take action on the legislative level.

"Most importantly, we need to work as a team," Wilson said. "Everyone here needs to see themselves as a leader and step up and take action. Take the lessons and message from here, inform the public and transform your agency." ○



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San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority Awards Federal Funds

Vital Groundwater Cleanup Continues as More Money is Sought

By Elizabeth Smilor
Special Sections Writer



"The WQA has dispersed the federal funds in a way that addresses the varied and emerging issues we face in the long-term cleanup of the basin. We are thankful for the support of our legislators in Washington, D.C. and will continue to work with them to bring in additional funding to accomplish our mission."

Mark Paulson
WQA Board Chairman

The San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority (WQA) awarded two \$10 million federal allocations to 17 diverse and vital projects in the ongoing cleanup of the San Gabriel groundwater basin. The allocations were made on Dec. 21, 2022 and Feb. 22, 2023.

"The WQA has dispersed the federal funds in a way that addresses the varied and emerging issues we face in the long-term cleanup of the basin. We are thankful for the support of our legislators in Washington, D.C. and will continue to work with them to bring in additional funding to accomplish our mission," said WQA Board Chairman Mark Paulson. "The WQA will continue to ensure safe, reliable drinking water for the residents of the San Gabriel Valley."



Grace Napolitano

The WQA was established by the State Legislature in 1993 to develop, finance, and implement groundwater treatment programs in the San Gabriel Basin after contaminants were identified in the late 1970s. The San Gabriel Basin is the primary source of drinking water for more than 1.4 million people.

"Each one of my constituents should have safe clean drinking water," said U.S. Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, whose 31st District covers much of the San Gabriel Valley. "The San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority was created to coordinate the cleanup of this important water source and must continue to receive funds moving forward."

"The San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority was created to coordinate the cleanup of this important water source and must continue to receive funds moving forward."

Grace Napolitano
U.S. Congresswoman

The federal funds were appropriated into the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund (Restoration Fund) following more than a decade without federal funds. The WQA Board of Directors would like to acknowledge the leadership of Senators Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla and Representatives Grace Napolitano and Judy Chu in advocating for the funding. Congress has authorized \$125 million for the Restoration Fund, of which \$94.5 million has been appropriated and allocated to cleanup projects by the WQA.

"When we opened up the initial round of funding, the applications we received totaled more than \$200 million in capital projects," said WQA Executive Director Randy Schoellerman. "That demonstrated to us that there is substantial need for additional funding in the San Gabriel Valley for cleanup and therefore we already are pursuing more funds."

"It's absolutely vital to California's future and our families' health that we have a safe and sustainable drinking water source."

Judy Chu
U.S. Congresswoman

The WQA received 23 applications for a combined capital cost of \$201 million. The projects awarded address a wide spectrum of contamination issues including five PFAS (Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances) treatment projects and four VOC (volatile organic compounds) treatment projects.

There are 33 active groundwater treatment plants in the San Gabriel Basin. The WQA has coordinated cleanup efforts that have resulted in the treatment of more than 1.9 million acre-feet of water. An acre-foot is equal to 325,551 gallons. Though variable, about 200,000 acre-feet of water is pumped from the Basin annually and used as domestic supply.

The emergence of PFAS, a group of more than 4,000 synthetic harmful chemical compounds, has increased the anticipated time and cost of the cleanup. On March 14, the U.S. EPA announced the proposed National Primary Drinking Water Regulation, which would establish legally enforceable levels called Maximum Contaminant Levels for six PFAS in drinking water.



Judy Chu



Since 1993, the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority has coordinated cleanup efforts in the Basin to supply clean water, shown in spreading basins at far left, to more than 1.4 million people. There are now 33 active groundwater treatment plants, like the ones shown at left and above, and more than 100 tons of contaminants have been removed.

"I am proud to have worked to secure \$20 million in federal funding for the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund to improve the stability and reliability of safe drinking water for communities across the region, and I will continue to work to bring additional resources that invest in our water infrastructure and ensure a clean water basin for the region."

Alex Padilla
U.S. Senator

ratepayers. A WQA legal team consisting of five law firms from around the country filed a lawsuit on March 17 against DuPont, 3M and other companies in U.S. District Court, District of South Carolina, seeking to recover the agency's costs of cleaning up PFAS from the Main San Gabriel Basin.

"Our agency is responsible for overseeing the cleanup and restoration of the groundwater Basin," said Schoellerman in announcing the lawsuit. "The Basin has been impacted by PFAS detected in numerous wells requiring the construction of additional treatment systems. Ongoing remediation costs associated with the PFAS contamination will continue

"I am especially proud to have secured \$20 million in Community Project Funding over the past two years for the San Gabriel Valley Water Quality Authority to clean up the San Gabriel Basin," said Congresswoman Judy Chu, who represents the 28th District covering much of the western San Gabriel Valley. "It's absolutely vital to California's future and our families' health that we have a safe and sustainable drinking water source."

In addition to seeking federal and state funding for the cleanup, the WQA garners funds from the parties responsible for the groundwater contamination. This funding helps to lessen the burden on local



Alex Padilla

for decades. It is part of our mission to pursue responsible parties for those costs."

PFAS, considered "forever" chemicals because they remain in the environment, were compounds produced mainly by the 3M and DuPont companies and used by them and a variety of other manufacturers to produce everything from Teflon for pots and pans to Scotchgard for fabric protection.

"I am proud to have worked to secure \$20 million in federal funding for the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund to improve the stability and reliability of safe drinking water for communities across the region, and I will continue to work to bring additional resources that invest in our water infrastructure and ensure a clean water basin for the region," said Senator Padilla.

The California Legislature has extended the life of the WQA to July 1, 2050. The WQA continues to approach each day as Earth Day in fulfilling its mission to ensure a safe, clean and reliable drinking water supply in the San Gabriel Valley. ○

Learn how the WQA is keeping your water safe and clean at www.wqa.com.



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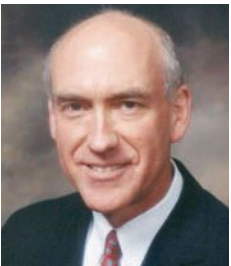
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Hydrogen Fuel Filling Station to Open in City of Industry

Drivers of zero-emission hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles will have another place to fill up.

By Amy Bentley
Special Sections Writer



"City of Industry is proud to join the network of hydrogen fueling stations and we hope to see more of these clean-air vehicles in Southern California."

Cory Moss
Mayor, City of Industry

The City of Industry is thinking today about the needs of tomorrow. That includes reducing carbon emissions from vehicles and strengthening the nation's energy resiliency through fuel diversity.

City of Industry is proud that a filling station for hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles (HFCVs), a type of zero-emission vehicle, will soon be available at the existing Shell service station at 2600 Pellissier Place in City of Industry.

"City of Industry is proud to join the network of hydrogen fueling stations and we hope to see more of these clean-air vehicles in Southern California," said City of Industry Mayor Cory C. Moss.

Shell is developing integrated hydrogen hubs to serve industry and heavy-duty transport. Shell also says it has opened nine hydrogen refueling stations in California and plans to grow this number to over 50 with a \$40.8 million award to Shell Hydrogen





Photo courtesy of Photographic Services, Shell International Limited



At far left, hydrogen fuel cell bus at a hydrogen filling station. At left, refueling station, and above, a rendering of a hydrogen fuel dispenser for H2 combustion truck engine for emission-free, eco-friendly transport.

from the California Energy Commission, subject to formal approval. The funding will be used to install hydrogen refueling equipment at 48 existing Shell retail stations, upgrade two Shell hydrogen stations, and add light-duty fueling dispensers at one existing Shell hydrogen heavy-duty truck station, the company says on its website.

California is the only state in the United States with a network of retail hydrogen fueling stations for HFCVs. Drivers need convenient locations to refill HFCVs because they can't be refueled at home, like battery plug-in electric vehicles. HFCVs are filled at a special station that pumps pressurized hydrogen into the fuel tank. As of Feb. 28 this year, there were 57 hydrogen filling stations in California, according to the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Partnership.

HFCVs have many benefits. They are quiet, smooth, offer consistent power, and emit zero carbon dioxide from their tailpipes; they only emit water vapor. And, refueling is fast – it

takes just 5-10 minutes to refuel for another 300-400-miles. Over 15,400 HFCVs have been sold or leased in the U.S. as of February 28, says the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Partnership.

Hyundai and Toyota sell and lease FCEVs in areas where hydrogen fuel is available, mainly in California. "With careful planning, the focus has been to add hydrogen fuel at existing gasoline stations covering regions in Northern California near San Francisco and Southern California near Los Angeles and San Diego, with additional connector and destination stations," says the website of the United States Department of Energy, which supports efforts to make HFCVs an affordable, environmentally friendly, and safe means of transportation. ○

To learn more about integrated hydrogen hubs to serve industry and heavy-duty transport, visit www.shell.com/energy-and-innovation/new-energies/hydrogen.html

And to learn more about HFCVs, visit h2fcp.org

City Council



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www.cityofindustry.org



"Just a 10% reduction in the U.S. saves enough natural resources to meet the needs of the poorest one billion people on Earth."

Joe Haworth

Helping communities create and maintain a sustainable environment through education.

Environmental Education Resources

The [Think Earth Environmental Education Foundation](#) is committed to ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION – to helping all people, especially young people, become more aware of their environment and to develop everyday habits and behaviors to help improve their environment ... that is, to THINK EARTH.



The Think Earth Foundation, a non-profit, public-private partnership, has developed and distributed one of the nation's most far-reaching environmental education programs – [The Think Earth Environmental Education Curriculum](#) for kindergarten through middle-school students.

[Curriculum](#) for kindergarten through middle-school students.

The Foundation also initiates and oversees [local environmental projects](#) and partnerships to provide experiences and materials to educate students about the importance of their environment.



Joe Haworth is the chairman of Think Earth Foundation, which offers free environmental curricula for grades K-middle school, surveys, and more. He is the former Public Information Officer for the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County.

Joe can be reached at joehaworth@thinkearth.org

GET KIDS INVOLVED

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Children – and parents – will learn that what's good for the environment is also good for us. And if we all just do a little, it will help a lot.



Think Earth has been downloaded in over 142 countries around the world and has educated 6 million kids. Teachers love the quality and the teachability. Help us spread the word to teachers that it is FREE and fun for kids. (Think Earth also meets state standards.)

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*Haleakala volcanic crater
on the island of Maui in Hawaii.*

Nature's gifts can be beautiful... By Joe Haworth, *Think Earth Foundation*

There is what looks like a giant crater on the island of Maui. Some have called it “the quietest place on Earth.” It’s huge, reaching 2 miles high above the ocean and often above the clouds. The crater itself is nearly 3,000 feet deep and 6 miles across. From inside it, the walls tower around you and take over the entire horizon, like the remains of some giant and ancient fortress built by gods. From the crater’s floor, all you can see is sky. The locals say, “if you don’t like the weather, wait five minutes, it will change.” Clouds float around inside it and then beautiful sunny weather suddenly breaks out.

What superhuman force built this thing? Was it a meteor crashing into Earth millions of years ago or something completely unknown to us? The locals say it was PELE, the Fire Goddess; she not only made this beautiful volcano called Haleakala, but she created the entire Hawaiian island chain.

Scientists say that it was the same volcanic power that builds islands, but with an unusual twist. There is a great hole punctured in the Earth’s crust that allows lava to flow through it and build islands. It’s still going on. A new Hawaiian island will soon join the chain of islands.

There is another great Earthly power that can shape mountains, the weather.

Weather is powerful, but oddly ours has begun to change. Some call it climate change, others have named it global warming, or even climate

chaos. The storms are getting bigger, droughts get longer, hot places get hotter, and cold places colder. As the oceans get warmer, they melt glaciers, which causes the oceans’ surfaces to rise, and that in turn affects the weather. It’s a vicious cycle. You see, gases like carbon dioxide and methane are increasing in the atmosphere and that causes the Earth to heat up. With the sun’s help of course. Is there any way to slow this down?

It’s time we began to give back to nature

We and our fellow creatures and plants will suffer from these changes. Many species are already moving to better, cooler climates. That even includes people. But it’s not hopeless. We’ve triggered this and we can slow or even reverse it. Everyone on Earth can do something. The first best step we can all take is conservation. Science tells us what we have to do: reduce, reuse, recycle, conserve our natural resources.

It all has to do with fossil fuel “pollution.” Pollution is just too much of the wrong stuff in the wrong place at the wrong time. It can be reversed, but it will take everybody. Your part is don’t pollute, in other words, don’t waste stuff; it is all part of our natural resources. It took nature 4 billion years to create Earth and now it’s our turn to save it. I know, “why me?” and the answer is, because it’s time. The people living before you just didn’t know enough, care enough or do enough.

Find out how you can start this project by studying how to think about the Earth and take action. We call that study “Think Earth.”

“Taking action, creates hope. Gratitude for what we have creates empathy.”



The Aquarium of the Pacific's resident green sea turtle, shown above, is the same species as those seen at the mouth of the San Gabriel River in Seal Beach. These regional turtles seem to spend a lot of time close to the Southern California shore where the water is warmer and food is plentiful.

Photo courtesy of Robin Riggs / Aquarium of the Pacific

[GREEN SEA TURTLES, Page 2]



Cassandra Davis

watershed. For the past 10 years, citizen scientist volunteers have been monitoring the population monthly along the last two miles of the river as it flows into the ocean.

Davis says an analysis of nine years of data has given them a better understanding of this sea turtle population. "First of all, it showed us the importance of wetlands. They are very active at a tiny outflow, basically a pipe, that leads to the Los Cerritos Wetlands," she said.

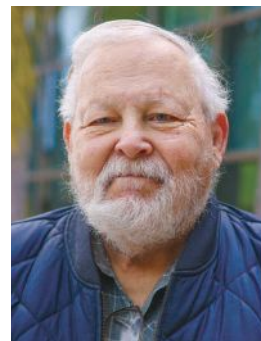
Aquarium staff and volunteers, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority, have been monitoring the green sea turtles and restoring wetlands including Los Cerritos in Seal Beach and the Colorado Lagoon in Long Beach.

By literally counting the number of times a turtle surfaces for air and observing its unique physical characteristics, the more than 338 volunteers over 10 years have determined that the turtles stay in the area for many years feeding on grasses and small invertebrates near the shore. Most of the local green sea turtles are juveniles, but range in size from 12 inches to 4 feet in length. Green sea

"It is so fascinating to see the connection to history and the natural world and to know these urban sea turtles are living right alongside one of the biggest cities in the world. It's a reminder of how close we are to the natural world and it resonates hope."

Cassandra Davis
Manager
Volunteer Services
Aquarium of the Pacific

turtles reach reproductive age between 25 and 50 years and travel to beaches in Mexico to lay their eggs. The local population has been tied through DNA testing to those nesting in Michoacan, Mexico. The lifespan of a green sea turtle is about 80 years.



Don Cadien

"We know that there are turtles here year-round," Davis said. "We know they are in the local wetlands and move through local channels, so it's important for boaters to go slow for sea turtles and other wildlife."

There are seven species of sea turtles, six of which live in the Pacific Ocean. Most are endangered internationally, though three, including the green sea turtle, are now considered threatened in the U.S.

"The major threat in the past was simply harvest for consumption by humans. That has largely subsided as nations have passed laws controlling harvest and limiting turtle/human interaction," explained Don Cadien, a research scientist with the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. "As we are at the northernmost reach of the range for green sea turtles, the turtles are likely to be aided by climate change, which makes our waters more suited to their thermal preferences. However, they also may be threatened by increasing disease rates as viruses and bacteria become more active and reproduce faster in the warmer waters."

[See GREEN SEA TURTLES, Page 22]



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"It's my hope that future mountain lions will be able to walk in the steps of P-22 without risking their lives on California's highways and streets."

Beth Pratt, *Regional Executive Director*
The National Wildlife Federation



Eulogy for P-22

Photo courtesy of Steve Winter and National Geographic

A Mountain Lion Who Changed the World

By Beth Pratt *Contributor*

I write this eulogy while looking across one of the 10-lane freeways P-22 somehow miraculously crossed in 2012, gazing at a view of his new home, Griffith Park. Burbank Peak and the other hills that mark the terminus of the Santa Monica Mountains emerge from this urban island like sentinels making a last stand against the second largest city in the country. The traffic noise never ceases. Helicopters fly overhead. The lights of the city give the sky no peace.

Yet a mountain lion lived here, right here in Los Angeles.

I can't finish this sentence without crying because of the past tense. It's hard to imagine I will be writing about P-22 in the past tense now.

Biologists and veterinarians with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife made the difficult decision to end P-22's suffering and help him transition peacefully to the next place. I hope his future is filled with endless forests without a car or road in sight and where deer are plentiful, and I hope he finally finds the mate that his island existence denied him his entire life.

I am so grateful I was given the opportunity to say goodbye to P-22. Although I have advocated for his protection for a decade, we had never met before. I sat near him, looking into his eyes for a few minutes, and told him he was a good boy. I told him how much I loved him. How much the world loved him. And I told him I was so sorry that we did not make the world a safer place for him. I apologized that despite all I and others who cared for him did, we failed him.

I don't have any illusion that my presence or words comforted him. And I left with a great sadness I will carry for the rest of my days.

Before I said goodbye, I sat in a conference room with team members from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the team of doctors at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park. They showed me a video of P-22's CT scan, images of the results, and my despair grew as they outlined the list of serious health issues they had uncovered from all their testing: stage two kidney failure, a weight of 90 pounds (he normally weighs about 125), head and eye trauma, a hernia causing abdominal organs to fill his chest cavity, an extensive case of demodex gatoi (a parasitic skin infection likely transmitted from domestic cats), heart disease, and more. The most severe injuries resulted from him being hit by a car, and I thought of how terrible it was that this cat, who had managed to evade cars for a decade, in his weakened and desperate condition could not avoid the vehicle strike that sealed his fate.

As the agency folks and veterinarians relayed these sobering facts to me, tissue boxes were passed around the table and there wasn't a dry eye in the house. This team cares just as much for this cat as we all do. They did everything they could for P-22 and deserve our gratitude.

Although I wished so desperately he could be returned to the wild, or live out his days in a sanctuary, the decision to euthanize our beloved P-22 is the right one. With these health issues, there could be no peaceful retirement, only some managed care existence where we prolonged his suffering — not for his benefit, but for ours.

Those of us who have pets know how it feels when we receive news from the veterinarian that we don't want to hear. As a lifelong dog and cat owner, I have been in this dreadful position too many times. The decision to let them go is never easy, but we as humans have the ability, the responsibility, and the selflessness to show mercy to end the suffering for these beloved family members, a compassionate choice we scarcely have for ourselves.



I look at Griffith Park through the window again and feel the loss so deeply. Whenever I hiked to the Hollywood sign, or strolled down a street in Beachwood Canyon to pick up a sandwich at The Oaks, or walked to my car after a concert at the Greek Theater, the wondrous knowledge that I could encounter P-22 always propelled me into a joyous kind of awe. And I am not alone — his legion of stans hoped for a sight of Hollywood's most beloved celebrity, the Brad Pitt of the cougar world, on their walks or on their Ring cams, and when he made an appearance, the videos usually went viral. In perhaps the most Hollywood of P-22's moments, human celebrity Alan Ruck, star of *Succession*, once reported seeing P-22 from his deck, and shouting at him like a devoted fan would.

We will all be grappling with the loss of P-22 for some time, trying to make sense of a Los Angeles without this magnificent wild creature. I loved P-22 and hold a deep respect for his intrepid spirit, charm, and just plain chutzpah. We may never see another mountain lion stroll down Sunset Boulevard or surprise customers outside the Los Feliz Trader Joe's. But perhaps that doesn't matter — what matters is P-22 showed us it's possible.

He changed us. He changed the way we look at LA. And his influencer status extended around the world, as he inspired millions of people to see wildlife as their neighbors. He made us more human, made us connect more to that wild place in ourselves. We are part of nature and he reminded us of that. Even in the city that gave us Carmeggedon, where we thought wildness had been banished a long time ago, P-22 reminded us it's still here.

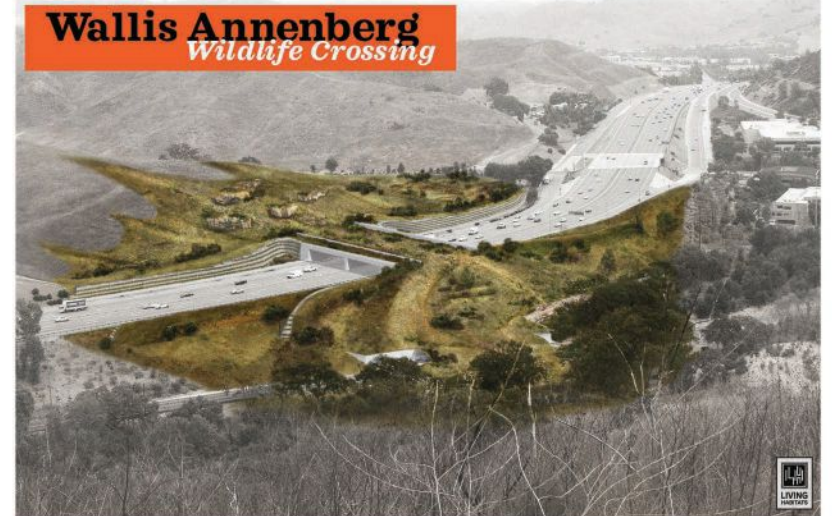
His legacy to us, and to his kind will never fade. He ensured a future for the entire population of mountain lions in the Santa Monica Mountains by inspiring us to build the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing.

P-22 never fully got to be a mountain lion. His whole life, he suffered the consequences of trying to survive in unconnected space, right to the end when being hit by a car led to his tragic end. He showed people around the world that we need to ensure our roads, highways, and communities are better and safer when people and wildlife can freely travel to find food, shelter, and families. The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing would not have been possible without P-22, but the most fitting memorial to P-22 will be how we carry his story forward in the work ahead. One crossing is not enough — we must build more, and we must continue to invest in proactive efforts to protect and conserve wildlife and the habitats they depend on — even in urban areas.

P-22's journey to and life in Griffith Park was a miracle. It's my hope that future mountain lions will be able to walk in the steps of P-22 without risking their lives on California's highways and streets. We owe it to P-22 to build more crossings and connect the habitats where we live now.

Thank you for the gift of knowing you, P-22. I'll miss you forever. But I will never stop working to honor your legacy, and although we failed you, we can at least partly atone by making the world safer for your kind.

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On Earth Day 2022, the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing broke ground in a ceremony led by many dignitaries after decades of fundraising and planning. Active construction is now visible alongside the 101 freeway in Agoura Hills.

The crossing will span 10 lanes of the freeway and when complete will be the largest in the world and the first of its kind in California. The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is a public-private partnership. The project's core partner team includes Caltrans, the National Park Service, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy - Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority, the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, Living Habitats, LLC, and the National Wildlife Federation.

The crossing will reconnect the Santa Monica Mountain ecosystem that supports not only mountain lions, but bobcats, birds and lizards. In fact, construction was briefly delayed when an acorn woodpecker nest was discovered in a utility pole that needed to be removed. The chicks fledged within a few days and construction continued.

Construction will be completed in two stages and completion is estimated for late 2025. The first stage is the section over the 101 Freeway, which began in spring 2022. Caltrans bid out the majority of the construction work, and after a competitive process, selected Valencia-based C. A. Rasmussen, Inc. to build stage 1. The second stage is the section over Agoura Road. Most of the heavy construction will occur at night and no full road closures are anticipated.

You can follow the construction progress virtually via a live camera feed at <https://savelacougars.org/> or at <https://app.oxblue.com/open/NWF/WallisAnnenbergWildlifeCrossing>. Images update every 10 minutes. The camera also will be capturing a time lapse of the entire construction process through 2025, that will be released as a short video once complete.





Photo courtesy of Robin Riggs / Aquarium of the Pacific

At left, a person snorkeling with Hawaiian green sea turtle. Above, an olive ridley turtle at the Aquarium of the Pacific is one of six species found in the Pacific Ocean. Below, volunteers count turtles near the mouth of the San Gabriel River.

[GREEN SEA TURTLES, Page 18]

Davis agreed that climate change is a major threat to sea turtles because it's also warming their nesting beaches.

"They have a particular temperature range that they've adapted to over many millions of years and that temperature range is quickly heating up and affecting the viability of the nests," she said. In fact, a warmer beach produces more female turtles, making future mating more difficult.

While adult green sea turtles are strictly herbivores, young members of this species and most of the other species of sea turtles eat marine invertebrates like jellyfish and sponges. Cadien says the bioaccumulation up the food chain of toxic substances is a major threat to local marine populations.

"Litter is a serious problem, and plastic debris (primarily plastic bags) have proven to cause death in turtles that ingest it," he said. "Like the other animals with which we share our ocean, turtles can best be helped by our being good neighbors. We should reduce what we put into the ocean either intentionally or accidentally, and any efforts along that line will benefit not only turtles but all animals including us. They also need to be treated with respect, and not as toys to play with in the water."

Much of the Earth is covered by oceans that support an underwater ecosystem. Each species plays an important role. For example, green sea turtles graze on seagrasses and algae, which maintains a healthy seagrass bed. Seagrass consumed by green turtles is quickly digested and becomes available as recycled nutrients to the many species of plants and animals that live in the sea grass ecosystem.

"Our ocean is a vast interconnected web of life, of which turtles are a part. Like all types of marine animals, turtles fill their own part of this web, and without them the web would have a big hole," said Cadien. "Turtles depend on other organisms and, in turn, are depended upon by yet more species. Loss of any one of them is a blow to the whole system." ○

HELP OUR URBAN GREEN SEA TURTLES

Sea turtle citizen science monitors are asked to commit to at least six sessions per year in the city of Long Beach. Those with a passion for science and marine conservation who are comfortable in the outdoors, and have great interpersonal and organization skills are encouraged to apply. Volunteers will be trained on site.

Who: Individuals must be 16 or older (or 7 and older with a parent/legal guardian).

When: First Saturday of each month; 8:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m.

How to apply: Go to the Aquarium web site www.aquariumofthepacific.org and fill out a volunteer application.

The Aquarium hosts a monthly habitat restoration event at the Los Cerritos Wetlands. The Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program is working to restore 66 acres of wetlands owned by the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority. These wetlands occupy habitat in two cities, Long Beach and Seal Beach, and two counties, Los Angeles and Orange. Restoration will focus on non-native weed removal and rare native plant conservation. These events are led by trained naturalists and local educators.

Who: Everyone; children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

When: First Saturday of the month; 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Where: Meet at the corner of Pacific Coast Highway and 1st Street in Seal Beach. Arriving around 10:15 a.m. is recommended.

Cost: Free. No registration required.

Please Bring: The wetlands are wildlands, so please dress accordingly. Closed-toe shoes are required. Hat and sunscreen are recommended. Drinking water will be provided, but this is a plastic water bottle-free event. Please bring a reusable water bottle.



Photo courtesy of Aquarium of the Pacific

Participants eligible to win a free ticket to the Aquarium and other prizes! Go to the Aquarium website or the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority site www.tidalinfluence.com/restoration.html for more information.

Pacific green sea turtles are protected under state and federal law. If you notice a sea turtle in distress, please report observations of injured or entangled turtles by calling (562) 506-4315.



Sea Turtle Facts

There are seven species of sea turtles with six in the Pacific Ocean. One species, Flatback, is only found near Australia and Papua, New Guinea.

GREEN SEA TURTLE

(see at the Aquarium)

Status in U.S.: Threatened

Size: Adults are 3 to 4 feet in length. The green turtle is the largest of the Cheloniidae family. The largest green turtle ever found was 5 feet in length and 871 pounds.

Diet: Changes significantly during its life. When less than 8 to 10 inches in length eat worms, young crustaceans, aquatic insects, grasses and algae. Once green turtles reach 8 to 10 inches in length, they mostly eat sea grass and algae, the only sea turtle that is strictly herbivorous as an adult.

Habitat: Mainly stay near the coastline and around islands and live in bays and protected shores, especially in areas with seagrass beds. Rarely are they observed in the open ocean.

OLIVE RIDLEY

(see at the Aquarium)

Status in U.S.: Threatened

Size: Adults measure 2 to 2.5 feet.

Diet: Have powerful jaws that allow for an omnivore diet of crustaceans (such as shrimp & crabs), mollusks, tunicates, fish, crabs, and shrimp.

Habitat: Generally found in coastal bays and estuaries, but can be very oceanic over some parts of its range. They typically forage off shore in surface waters or dive to depths of 500 feet (150 m) to feed on bottom dwelling crustaceans.



LOGGERHEAD

Status in U.S.: Threatened

Size: Typically 2.5 to 3.5 feet in length.

Diet: Primarily carnivorous and feed mostly on shellfish that live on the bottom of the ocean.

Habitat: Prefer to feed in coastal bays and estuaries, as well as in the shallow water along the continental shelves of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

LEATHERBACK

Status in U.S.: Endangered

Size: 4 to 6 feet. The largest leatherback ever recorded was almost 10 feet from the tip of its beak to the tip of its tail and weighed in at 2,019 pounds.

Diet: They feed almost exclusively on jellyfish.

Habitat: Primarily found in the open ocean, as far north as Alaska and as far south as the southern tip of Africa, though recent satellite tracking research indicates that leatherbacks feed in areas just offshore

HAWKSBILL

Status in U.S.: Endangered

Size: Adults are 2.5 to 3 feet.

Diet: They eat sponges, anemones, squid and shrimp.

Habitat: Typically found around coastal reefs, rocky areas, estuaries and lagoons.

KEMP'S RIDLEY

Status in U.S.: Endangered

Size: Adults measure around 2 feet.

Diet: Have powerful jaws that help them to crush and grind crabs, clams, mussels, and shrimp. They also like to eat fish, sea urchins, squid and jellyfish.

Habitat: Prefer shallow areas with sandy and muddy bottoms.

– Sea Turtle Conservancy



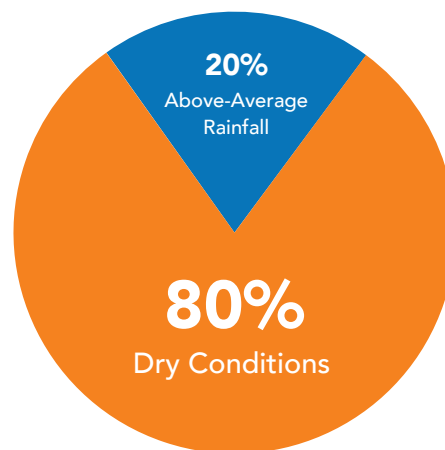
Earth Day 2023

Dry conditions are still here — even in this rainy, snowy year

Our Water

It's true: we've had a wet winter. It's also true that we're still in abnormally dry conditions. The bottom line is it will take more than one wet winter to make up for a decade of drought that strained our groundwater. It's the primary source of water for all of us in the San Gabriel Valley.

Dry vs. Rainy Years (2013–2022)



Our Work

We can't—and aren't—leaving our water supply up to the weather. For our water, we're taking action together. We're working in coordination with Los Angeles County's Flood Control District to capture nearly all—90 to 95%—of our local rain and snow melt, so that it can seep into the ground to become our groundwater. We're ensuring water quality to protect the earth's natural basin deep down underground that holds our groundwater. And we're supporting Pure Water Southern California, a future drought-proof water supply source.

Our Future Success

In the San Gabriel Valley, 1.5 million of us are connected to one water source—our groundwater. As we all have a role in its care, our future success will be built together. Groundwater is our common ground and our common cause. Join us this Earth Day and every day to share the story of the waters that connect us.

To learn the story of our groundwater, visit: thewatersthatconnectus.com

