



June 7, 2018

TO: Hon. Sheila Kuehl, Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Janice Hahn, Chair Pro Tem, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor, First District, Los Angeles County
Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor, Second District, Los Angeles County
Hon. Kathryn Barger, Supervisor, Fifth District, Los Angeles County
Mark Pestrella, Director of Public Works, Los Angeles County

RE: Safe, Clean Water Program

Dear Supervisor Kuehl,

Nature for All is a coalition working to build a diverse base of support for ensuring that everyone in the Los Angeles area – no matter where they live – has equitable access to the wide range of benefits that nature can provide. Nature for All is best known as the leading community group that built support for the designation of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in 2014. For more than a decade, Nature for All has been advocating for policies and programs to protect the mountains, rivers and parks in our area, create more natural spaces, and connect people to public lands. We bring together local, state and national organizations to develop leaders who advocate for policies and programs to positively impact our historically-underserved communities such as Measures A & M in 2016 and most recently Proposition 68.

Our commitment to **Protect, Create and Connect** underserved communities with nature and all the benefits it can provide is why we have been a major contributor to the OurWaterLA coalition. We share with the coalition a commitment to developing policies and a funding measure which advance civic engagement, programs and projects which equally and directly promote inclusivity and sustained “fair trade” community engagement. It is our communities of color who have supported time after time funding measures which have not addressed the inequalities of how public funds are invested until recently with Proposition A and Proposition 68. We expect nothing less from the proposed Los Angeles County Safe, Clean Water Program.

As a coalition with significant numbers of engaged and informed constituent members we are committed to working with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to ensure a safe and clean water for future generations through a multi-benefit stormwater and urban runoff capture program to increase water supply, improve water quality, and investment in communities. However, that is only possible if there is a reasonable commitment to investments in underserved, low income communities for projects/programs that provide direct and distinct benefits to those areas. Further, we support projects which are distributed and at the neighborhood scale which use nature-based solutions to capture, infiltrate, treat and use stormwater and dry-weather runoff. Such projects and programs can help achieve a more sustainable and equitable water future for all communities in Los Angeles County.



Safeguarding public health is another Nature for All priority and that is why we are committed to advancing a regional water resilience plan that mitigates against extreme weather variability, increased drought, flood risk and urban heat. We support a plan that reduces trash and pollution in our waterways, beaches and habitat throughout the Los Angeles region.

Funding for projects should be distributed in a manner that promotes equity for underserved communities and mitigates displacement. Furthermore, our hope is to work closely with county and local agencies to increase environmental awareness programs that encourage and train community members to participate and promote greater watershed stewardship.

We appreciate the County of Los Angeles' strong commitment to achieving a safe and clean water future for all residents. We stand ready to work with you on providing input on the Safe, Clean Water Program and to assist with outreach to communities and leaders throughout Los Angeles County based on a thoughtful, equity-based program which will meet advance improvements and quality of life for all communities while enhancing, improving and keeping our water supplies clean and safe.

Sincerely,

Roberto Morales, Chair

Nature for All

CC: Safe, Clean Water Program Stakeholder Advisory Committee
Leslie Friedman Johnson, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
Rachel Roque, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
Kelly Cook, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
Genevieve Osmena, Public Works, Los Angeles County
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board