



July 24, 2022

VIA EMAIL eric.garcetti@lacity.org; mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org

Eric Garcetti, Mayor
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Effect of Water Restrictions on Hillside Vegetation in Residential Zones

Dear Mayor Garcetti:

The current program for water usage restrictions is necessary. Appropriately organizing for the next step is also. Accordingly, the current program's efficacy should be re-analyzed. We believe as it is based on information prior to 2016, and possibly from an earlier analysis. Much has changed the City Council last acted with regard to water conservation, and both current and future conditions require fresh consideration.

The City is a saucer with the Santa Monica mountain range running through the center east to west. Those hillside areas in the Santa Monica Mountains and in the East Los Angeles hills provide distinguishing characteristics relevant to the general ecology of the City. The water program should be reviewed and revised by distinguishing, among other things, the characteristics of these hillsides and the flats. Reducing water consumption for ornamental landscaping in hillside areas poses a significantly larger danger than doing the same in the flats.

The hillsides are congruent with State-designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Public safety in these zones needs to be balanced with the supply-demand issues facing DWP, a wholly owned City entity delivering services subject to profit and loss basics, which may be different

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Laurel Canyon Association
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RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Bel Air District
Bel Air Glen District
Franklin-Coldwater District
North of Sunset District

NON-RESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATION

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Public Schools & Private Schools

from public safety. The speed of spread of wildfires is determined in large part by the water content of vegetation in their paths. It is important to keep vegetation healthy and with a high moisture content around residences in hillside areas, which the watering restrictions may impede.

Accordingly, we ask for a new Blue Ribbon Panel which would include not only the DWP, but also the LAFD, LAPD, Planning, and environmental horticulture specialists available to the City and input from representatives of the insurance industry that provide coverage within the City limits. This Blue Ribbon Panel would consider the appropriate balance of water use for ornamental vegetation, especially trees, in hillside residential areas relative to the hazard posed by dead and drying vegetation during extreme fire weather and during any fire event.

This letter was approved at the June 22, 2022 meeting of the Board of the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council. The Brown Act-noticed public meeting had a quorum of 27 members present and voted unanimously to express their request that you investigate the implications of water restrictions on fire safety and vegetation health in the hillside zones.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Travis Longcore", written over a horizontal line.

Travis Longcore, Ph.D.,
President

cc: Councilmember Nithya Raman
Councilmember Paul Koretz