

# This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

[watersmartinnovations.com](http://watersmartinnovations.com)

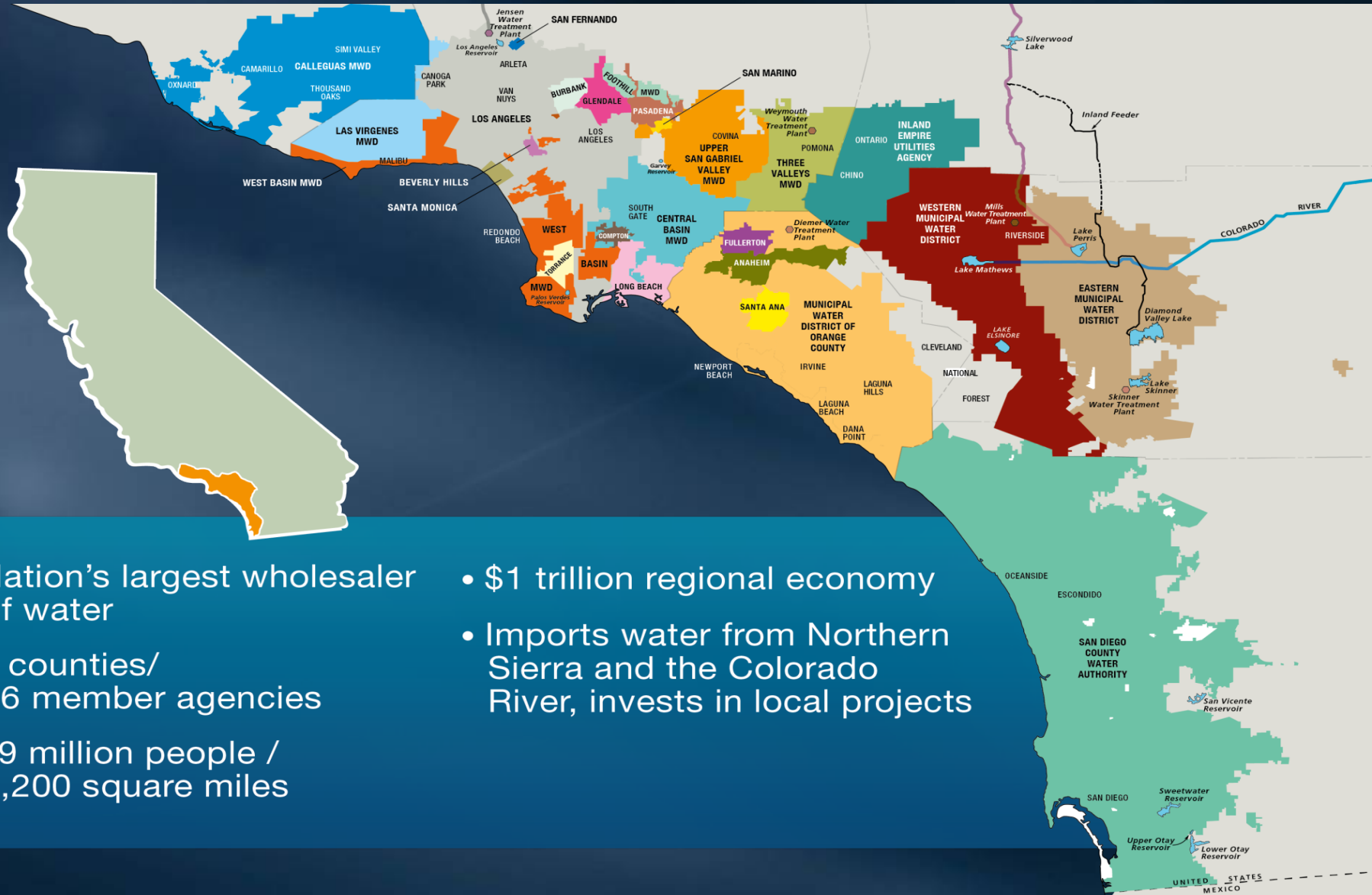




# **QWEL/WMCP Hybrid Landscaper Certification Program: One Class, Two Certifications, and Multiple Benefits**

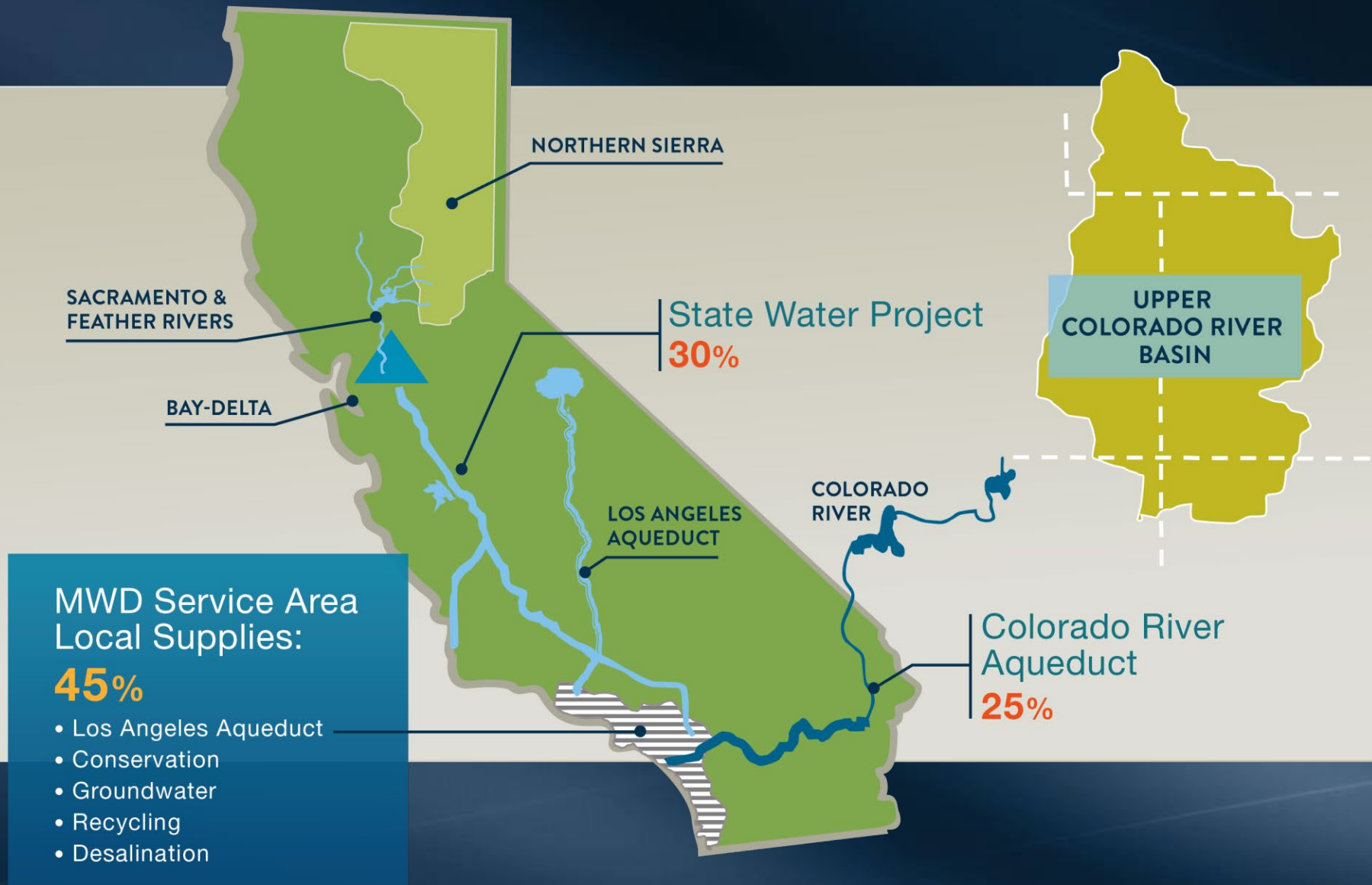
**October 6, 2021**

# METROPOLITAN OVERVIEW



- Nation's largest wholesaler of water
- 6 counties/  
26 member agencies
- 19 million people /  
5,200 square miles
- \$1 trillion regional economy
- Imports water from Northern Sierra and the Colorado River, invests in local projects

# Sources of Water for Southern California



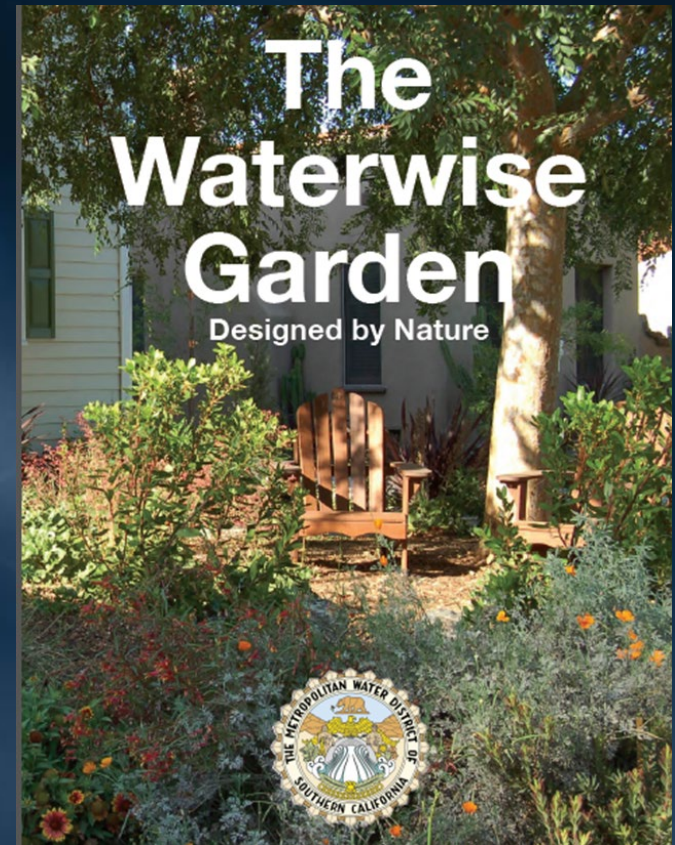
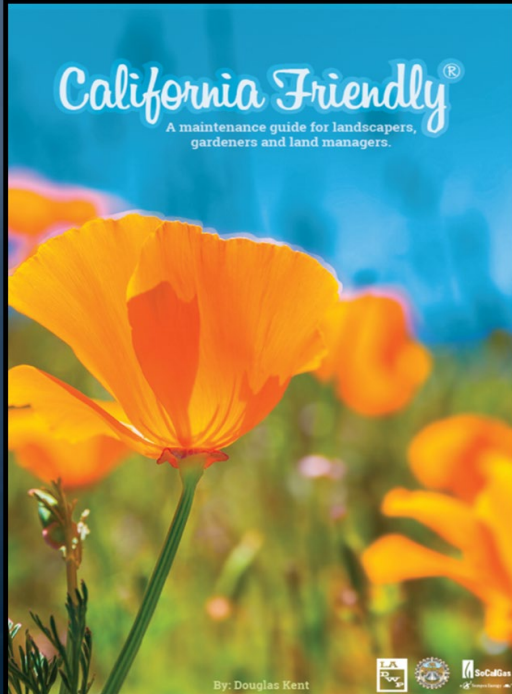
# MWD's Long Push for Turf Replacement

- Largest turf removal program in the country
  - 183.2 million square feet removed
  - 741,800 acre feet of water savings
- Changes made to add sustainability to water savings
- Turf replacement program
  - Stormwater features
  - Plant coverage requirements
  - Permeable hardscape



# Supporting Resources

- Design templates
- How to videos
- Fact sheets
- Landscaping handbooks



# Transformation = Water Savings?

- Water savings calculations based on garden “lifetime”
  - 10-30 years of lifetime water savings
  - Irrigation changes are key
- Additional savings calculated from “spillover” effect
  - Increase in public demonstration gardens
  - Direct install neighborhood demonstration gardens

# Maintenance - the missing resource

- Poorly maintained landscapes counteract program goals
  - Discourage neighbors
  - Shorten landscape life
- Different roles of landscape contractors
  - Installation contractors
  - Maintenance contractors
    - “Mow and Blow”
    - Water efficient landscape experts
- Maintenance resources targeted towards homeowners



# Landscape Contractor Training

- Desire to fill the gap in turf replacement projects
  - What is most important in garden maintenance?
  - What elements should we include?
- Certification training designed for landscape contractors
  - Sonoma-Marín Water Saving Partnership Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL)
  - CLCA Water Management Certification
  - Green Gardens Group Watershed Wise Landscape Professional Certification

# Why combine these certifications?

- Both EPA WaterSense Certified
  - Inclusion in WaterSense directory
  - Work opportunities for federal projects
- Similar content and field audit requirement
- Target audience
  - MWD able to offset high cost of CLCA certification training for public agency staff
  - Able to leverage CLCA connections and member list to fill QWEL classes
- Board and staff crossover

# QWEL/CLCA Combined Program

- One 20+ hour workshop
  - Field audit
  - Content from both programs
- Single final exam
- Water management assistance
- Benefit of two certifications from one workshop
  - Listed on QWEL, CLCA, and MWD websites



# Process for Developing Hybrid Program

Created and submitted combined exam to EPA WaterSense for approval

Received approval from both QWEL and CLCA Boards of Directors

Scheduled and marketed workshops

July  
2019

Aug

Oct

Nov

Feb  
2020

Created combined workshop class content

Executed contract for workshop implementation





COVID-19

# Adapt and Adjust

- Contract term ended June 2021
- Online learning considerations
  - Zoom fatigue
  - Technology needs
  - Scheduling
- Virtual v in person field audit
- Online exam considerations
  - Proctor availability
  - Open v closed book

# A Great Start

- **131** individuals completed 18-hour virtual class sessions
  - **58 unique cities** in MWD service area
  - **65 unique companies** in MWD service area
- **89 sites** actively being managed to water budgets
- First two exam/audit events in June 2021
  - **35 certified WELDCP** contractors



# Our Commitment

- Three sessions scheduled through January 2022
  - One virtual and two in person
  - All in person audits and exams
- Working on copyright package for WELDCP brand
- WELDCP branded manual by end of year
- Certified Contractors for hire webpage on [www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com)







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