



## Biodiversity

To help protect local ecosystems in the communities we serve, biodiversity considerations are integrated into company operations, while delivering safe and reliable water, wastewater and electric services.

- **Project Planning:** Our efforts include a thorough review and implementation of federal, state and local requirements and regulations designed to protect waterways, land uses, natural resources and wildlife habitats. Beginning with the NEPA and CEQA regulations, we utilize environmental consultants and in-house environmental experts to understand the ecosystems where we operate to mitigate or eliminate negative impacts that our operations and capital programs may have on wildlife habitats, aquatic life, drinking water, fish and shellfish consumption, and recreation. Our engineering processes assess impacts to wildlife and plant species when considering infrastructure, such as water intake production, storage and treatment facilities. Best practices are implemented to eliminate or minimize the impacts that both the construction phase and the ongoing operations may have on local ecosystems. State-of-the-art flushing equipment is utilized for water distribution system flushing operations. Rather than discharging large volumes of treated water to the local stormwater system and mobilizing the dirt, oil and debris found in the public right-of-way, our specialized equipment filters the water being flushed and returns it to the water distribution system, thereby eliminating the waste of large volumes of water and the negative environmental impacts to the local inland and coastal water ways.
- **Land Management:** Our efforts include wildfire mitigation, habitat protection and restoration and minimizing generation of waste.
- **Water Resources, Water Use & Efficiency:** As an environmental steward and to preserve local habitats, we have participated in regional surface water diversion curtailment programs during times of drought to ensure there is adequate surface water to support aquatic life and habitats. Our extensive water conservation outreach program promotes water conservation by providing water audits and conservation kits to our customers. In addition, we track and manage water loss and leakage across our systems. Regulatory agencies consider the environmental consequences of water diversions during permitting and our compliance department ensures we meet those permit requirements. Through our capital program, we have retrofitted our water production and storage facilities with drought tolerant landscape and hardscape areas to reduce or eliminate outdoor water use.

- **Wastewater Treatment:** Regulatory agencies consider the environmental consequences and impacts to local habitat during permitting processes. Our compliance department develops training, procedures and record keeping to ensure effluent is effectively managed to minimize impacts to the local rivers, streams and wetlands within the communities we serve.

## **Policies**

The company maintains several key internal policies that support our efforts to promote biodiversity. Our Environmental Policy, found on our website, guides our commitment to complying with relevant environmental laws, regulations and standards, sustaining the environment through responsible business practices and using natural resources, including energy, effectively and efficiently.

Our operations are subject to extensive federal, state and local laws and regulations governing the protection of the environment, health and safety, the provision of water and wastewater services, particularly with respect to the quality of water the company delivers to its customers, and the manner in which it collects, treats, discharges, recycles and disposes of wastewater. In the United States, these regulations are developed under federal legislation, including the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act, and under a variety of applicable state laws. Environmental and water quality regulations can vary by state and in some instances, state standards can be more stringent than federal standards.

The company is also subject to various federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing the storage of hazardous materials, the management and disposal of hazardous and solid waste, discharges to air and water, the cleanup of contaminated sites, dam safety and other matters relating to the protection of the environment. Public Utility Commissions also set conditions and standards to ensure protection of biodiversity and the environment.