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December 2010 E-newsletter

The viability of seawater desalination as a local water source, progress on transportation issues and more...

One Last Opportunity to Give in 2010!

Equinox Center would like to thank our donors, friends and advisors for their generous support of our work this past year. Your donations have allowed us to provide policy makers and the public with balanced, non-partisan research on critical issues related to San Diego's [water supply](#), to weigh in on key [transportation](#), [land use](#) and [climate change](#) policy decisions, and to update our [San Diego Regional Quality of Life Dashboard](#) (stay tuned for a January release). We are grateful for your gifts and continue to need your support to ensure a healthy environment, strong economy and vibrant communities in the San Diego region. Read on to hear more about our activities or click [here](#) to make a contribution.

Our best wishes for a healthy, prosperous and vibrant 2011!

H2Overview: Desalinated Seawater a Viable Resource to Help Diversify Local Water Supply

On December 21, Equinox Center released the fourth report of its [H2Overview](#) Project, a series on San Diego County's Critical water supply issues. The report, "The Potential of Seawater Desalination as a Water Source in San Diego County" reveals that while not without challenges, **desalination could be a high-quality, drought-proof water source to add to the region's water supply.**

Extended droughts, a growing population, the threat of earthquakes, and legal and environmental concerns have

put San Diego County's water supplies at risk and resulted in escalating water prices. In this context, the report explores the challenges and opportunities of seawater desalination, summarizes the latest research from around the world, and provides strategies on how the San Diego region should proceed when considering this technology as an option. To read the full report, click [here](#).

Progress on the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan for San Diego County

On December 17, SANDAG, the county's regional planning agency, endorsed [a document](#) that lays out up to \$110 billion in transportation projects for the next 40 years. In a region where 76% of the population drives to work alone, and the average highway vehicle miles traveled per person per day is higher than Los Angeles County's and the CA state average, there is an urgent need to develop solutions that modify our current transportation infrastructure.

Equinox Center sent a [letter to the SANDAG board](#) sharing its research and findings on transportation in the region. Based on its data, Equinox urged SANDAG to support policies that provide residents and visitors to the region with an array of transportation options, especially fast, cost-effective mass transit that gets people where they need to go. Public hearings on the Draft Regional Transportation Plan and the accompanying Environmental Impact Report will be held in the spring of 2011.

Board of Supervisors Closes Testimony on County General Plan Update

On December 8, 2010, the County Board of Supervisors closed testimony on the General Plan Update, after three full days of presentations (the previous days were October 20th and November 10th). Staff is now reviewing all issues raised during the hearings, including property-specific requests, and the Plan will be taken up again on February 9, 2011, with additional information and research. Video of each of the hearings is available from the [Clerk of the Board](#). To view Equinox Center's letter to the County Board of Supervisors on the General Plan Update, click [here](#).