



William C. Velásquez Institute

For Immediate Release

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Latino Climate Resiliency “Pro Agua” Project Launched **WCVI “Pro-Agua!” Anti-Drought Project Starting in Orange County**

(Los Angeles, CA July 6, 2016) The William C. Velasquez Institute (WCVI) launched a Latino Climate Resiliency project today in Orange County whose main feature is countering the Climate Change-caused long term drought in California through diverse strategies for clean and efficient water use and production.

“Last November at WCVI’s 30th Anniversary Conference at the LA River Center we declared our intention to focus on Climate Adaptation as the paramount strategy for Latino Climate Action in California and beyond. Our Southern Cal Climate Resiliency effort implements our strategic vision, beginning in with the “**Pro-Agua!**” project in Orange County,” announced Antonio Gonzalez, WCVI President

“**Pro Agua!**” will build substantial Orange County Latino leader and voter support for clean water production and efficiency through diverse strategies including desalination, recycling, storm water capture, ground water reclamation and conservation thru a year-long community education, outreach, leadership development and advocacy program that starts immediately,” added Patricia Gonzales, WCVI Senior Vice President.

WCVI’s Orange County **Pro Agua!** campaign has the following elements:

- Partner with key Latino organizations in Orange County to educate and organize Latino elected officials and organizational leaders throughout Orange County around a pro-water agenda through a series of one to one meetings followed by a series of leadership meetings.
- Conduct leadership training in July and August through the SVREP/WCVI Latino Academy on water advocacy and organizing techniques. This involves bringing together activists and leaders and giving them leadership and skills training to better advocate the Pro-Agua Agenda;
- Participate in key meetings of local, state, and federal entities in favor of the **Pro-Agua!** agenda
- Sensitize and educate Spanish-language media on pro-water agenda. This is an ongoing priority involving regular personal visits and follow on communication to key personalities and entities.

- Message to thousands Latino Voters through social media. This includes sending them regular bilingual messages including water and climate info, opinion surveys, meeting notices, online petitions, etc. See www.wcvi.org for more information;

WCVI is the leading national Latino organization in matters of Climate Action.

- During 2004-2014 WCVI founded the Alianza de los Pueblos del Rio de Los Angeles campaign with Mujeres de la Tierra, Anahuak Youth Sports Association, and City Project-an extensive Latino community outreach campaign the development of significant urban parks in northeast Los Angeles in the historic Mexican barrios of Dog Town, Cypress Park, Frog Town, and Clover. The parks –Rio State Park (30 acres), LA State Historic Park (50 acres), Marsh Park (5 acres) , and Albion Park (5 acres) collectively cost hundreds of millions to acquire, mitigate, and build are part of the LA River Revitalization movement. They are under various stages of development with 2 completed, 1 nearing completion, and 1 in initial stages of development.
- In 2006, 2009, and 2010 WCVI conducted significant legislative advocacy around state and federal climate bills.
- In 2010 WCVI launched the modern urban camping movement with its Earth Day Latino series and an LA River Eco Intern program which continue through today.
- In 2015 WCVI conducted a 6 month Water/Parks Latino community education, outreach and advocacy program in Los Angeles County called the Aguacate Alliance Three River Campaign whose outcomes included significant state funding to make strategic land purchases along the LA River.
- Currently WCVI is developing a “clean water through oyster aquaculture” program to mitigate urban runoff in Los Angeles County’s coastal estuaries with a broad Long Beach-based Latino, environmental and academic coalition.

William C. Velasquez Institute (WCVI) is the policy wing of SVREP's Latino Vote movement. WCVI's mission is to provide public policy case studies and strategies to Latino elected officials and community leaders. WCVI was founded in 1985 and has offices in Los Angeles and San Antonio.
