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Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

December 1, 2011

Dear Mayor Villaraigosa,

The Sierra Club Angeles Chapter would like to renew our recommendations that the City of Los Angeles become a model for water-wise landscaping. Given the recent Occupy LA activity on City Hall property and its impact on the unsustainable grass and sprinkler system, this is an opportune time for the City to plan landscape improvements that rely on drought-tolerant and native vegetation.

In 2009, the Sierra Angeles Chapter expressed concern about the effects of California's persistent water shortage and recommended that the City alter its water-use habits and lead by example to promote water conservation through sustainable landscaping. We raise our concern again, in support of Emily Green's *Los Angeles Times* article on November 16 entitled "Now, about L.A. City Hall's lawn."

The Sierra Club Angeles Chapter again urges the City of Los Angeles to take the lead by taking these actions:

1. Become a role model and educator by replacing the lawns at city owned sites and facilities, except for public parks, with drought tolerant flora (especially natives) and suitable mulches, including gravel. The sites should be properly sculpted with swales and berms to reduce storm-water run-off and allow storm-water percolation into the ground. The sites should be provided with interpretative signage and can serve as demonstration sites that show residents how to change their own landscaping.
2. Require new commercial and industrial developments to implement best management practices that minimize their water needs and capture storm water run-off in their landscaping.

Embracing drought tolerant and mulched landscaping will benefit the local economy by promoting green jobs. Landscapers and arborists who currently make a living mowing and tending water reliant lawns will continue to be needed for ongoing care of new landscaping.

Experts on climate change predict that the American Southwest, including Southern California must expect permanently and extensively reduced rainfall. As we must come to terms with this new status quo of reduced supply, best practices to reduce water use must be implemented.

We urge the City of Los Angeles to set the standard as a leader and an educator in promoting and demonstrating water conservation. Now is the time to bring green space at City Hall into the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Charming Evelyn
Water Committee Chair
Sierra Club Angeles Chapter

cc: Los Angeles City Councilmembers