

WEBVTT

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00:00:06.390 --> 00:00:15.509

Nick Josefowitz: Hello, everybody! We're just gonna wait thirty seconds for zoom to let people in, and then we will get going. Thank you very much for coming.

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00:00:29.640 --> 00:00:43.950

Nick Josefowitz: Okay. My name is Nicholas and I'm, the chief of policy at Spur. Thank you so much for joining us for this digital discourse today, and you here today are spur members. So thank you for your support. If you are not a member, I encourage you to join

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00:00:43.960 --> 00:00:59.840

Nick Josefowitz: ongoing work and using education, policy, analysis, and advocacy to make our cities and region and state more prosperous, sustainable, and equitable places to live. Your financial support enables us to continue our work, including the hosting of programs like today's

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Nick Josefowitz: find more information about membership online at Spur Dot Com.

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Nick Josefowitz: Our next event is scheduled for this evening from six to eight Pm. It is ballots and bruise um San Francisco spotlight in person at our Urban center here in San Francisco. Every election the spur voter guide provides in-depth analysis and recommendations on the complex measures up for vote join our policy staff in a beloved tradition, as they explain the local measures on the November eighth, San Francisco ballot and spur stance on each one. Grab your ballot and your brew, and join us in person this evening in the oven

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00:01:35.110 --> 00:01:38.229

Nick Josefowitz: center for this San Francisco spotlight.

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00:01:39.420 --> 00:01:55.539

Nick Josefowitz: Today's digital discourse is resiliency in the face of a changing climate. Californians are feeling the effects of a changing and warming climate sea levels are rising, wildfires are more intense and frequent drought heat waves. We can go on

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Nick Josefowitz: um, and as California grapples with how to address the impact of climate change. The California Natural Resources Agency has been tasked with building California's

Climate resiliency preserving the State's biodiversity and expanding equitable access to natural areas. And today. Um, i'm really really excited to have Secretary crowded

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Nick Josefowitz: Um uh on um, and and we're gonna have a great conversation about what he's working on. Um, and how he's preparing, and is a team of preparing California for a more Climate Resilient and Equitable Future

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00:02:28.410 --> 00:02:41.120

Nick Josefowitz: Quick Background on Secretary Crofett Um Wakef It became California's Natural Resources Secretary in January, the twentieth, nineteen, appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom, and he oversees an agency of twenty one thousand

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Nick Josefowitz: twenty one thousand employees, who protect and manage California's natural environment. This includes stewarding the states, forests and natural lands, rivers and waterways, coast and ocean, protecting fish and wildlife and overseeing energy development

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00:02:54.890 --> 00:03:02.370

Nick Josefowitz: as a member of Gap, Governor Nuisance Cabinet. He advises the Governor on natural resources and environmental issues,

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00:03:03.120 --> 00:03:11.679

Nick Josefowitz: but Secretary Crawford, There's a rumor that there's something that's not in your bio, but that you were actually a spur. Intern.

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00:03:12.100 --> 00:03:14.239

Nick Josefowitz: That's very true.

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00:03:14.270 --> 00:03:30.520

Secretary Crowfoot: True story Uh: back in the Middle Ages, otherwise known as one thousand nine hundred and ninety-five. I think I moved from the Midwest right after I graduated college and moved to San Francisco. I was actually yeah, and I worked as an unpaid intern

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00:03:30.590 --> 00:03:35.710

Secretary Crowfoot: at Spur well before the urban center, when it was up in the financial district

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Secretary Crowfoot: working for Jim Chapel, who is, of course, legend in San Francisco, and legend at Spur. At that time Spur had, I think, two part time graduate students who were working, and then at part time Development Director. So it was a little engine that could, and my big project was analyzing whether the planning department and the redevelopment agency should be merged.

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Secretary Crowfoot: So you know, fast forward. We don't even have redevelopment agencies in California at this point. Um! But I I I was really this earnest like twenty, one, twenty, two year old. Ah, kid, with this Ah, with this big project and spur so ah fun to remember that history. Ah, and how far you guys have come.

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00:04:16.910 --> 00:04:37.240

Nick Josefowitz: Well, if you were in person I would be presenting you with Spur's most famous intern prize uh, and I doubt it. And so we still have an internship, and uh, and so everybody. Um! So this is. Everybody knows. Um. There's a guaranteed track to being a California uh uh secretary, if uh, if you come and join

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Nick Josefowitz: as an intern but you know it's so interesting one of the things back back, then, we weren't, really thinking with the same level of urgency about climate, resilience,

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00:04:47.280 --> 00:04:57.119

Nick Josefowitz: um and uh, and that's obviously something that we're thinking so much more about. Now we in this sort of everybody sense as well as as spur.

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00:04:57.130 --> 00:05:10.150

Nick Josefowitz: Um. And one of the things that you know this is sort of particularly unique in the California context about the bay area is our vulnerability to sea level rise. Um! And how how an intense our vulnerability is!

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00:05:10.280 --> 00:05:21.459

Nick Josefowitz: And I I just you know there's there's so much money that has been made available over the past few years through State budget surpluses through Federal investments,

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00:05:22.010 --> 00:05:27.130

Nick Josefowitz: but it somehow still doesn't seem like we're even getting close to fully funding

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00:05:27.240 --> 00:05:32.979

Nick Josefowitz: what we would need to fund around kind of making up communities resilient to sea level rise.

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00:05:33.150 --> 00:05:37.249

Nick Josefowitz: I'm sorry. Maybe I just thought we'd start off with that and get straight into it.

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00:05:37.270 --> 00:05:50.800

Nick Josefowitz: Do you? Do you see the start of question? This an easy start? A question is that you? Do you see that too. Um! And and how how can we? Well, what? How, how do you kind of plan for that in in your position?

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00:05:51.280 --> 00:05:53.159

Secretary Crowfoot: Well, I mean I would back up,

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00:05:53.360 --> 00:06:05.770

Secretary Crowfoot: and just, you know, share the observation that climate, climate change is accelerated. You know more quickly than really almost anyone thought, including the scientists that were making projections even ten years ago,

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00:06:06.030 --> 00:06:23.990

Secretary Crowfoot: boy back almost thirty years ago, when we're talking in the nineteen nineties. You know, climate change was one of you know myriad environmental issues, you know, facing the the planet. There was some, you know, broad recognition that sometime in the in the twenty first century we would be feeling its impacts

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00:06:24.010 --> 00:06:37.040

Secretary Crowfoot: fast forward, you know, when I started in State Government about ten years ago, for then Governor Jerry Brown climate change was obviously more central on the on the radar screen. But even then the focus was on

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Secretary Crowfoot: reducing our climate pollution, really moving towards clean energy clean, you know, economy really focused on how we're going to stabilize the climate over the next one hundred years.

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00:06:46.690 --> 00:07:02.360

Secretary Crowfoot: The tale of the last ten years has been really experiencing climate's impacts. Now, you know you laid it out. We had, You know we've lost seven percent of our forests in the last few years. We just had the hottest and longest heat wave we've ever experienced in the State's history.

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Secretary Crowfoot: We're in the third year of the current row, and eight of the last eleven years have been extreme drought in the state

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Secretary Crowfoot: um sea level rise, which we'll talk about in just a moment is, uh, you know, promising to be worse than we expected, and then the other side of the coin for drought is is flooding, and i'm sure many people saw the New York Times article on the potential of what's called an arc storm, or like what we would know, is like a Biblical flood across California,

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00:07:28.290 --> 00:07:39.750

Secretary Crowfoot: and these are now challenges We're facing in real time, you know. Ah! Climate adaptation used to be separated from what we know is climate, mitigation, right? Mitigation was all about. Hey? What are we doing to

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00:07:39.760 --> 00:07:53.959

Secretary Crowfoot: mit ctl, and reduce pollution, and meet our Ab. Thirty-two goals and adaptation was like this future wonky planning exercise. That was kind of back, Bernard, for you know climate Nerds, that we're not really part of the central part of the conversation. That's all changed. Two hundred and fifty.

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Secretary Crowfoot: Now we understand that we have to, you know, convert to a clean energy economy. We have to reach a carbon neutrality. We have to show the world that the fifth largest economy in the world. California can do that, but we also have to do a lot to actually protect our people and natural places like right now.

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00:08:10.780 --> 00:08:25.939

Secretary Crowfoot: Uh, and so part of that. Those twenty one thousand, you know, people in our agency are almost ten thousand firefighters who are actually out there, you know, protecting us from catastrophic wildfire right now. But then, at the same time getting into your question,

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Secretary Crowfoot: we have to think about okay, Recognizing the climate impacts, you know, are already here, and climate change is accelerating. And we should plan for you know, continued Major, and worsening impacts, what are the changes that we have to make? On the one hand we're doing more than we ever have.

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Secretary Crowfoot: So California, thanks to Governor new system, our Legislature between last year in this year's budget, we're allocating fifty-four billion dollars to climate action, whether that's zero mission vehicles or decarbonized buildings or renewable energy or more in my world uh drought resilience, wildfire resilience.

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Secretary Crowfoot: But to your point the fifty four billion dollars as much as that. That sounds like a big number. It's just a down payment.

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00:09:12.180 --> 00:09:20.059

Secretary Crowfoot: We have to fundamentally transform our infrastructure, our communities in coming decades. If we're going to actually continue to thrive,

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00:09:20.110 --> 00:09:36.600

Secretary Crowfoot: and sea level rise in San Francisco is a great example. You no doubt Nick saw in the Chronicle today the big piece on on sea Level rise, planning for the embarkadero and what that looks like. And then that is huge investment. Um! Well, beyond what we've allocated already,

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00:09:36.610 --> 00:09:48.520

Secretary Crowfoot: so I feel like in the one hand, California is going further and faster than anybody else. But you know we continue to to to play, catch up to the climate impacts we're experiencing.

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00:09:48.860 --> 00:09:57.459

Nick Josefowitz: I I and you're right. Right. We are doing so much more than than so many other places. Um and um,

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00:09:57.840 --> 00:10:06.629

Nick Josefowitz: And yet like, do you think that we will be able to catch up? Or do you think you know, or do you think that the sort of the

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00:10:06.880 --> 00:10:09.130

Nick Josefowitz: well, How How do you think about that?

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00:10:09.390 --> 00:10:12.190

Nick Josefowitz: And I guess How do you then

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00:10:12.320 --> 00:10:19.639

Nick Josefowitz: sort of think about prioritizing different if if we might not be able to catch up.

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00:10:20.030 --> 00:10:30.619

Secretary Crowfoot: Well, I mean I I encounter a lot of discouragement and dread from people in this job about. You know. What is the future look like when climate change is on the march

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00:10:30.630 --> 00:10:45.609

Secretary Crowfoot: mit Ctl. And and you know these impacts are real already. Uh, and you know, even in the in the bay area, you know, we've all become accustomed to a smoke season where we have to deal with toxic smoke for part of the of the year. And so we get all of these questions around one hundred and fifty,

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00:10:45.620 --> 00:10:54.969

Secretary Crowfoot: you know. Are we ever going to be able to actually get back to what we what we had, and didn't even know we had um, which is, you know, a more stable environment,

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00:10:55.140 --> 00:11:06.790

Secretary Crowfoot: you know. And what does the future look like? I mean, The first thing i'd say is, I don't think it's binary. I don't think it's like we either you know, defeat, climate change, or all is lost.

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Secretary Crowfoot: I think there will be, you know, clear impacts that will, you know, degrade the quality of life. Whether you're you know a person living in California or living in Bangladesh certainly will degrade our environment.

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00:11:20.500 --> 00:11:32.109

Secretary Crowfoot: But I think we have a lot of agency uh right now. We can determine what that trajectory looks like. You know we will have to deal with challenges We didn't think we were going to have to,

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00:11:32.120 --> 00:11:51.960

Secretary Crowfoot: but we can still, you know, move to show the world how we can stabilize our climate and over the most catastrophic impacts. So that's what I think about, You know. I think you know there's some realism that sets in as you read the science that yeah, the world's going to change, and the planet's going to change,

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00:11:51.970 --> 00:12:03.749

Secretary Crowfoot: but all is not lost. There is, uh, still a lot that we can do across the planet, and and that's really where California comes in I mean the rest of the world. We go to these international convenings one hundred

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00:12:03.770 --> 00:12:17.889

Secretary Crowfoot: and first of all, everybody knows California because of the size and it's market size, and and also the cultural influence of Hollywood and and America. And they look to California as a leader, and from my perspective, if if we can't do it here.

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00:12:18.420 --> 00:12:33.980

Secretary Crowfoot: Where is it going to get done in terms of achieving carbon neutrality by two thousand and forty-five moving to all zero mission vehicles much sooner than that really getting our wildfire crisis, our drought crisis under control.

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00:12:34.170 --> 00:12:53.830

Secretary Crowfoot: So i'll say, you know I don't. I don't you know, diminish the challenges. But I have to say, You know California is an incredible place to do this work, and we have, you know, resources. We have strong political will. We have a like, you know, voters that want us to frankly do more than we're already doing

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Secretary Crowfoot: Erez agmoni. We have innovation, both technology, innovation, policy, innovation, cultural innovation. So as we break down the different things that we're doing, i'm optimistic. I mean I think, in twenty-five thirty, fifty years. California will continue to thrive. It'll look a little different one hundred and fifty.

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00:13:09.210 --> 00:13:15.089

Secretary Crowfoot: But if we can actually do what we're planning to do now, California will still be a great place to live.

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00:13:16.650 --> 00:13:34.030



Nick Josefowitz: Um, that's good to know. Um, uh. So you know, one of the challenges in the bay area is that a lot of the areas most vulnerable to sea level Rise, um are equity, priority communities, a low income, communities and communities where um

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00:13:34.040 --> 00:13:45.369

Nick Josefowitz: a lot of by Pop Californians live in San Francisco, certainly with kind of places like on this point, but also around the bay in in in, in in North San Jose, and he's Palo Alto and Marin City

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00:13:45.610 --> 00:13:48.140

Nick Josefowitz: in Richmond.

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Nick Josefowitz: How do you think about kind of prioritizing equity in in sort of as you sort of prioritize investments? And how do you?

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00:13:57.580 --> 00:14:03.770

Nick Josefowitz: How do you deal with? Kind of some of the challenges around green gentrification, green displacement

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00:14:03.780 --> 00:14:23.510

Nick Josefowitz: of sort of making really sizable investments in equity priority communities? Um. But then also kind of struck sort of having to struggle with the potential displacement impact that those investments might cause.

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Secretary Crowfoot: You know we know that sea level rise will impact california's. Coast.

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Secretary Crowfoot: Science is helping us understand just how much I think we're It's still, you know, not clear what amount of sea level rise we should

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Secretary Crowfoot: uh expect by when. But we know that there will be major impacts um within the bay area and across the State. There are some real, no regret solutions that we can pursue, and i'm really glad that the bay area, you know past measure aa

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Secretary Crowfoot: um to restore its wetlands around the bay area pretty remarkable nine nine county parcel tax

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Secretary Crowfoot: mit ctl. And really taxing yourselves in the Bay area to deploy nature-based solutions to sea level rise this that is restoring wetlands, Which are these natural sponges that are going to soak up that storm surge and that tidal surge and reduce the impacts on on built communities. Those wetlands also are really good at filtering out pollution to keep the bay clean. Two.

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00:15:25.740 --> 00:15:45.629

Secretary Crowfoot: So that's obviously, you know, from our perspective, where we want to, you know, Go first is, how do we restore nature in ways that buffer these climate impacts? And that's a really good one. But to your point, Nick, you know, communities along the bay are going to have to do quite a bit to, you know, protect themselves in their communities,

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Secretary Crowfoot: and let's be honest in sea level rise and across the board on climate impacts richer communities. More, you know, communities with more political power are going to be better off to protect themselves than more vulnerable communities and vulnerability, often, you know, is correlated to the income.

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00:16:04.200 --> 00:16:10.960

Secretary Crowfoot: Political power um redlining um. You know racism, historic racism,

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00:16:10.970 --> 00:16:25.140

Secretary Crowfoot: and so i'm glad that you raise this question, because that's very apparent in the Bay area. You know you have some of the richest communities in in the State and the country, and arguably the world. And then you have some of the poorest communities in California,

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Secretary Crowfoot: and so i'll say that we in the State are prioritizing our funding and our policy to the most vulnerable communities. That's not to say everyone won't benefit from these historic investments. But we will be disproportionately investing in those communities that are most vulnerable to really build their resilience. And that's everything from one hundred,

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00:16:44.520 --> 00:16:50.130

Secretary Crowfoot: you know, funding infrastructure to funding community capacity to plan and to build.

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Secretary Crowfoot: I think this question around. How do we avoid simply gentrifying communities that are chasing, You know, limited income residents out uh is a really important one and um part of the answer to that that we found is really having the community truly drive

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00:17:08.700 --> 00:17:19.209

Secretary Crowfoot: um the The planning and the improvements that are being made. I'll give you an example. I was in Dc. A few weeks ago, and I met with somebody super high up at the Department of the interior,

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Secretary Crowfoot: and she had just been in San Francisco, where some Federal funding was being used to, I think Ah refurbished the Buchanan Mall in the Western edition. Ah! And they were celebrating this as like a, you know, Infrastructure act funding, actually hitting the ground with our great San Francisco parks and Rec. Department,

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Secretary Crowfoot: and the community that gave her the tour basically said, This is our park, and we wanted to make sure people understood that this is a a park designed by black people for black people,

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Secretary Crowfoot: and I thought that was really interesting, because, as you know, in the Western edition in San Francisco, there's this whole legacy of quote, unquote urban redevelopment, and quote unquote urban renewal where the black community was displaced for gentrification. And here we are spending Federal funding through our local Parks department on on um improvements that are designed by and for the community that really send the message that. Um that this is a This is a historically black community, and needs to stay as such.

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00:18:19.240 --> 00:18:41.999

Secretary Crowfoot: So I just think I thought that was a really compelling, you know, that really struck her when she shared that story, And I think we have to think about really as we're working is supporting these these communities, these most vulnerable communities. How do we make sure they're driving the agenda, and the agenda is not driven from Sacramento, or even you know parts of the Bay area where you know These These residents don't live

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00:18:42.790 --> 00:18:57.340

Nick Josefowitz: um, and I see that there's a lot of Q and a kicking off. And please put questions in ideally in the Q. A. Um section of of the zoom app, you can click Q A. At the bottom. And uh, we want this to be as interactive as possible. So we'd love

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00:18:57.350 --> 00:19:18.069

Nick Josefowitz: to get to that. So just a follow up question on that, you know. There's some state programs which Um, for instance, the uh the Tcc. Program coming out of opio uh coming out of the sustainable Growth Council, which is a transformative climate communities program which focuses Mo mostly on transportation investments

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00:19:18.080 --> 00:19:37.639

Nick Josefowitz: which really bakes in a sort of a community-led process. Um! And that's not the case for a lot of state programs. And I was wondering how you're thinking about the kind of this on a most sort of granular basis for some of the kind of resiliency programs that your office is responsible for baking in,

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00:19:37.710 --> 00:19:49.780

Nick Josefowitz: not just sort of like. Oh, you got to go talk to the community, but make but sort of baking in that. These are community led investments in the very kind of structure of how the how the program is is designed.

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Secretary Crowfoot: Yeah. Well, I mean, I think, like, look, there's

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00:19:53.660 --> 00:20:01.769

Secretary Crowfoot: inequity is systemic, and inequity is baked into the institutions that that we lead, and the processes that we have.

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00:20:01.870 --> 00:20:15.239

Secretary Crowfoot: So if you think about the way that the State and Federal Government has given away money. Historically it's perpetuated inequity, in other words, complicated grant processes, grant application processes

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00:20:15.250 --> 00:20:34.450

Secretary Crowfoot: mit ctl, and benefit the the most well resourced communities that actually have the time and resources to understand those processes, navigate those processes, write the

grant applications. And so, as we were looking at our historic investments, what we realized is, they were disproportionately going to the least vulnerable communities two hundred and fifty,

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00:20:34.460 --> 00:20:36.939

Secretary Crowfoot: so that obviously has to shift.

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Secretary Crowfoot: So part of this is some really straightforward requirements like a lot of our programs. A certain percentage of funding, like forty percent in some cases, has to go to a small minority of communities that are the most burdened by environmental injustice and impacts. So one is just really, you know, like, okay, let's measure ourselves in the actual dollars that a disproportionate amount are going to the most vulnerable

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00:20:59.780 --> 00:21:14.410

Secretary Crowfoot: Erez agmoni. But then it's actually stepping back and creating more equitable processes so increasingly based on the work of the strategic Growth Council that I sit on, that you referenced a lot more funding towards technical assistance and capacity building one hundred and fifty

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00:21:14.420 --> 00:21:29.889

Secretary Crowfoot: um. So really positioning communities to actually uh compete for these funds and to build their own vision. It's not enough to say, Come, bring us your vision. In some cases we have to support these communities, building up the capacity to do that,

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00:21:29.900 --> 00:21:39.790

Secretary Crowfoot: we also have to change a lot of our guidelines. So, for example, if we want to fund small cities, towns, community-based organizations

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Secretary Crowfoot: we can't necessarily require a reimbursement as the as the dominant form of payment where you have to go out and spend three million dollars on a grant, and then, you know, nine to twelve months later, the after you're done with the grant, the State will reimburse you. Well, that doesn't work for a community that can't float the cash or a community-based organization. So increasingly we're focused on practices like advanced payments which right now are best practices, and we're working to make them standard practices.

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00:22:09.680 --> 00:22:21.680

Secretary Crowfoot: So it's both, you know, brass tax getting money out the door disproportionately these vulnerable communities. But then fundamentally shifting the way that we actually provide that support to create more equity.

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00:22:22.200 --> 00:22:39.349

Nick Josefowitz: Um, Dr. Anna Alber has asked um about what you know. Would you consider sort of requiring displacement prevention plans for uh for sort of uh climate resiliency projects that you that you fund.

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00:22:39.380 --> 00:22:58.710

Secretary Crowfoot: Yeah. Well, first of all, it's great to have uh, Dr. Alvar, as on that, as part of the zoom I uh enjoy working together with her. Um, I would say, look! All all ideas need to be on the table. Um, and i'll say this, which is, you know I don't think I mean find me a program that has adequately addressed.

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00:22:59.140 --> 00:23:10.229

Secretary Crowfoot: You know, the real concerns are on displacement and gentrification. Um, because, you know, we would. We would really want to understand that and and integrate that. In other words,

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00:23:11.250 --> 00:23:30.000

Secretary Crowfoot: you know, I think everyone recognizes that those displacement and gentrification concerns are real, and there those those impacts are real. In other words, where you you know, fund into a community. How do you? How do you stabilize that community? So it's. Residents can continue to enjoy it. So I would say to Dr. Alvarez we would be.

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00:23:30.010 --> 00:23:42.259

Secretary Crowfoot: I'd certainly be open-minded to whatever kind of features we could put in um to the programs we administer through our agency to really protect against that, and you know it'll probably require some level of experimentation.

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00:23:42.270 --> 00:23:55.590

Secretary Crowfoot: I'm not the leader in this area. So maybe there's already really interesting, so you know, approaches that are happening across the state and country. But I think if there are, then we really need to elevate those and and institutionalize them.

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00:23:56.210 --> 00:24:08.220

Nick Josefowitz: Um, yeah, it's. It's such an interesting emerging field, and so so important. And I think there is a lot of um that there are a lot of examples. It's interesting that a lot of examples in State Government

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00:24:08.230 --> 00:24:16.649

Nick Josefowitz: um, even in California, where that's done well, as as you said, from the Strategic Growth Council, and I think there's a lot of a lot of learning to do

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Nick Josefowitz: to do that. You know. One of the things

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Nick Josefowitz: just sticking on equity for one more. One more moment and and sea level rise. You know, in recent years one of the things that we've understood to be a a a huge threat of sea level rise is not just the water coming over the top, but it's the ground water coming up from the bottom and um,

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00:24:38.670 --> 00:24:43.250

Nick Josefowitz: and that there's sort of, and that that could that doesn't just cause

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00:24:44.000 --> 00:24:50.820

Nick Josefowitz: flooding with groundwater rise. But in a lot of places around the bay area, especially those

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Nick Josefowitz: um which are equity priority communities. You have a lot of

115

00:24:55.630 --> 00:25:13.680

Nick Josefowitz: sort of toxic pollution from industrial sites, from the military. That is kind of sitting in the groundwater quite a ways below ground now, which gets mobilized by groundwater, rise, and will sort of rise up into communities, into pipes, into plumbing into kind of open space. Um,

116

00:25:13.840 --> 00:25:32.800

Nick Josefowitz: and it's sort of. You can't really address that with the a lot of the sort of traditional sort of um interventions that you would do to stop the water coming in over the top like uh with sort of wetlands, or with sort of levies or things like that.

117

00:25:32.890 --> 00:25:37.420

Nick Josefowitz: Um! And I was wondering how you were kind of thinking about

118

00:25:37.520 --> 00:25:52.809

Nick Josefowitz: this kind of emerging challenge of sort, of a dealing with kind of groundwater rise in former industrial sites in former military sites which which are home to so many low income and and bipart Californians.

119

00:25:53.710 --> 00:26:01.790

Secretary Crowfoot: Yeah, I mean, the irony of your question is, I spent a lot of my time dealing with the opposite, which is depleted groundwater basins across the State.

120

00:26:02.020 --> 00:26:03.650

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, because

121

00:26:03.660 --> 00:26:33.349

Secretary Crowfoot: you know for so well California is the last state in the Western United States to manage its groundwater, and as a result, for decades uh, we have been depleting our groundwater basins so much so that in parts of the central valley. They, the the ground has has essentially sunk. Um, you know, dozens of feet believe it or not, it's impacting infrastructure, et cetera. So the good news is, we have a State law that is all focused on managing groundwater sustainably now.

122

00:26:33.540 --> 00:26:49.039

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, But the point you raise is obviously the other side of the coin, which is where you have increasing water tables that are bringing up uh contaminants. And uh, there's an interesting situation of this happening at March Air Force Base in Southern California, outside of Riverside,

123

00:26:49.050 --> 00:27:05.000

Secretary Crowfoot: I mean, I don't have any, you know, clear technological solutions uh, except you know, you gotta figure out ways you probably to, you know. Keep the groundwater levels at bay, probably through some type of pump and treat situation, perhaps.

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00:27:05.010 --> 00:27:11.350

Secretary Crowfoot: But i'll say, you know, the Bay area is among the most sophisticated places in the world in terms of environmental planning.



125

00:27:11.360 --> 00:27:30.269

Secretary Crowfoot: And we're really proud that the Bay Conservation and Development Commission are B. C. Dc. Uh. Actually is part of our agency. And so you know, you have this. You have this. They adapts uh program that uh, that the Pcdc. Is is advancing. And so I would really say, from the you know, the Bay Area's perspective.

126

00:27:30.830 --> 00:27:43.820

Secretary Crowfoot: Well, from our perspective, I should say we're not gonna. You know we're not in the business of telling regions how to achieve sustainability. It's really about supporting, you know, regional solutions,

127

00:27:43.830 --> 00:27:52.820

Secretary Crowfoot: and that can sound like a talking point. But it's true, but really important point on on resilience, and also that and how it impacts the Bay area.

128

00:27:52.940 --> 00:28:09.989

Secretary Crowfoot: You know California, one hundred and five million acres of land. We have the lowest point in the United States, the highest point in the United States. We have vast deserts. We have temperate rainforests. Basically We have mountain ranges. We have, you know, the the central valley, the coast.

129

00:28:10.000 --> 00:28:27.479

Secretary Crowfoot: We have such diverse landscapes. As a result we have in climates we have such diverse climate challenges. So your challenges, Nick, in the bay area, on climate impacts, keying on sea level rise, for example, are vastly different than other parts of the State. So we don't have, you know, the

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00:28:27.490 --> 00:28:37.080

Secretary Crowfoot: the focus uh, nor the you know, on the ground. Experience um to to dictate what should happen in the Bay area. As it relates to sea level rise.

131

00:28:37.130 --> 00:28:50.819

Secretary Crowfoot: We think our responsibility is to help provide funding for the plans that you do have help draw Federal funding for the plans that you do have identify policies or laws that can support the implementation.

132

00:28:50.830 --> 00:28:57.549

Secretary Crowfoot: We're needed. Provide standards, for example on water quality to ensure that you know what you're doing is safe.

133

00:28:57.660 --> 00:29:12.340

Secretary Crowfoot: So that's you know that's not a way to avoid a you know, getting too detailed on your question. But it is saying, Hey, Bay Area communities in the Bay area identify your plan and then really it's up. It's up to the State to help support its implementation. Two hundred and fifty

134

00:29:12.660 --> 00:29:32.470

Nick Josefowitz: totally. And you know one thing that I, you know one extra responsibility that I would love to be able to throw on your plate is helping local communities interface with the military Um, because it's very difficult for local communities, especially smaller communities who have hosted military sites or military bases

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00:29:33.530 --> 00:29:35.800

Nick Josefowitz: to be able to like actually

136

00:29:36.440 --> 00:29:55.159

Nick Josefowitz: to have uh interface with the military, and actually get any, even just know, like, figure out someone to talk to someone who's not just going to sort of fog you off. He's actually going to be able to answer a question, let alone. Sit down in a room with you and develop a plan, and even a place like San Francisco I mean, we got the Speaker of the House. We're like, you know.

137

00:29:55.170 --> 00:30:08.080

Nick Josefowitz: We we we're not. We're not a sort of a small community that doesn't have resources. We really struggle to be able to kind of get the military to come to the table in places like Hunter's Point, where you do see sort of military toxic

138

00:30:08.090 --> 00:30:25.200

Nick Josefowitz: pollution kind of potentially being a threat. Um from uh from sort of, you know, being mobilized from groundw to um sort of ground will to rise,

139

00:30:25.410 --> 00:30:27.849

Secretary Crowfoot: as it relates to the Federal military.

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00:30:28.030 --> 00:30:41.090

Secretary Crowfoot: Most of most all of the Bay area. Federal installations. Military installations, you know, were closed over the last forty years through this base realignment and closure or Brock process,

141

00:30:41.100 --> 00:30:55.329

Secretary Crowfoot: you know, if you think back to World War II. You know many of our troops that ultimately fought in the Pacific, you know, came through San Francisco right. That was Fort Mason, the Presidio Alameda Naval Air Station, Mayor Island. The list goes on and on, one hundred and fifty,

142

00:30:55.490 --> 00:31:07.730

Secretary Crowfoot: and the and the vast majority of those almost all of them, have closed. Now contrast that with San Diego, which you know you have a quarter of its economy generated by the Federal military.

143

00:31:07.740 --> 00:31:21.340

Secretary Crowfoot: So it's easier to maintain those relationships where there's an active military presence, because you have the installation. The Federal military in my experience in California are really strong environmental partners where there are active installations. One,

144

00:31:21.350 --> 00:31:31.629

Secretary Crowfoot: I think the challenge you speak of is where there's leg legacy impacts of former military bases in your case that you you raise the shipyard right or naval air station,

145

00:31:31.640 --> 00:31:45.649

Secretary Crowfoot: and then really, how to reach back into the Federal Government and identify resources or support for those um. Those places, you know. Some of this, you know, raises the question of legal liability, which is like, who's liable for it two hundred and fifty,

146

00:31:45.660 --> 00:32:01.900

Secretary Crowfoot: you know. I think I I don't know you know I you know don't know all that much about the current status of Hunter's point, but I know at one point it was an Epa super fund site, so that was a major source of funding um. But I would say that you know there is an active part of the military that does support

147

00:32:01.910 --> 00:32:19.389

Secretary Crowfoot: those places that were closed through brack through base re alignment enclosure. So the State has a governor's military council for what it's worth, and there are liaison

with the Federal military, so we can be supportive in in terms of you know, finding out the right point of contact one hundred and fifty

148

00:32:19.400 --> 00:32:25.869

Secretary Crowfoot: Um. The question of whether there'll be, you know, adequate engagement on some of those legacy bases is a question I can't answer.

149

00:32:27.090 --> 00:32:43.339

Nick Josefowitz: Um, thank you. That is uh It's that we're gonna we're gonna go. We're gonna go look for that Council. Um, and uh, that's that's great advice. Um, you know one of the things that just to kind of maybe the last question on sea level rise specifically

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00:32:44.440 --> 00:33:02.510

Nick Josefowitz: that there still isn't really a strong mandate from the State for communities to either plan themselves the sea level rise, or to kind of plan at the kind of regional sub regional level. There's a lot of kind of nudges that the State gives, and you and you've given a lot of

151

00:33:02.520 --> 00:33:07.959

Nick Josefowitz: uh resources to allow communities and regions and sub regions to plan.

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00:33:08.400 --> 00:33:13.699

Nick Josefowitz: You know this was sort of quite controversial this year with Sb. Eight hundred and sixty seven,

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00:33:13.910 --> 00:33:18.900

Nick Josefowitz: and I was wondering if you you envision that there will be at some point a

154

00:33:19.190 --> 00:33:27.019

Nick Josefowitz: a sort of a requirement. The communities kind of step up, and we with t um and sort of join together.

155

00:33:27.150 --> 00:33:37.729

Nick Josefowitz: I I the individually you'll join together at the kind of sub regional or regional level, and actually do put together kind of really meaningful, otherwise adaptation plans.

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00:33:38.070 --> 00:33:39.750

Secretary Crowfoot: Yeah. Well, first I

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00:33:40.090 --> 00:33:53.400

Secretary Crowfoot: I had acknowledged something that you know It's pretty obvious to you and others at spur, which is, There's this fundamental natural sort of built in tension on land use and land use control between the State and and the local governments,

158

00:33:53.410 --> 00:34:05.070

Secretary Crowfoot: You know, historically, in California. Locals have retained authority to plan land use in their jurisdiction, and ah! And that really, the State, you know, has provide, you know,

159

00:34:05.130 --> 00:34:19.750

Secretary Crowfoot: and provide standards and requirements generally, but doesn't really get into that that local land use. Now that's changing. I mean a whole. Another conversation could be had, as it relates to housing, and how the State is really ensuring that all communities are planning and meeting housing needs one hundred and fifty.

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00:34:19.760 --> 00:34:35.899

Secretary Crowfoot: Um. So I think it's a fair question around. What should the State be requiring of local governments on climate resiliency? Um! It's certainly our intent our goal uh to ensure that all communities, big and small, actually understand their climate impacts

161

00:34:36.050 --> 00:34:54.080

Secretary Crowfoot: and actually plan for those impacts, whether they are wildfire impacts. If you live in the Wildland urban interface, or whether they are drought impacts. If you live in a water insecure area, I think you know the question has been Um, you know, what does the State compel in that respect.

162

00:34:54.100 --> 00:35:11.430

Secretary Crowfoot: Um. I will acknowledge that there, you know, was a policy proposal to mandate that as part of local coastal plans or lcps, that those lcps actually um plan or or integrate, you know sea level rise and sea level rise planning,

163

00:35:11.440 --> 00:35:22.180

Secretary Crowfoot: I think, broadly over time that seems like a no-brainer that you know communities will need to do that. I think the open question is how that gets done, and who pays for it?

164

00:35:22.190 --> 00:35:39.709

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, and you know. In that case of, as I understand, that policy proposal, it ultimately was not signed by the Governor. It would be essentially a local mandate that would then fall for the State to fund. Um. So you know. Honestly, Nick, I think we're moving into a point where

165

00:35:39.720 --> 00:35:53.859

Secretary Crowfoot: erez agmoni, you know, we we want to provide resources and incentives and support. But ultimately, you know, all communities across the State, whether it's sea level, rise, or other climate impacts are going to need to have clear resilience, plans one hundred and fifty,

166

00:35:53.870 --> 00:36:03.699

Secretary Crowfoot: that they that they you know that figure into their um local land use. And I think The question is just how this will evolve and how we can maximize

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00:36:03.710 --> 00:36:20.069

Secretary Crowfoot: uh collaboration and not create, You know, conflict between the State and locals, but that we're really moving local governments along. As you know. I think a lot of local governments are leaders in this respect. Uh, but we certainly need all of them to take action uh given the threats we face

168

00:36:21.390 --> 00:36:36.210

Nick Josefowitz: I mean I I I think there's you know It's it is. It is always so difficult to strike that balance between coercion and cooperation, and often you need a little bit of sort of the the the stick to kind of get people to the table. And um,

169

00:36:36.590 --> 00:36:53.430

Nick Josefowitz: you know, I think from our perspective at spur we really feel that there is a state interest in making sure that all communities are doing uh the sort of the really bol sort of uh necessary resilience planning because the the threats don't stop at a border

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00:36:53.440 --> 00:36:56.969

Nick Josefowitz: right, that if all communities are not doing this together.

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00:36:57.050 --> 00:37:07.480

Nick Josefowitz: Um! Then they sort of put all communities at greater risk, even those that have done the right thing within that community. And I think this is a good transition to wildfires.

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00:37:07.620 --> 00:37:21.749

Secretary Crowfoot: I just say one more thing, though, because it gets really to a key principle of spur, and that is, of course, regionalism, and your point is so well taken which is, look, if it's a patchwork of this, this incorporated city versus that incorporated city.

173

00:37:21.770 --> 00:37:41.040

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, and that there's not a sort of a common approach. Um, Then, when you know we're not going to protect our communities effectively, and i'm with you on that and bay area and sea level rise is a really good example of that. So, and the question is how to move towards more regional approaches that respect that

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00:37:41.050 --> 00:37:47.400

Secretary Crowfoot: you know local authority, but but but recognize that we have to take action on a regional basis,

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00:37:47.410 --> 00:38:01.570

Secretary Crowfoot: so the more that we can create those paradigms of of regional action. And then from the state like maybe it's funding incentives that the plans need to be regionalized in nature, or ultimately moving to, as you say, to standards or requirements,

176

00:38:03.230 --> 00:38:18.420

Nick Josefowitz: and you know, from a policy level. And you kind of brought this up, and we don't. I'd love to have a whole. Another discussion about it. But maybe we could just have one question about it, and in wildfires it's it's, it's it's super cute. It's also true in sea level rise in a different way.

177

00:38:18.880 --> 00:38:21.230

Nick Josefowitz: We're still building housing.

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00:38:21.250 --> 00:38:32.539

Nick Josefowitz: We're still building. You know, new communities in the places that I that we know are most at risk of wildfires that are most at risk from sea level rise.

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00:38:33.250 --> 00:38:42.579

Nick Josefowitz: And part of the reason we're doing that is, we need to build a lot more housing in this state and um, and there's a lot of places where there is at least some risk.

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00:38:43.090 --> 00:39:00.409

Nick Josefowitz: How do you think from you know about balancing those two priorities about not wanting to kind of put more people in harm's way, whilst at the same time sort of still making sure that we can build enough housing to to meet our need in California.

181

00:39:01.140 --> 00:39:04.779

Secretary Crowfoot: Well, I would say, you know it starts and ends with good planning.

182

00:39:04.800 --> 00:39:24.110

Secretary Crowfoot: So, in other words, from my view, you know we have. We have a lot of land. We have a lot of opportunity to build more housing in California period full stop, and we can do that while meeting. You know, our environmental conservation goals, You know, we have a really ambitious target to improve,

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00:39:24.120 --> 00:39:31.090

Secretary Crowfoot: you know, to ensure conservation on thirty percent of california's, lands by two thousand and thirty. That's really important to protect our biodiversity

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00:39:31.230 --> 00:39:33.889

and create these climate buffers, et cetera.

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00:39:34.010 --> 00:39:48.689

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, We can. We can build housing and do that and build out our clean energy infrastructure and do it in a safe way. But it really does get down to planning. There are counties, for example, on the environmental side where they do these

186

00:39:48.810 --> 00:40:12.230

Secretary Crowfoot: habitat conservation plans, uh which are focused on sort of red light yellow, like green light for development. And you have, you know, areas that you you you preserve from development. And then that essentially allows you to go ahead and develop the best developable areas and provide some environmental um coverage for impacts on on local species.

187

00:40:12.480 --> 00:40:25.430

Secretary Crowfoot: The point being, you know, communities can plan for more housing and avoid bad decisions. And obviously, you know, densifying a lot of communities, including cities, is one clear answer to that.

188



00:40:25.450 --> 00:40:38.919

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, Nick, I think one question, though, that you know this this begs is okay. But what happens if a community decides not to do that? Um! When does the state. Step in and say, you know, Sorry Can't do that here.

189

00:40:38.930 --> 00:40:53.699

Secretary Crowfoot: And that has been that you know that is not happened to date, because that you know that there is that that fundamental tension and that fundamental, you know, focus on on local uh on local authority. I think you know we're finding

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00:40:53.830 --> 00:41:08.879

Secretary Crowfoot: well recently, for example, with this board of Forestry regulations that um that are being put in place is basically saying that certain infrastructure requirements are needed. If you're going to actually build into very dangerous places for Wildfire.

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00:41:08.900 --> 00:41:24.440

Secretary Crowfoot: So I think we are having, You know, a conversation about um, you know, putting in requirements. Um, that dissuade, you know, building in very dangerous places, or if you're going to build in places that are vulnerable, then you need to spend a lot of money on the infrastructure.

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00:41:24.450 --> 00:41:32.869

Secretary Crowfoot: Um! So I think we'll see some changes over time. But I think it's a fair question around. Is it happening quickly enough, for you know, an an organization like spur,

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00:41:33.250 --> 00:41:39.899

Nick Josefowitz: and you know, I think, from our perspective, and we're involved in a number of conversations around this and a number of coalitions.

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00:41:40.170 --> 00:41:58.229

Nick Josefowitz: You know. It's it's the eventually. This is gonna have like it. The the the the private market is going to sort of start dictating where people can or can't go with mortgages, or with sort of commercial loans, or with insurance. And we're already seeing this everywhere, and it feels

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00:41:58.240 --> 00:42:17.070

Nick Josefowitz: that it's the the sort of government is the little bit playing catch up on that um and um, and that there is a lot that you know we would be. We would be able to manage this

transition more effectively if Government could kind of get ahead of that, and not, you know, Run behind the insurance

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00:42:17.080 --> 00:42:33.250

Nick Josefowitz: brokers. Um and uh, and try and sort of regulate them after the fact. And what once people have already moved in to communities built, built, built new homes there and build new new sort of businesses,

197

00:42:33.870 --> 00:42:45.989

Secretary Crowfoot: you know already. A quarter of California's homes are in high hazard, you know wildfire zones, so you know, you think of. Think about Lafayette, uh Maraga Ornda,

198

00:42:46.040 --> 00:42:58.939

Secretary Crowfoot: Lot of high hazard severity. Think about the Oakland Hell same. Obviously the Hollywood Hills. Um, you know you don't really have to go that that far to find all these places. And I don't think we're talking about,

199

00:42:58.950 --> 00:43:18.079

Secretary Crowfoot: you know, retreating from, you know, uh ten million people in California. I think we have to help those places be more resilient, so that we reduce fire risks. Likewise sea level rise, I mean the embarcadero over tops during a king tide. Are you planning to move back three hundred feet in San Francisco? I don't think that's feasible. So

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00:43:18.090 --> 00:43:36.089

Secretary Crowfoot: you know there has to be an honest conversation about. You know how to avoid the biggest mistakes around doubling down, you know, on places that are just Don't make sense to put new development. But then, where there is development, how do we? How do we build resilience? You know realistic resilience

201

00:43:36.140 --> 00:43:48.809

Nick Josefowitz: totally, and because you often see, like, Oh, i'm not my! You know my this, this this sort of set of parcels that you want to build on is on some map, and it's sort of indicated as a high hazard area. So it's often used

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00:43:48.820 --> 00:43:59.179

Nick Josefowitz: as it is sort of a nimble argument like Oh, we cannot. We couldn't possibly build there, even if it may be literally across the road from a part station. Um and um,

203

00:43:59.320 --> 00:44:11.859

Nick Josefowitz: and it's sort of, you know, in the middle of sort of a whole bunch of suburban development that we're not going to be retreating from any time soon, or should we? And I think you're right, I mean, I think it, but I and I think there is a real role for the State and helping kind of catalyze

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00:44:11.870 --> 00:44:23.250

Nick Josefowitz: those discussions. Um, in a way that kind of meets our collective goals, because, as you said, I mean as we talked about before it's sort of it. It doesn't make a lot of sense necessarily for each community

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00:44:23.260 --> 00:44:35.759

Nick Josefowitz: to be deciding this on their own, when the actions that that, without sort of any guidance, or even the requirement to make a decision about it, because the actions that one community takes is such an impact on others. Um,

206

00:44:35.770 --> 00:44:45.930

Nick Josefowitz: I please throw questions in the Q. A. Some people have been have thrown in a few, and I hope more people can throw questions in because I want to get to as many of them as possible. Um,

207

00:44:45.990 --> 00:45:01.539

Nick Josefowitz: you know one of the you You've worked for two governors, um and uh and the first governor that you worked for Governor Brown. Um, and we're always gonna I I I I like a lot of would coming back to resource questions. But after we left he left off. At this

208

00:45:01.610 --> 00:45:19.109

Nick Josefowitz: he put. He helped organize this thing called the I don't even know how to pronounce it the declaration, i'm sure you didn't pronounce it with the British accent. But anyway, um! And it calls for a number of things, but it also calls for five billion dollars annually.

209

00:45:19.120 --> 00:45:30.129

Nick Josefowitz: Um, uh, from public and private sources for proactive fuels reduction related to Wildfires workforce, development, infrastructure, and other facets of community fire adaptation.

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00:45:30.280 --> 00:45:31.379

Nick Josefowitz: Um!

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00:45:31.970 --> 00:45:37.459

Nick Josefowitz: And I just. I was wondering, you know, same question that I gave that I had for the sea level rise. How do we?

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00:45:37.900 --> 00:45:45.479

Nick Josefowitz: How can we actually raise the funds that we need um to be able to kind of protect

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00:45:46.010 --> 00:45:55.979

Nick Josefowitz: California sort of sufficiently from from wildfires, because it feels like even in this movement of great state surplus and great Federal investment,

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00:45:56.280 --> 00:45:59.009

Nick Josefowitz: it still feels somehow like with coming up.

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00:45:59.120 --> 00:46:02.710

Nick Josefowitz: Given the kind of current strategies that we have.

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00:46:03.430 --> 00:46:16.859

Secretary Crowfoot: Well, you know, I wouldn't consider it. I mean sorry to use binary twice in one discussion, but I wouldn't consider a binary, you know. Either you raise, you know, fifty billion dollars over ten years, or you know you failed. You know. The fact is

217

00:46:16.970 --> 00:46:36.309

Secretary Crowfoot: over the last two years we've scaled up funding for these wildfire resilience projects. Think fuel breaks around communities, or you know, home heartening, or you know, landscape level, prescribed fire, where, you, you know, reduce major fire risk. We've scaled that up over twenty times

218

00:46:36.320 --> 00:46:47.280

Secretary Crowfoot: We used to spend between seventy-five to two hundred million dollars a year across the State. And for the last two budget cycles we've gotten almost four billion dollars.

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00:46:47.390 --> 00:47:07.200

Secretary Crowfoot: So, working in government scaling up the work is a challenge in its own right, so as of now based on uh funding we got last year, we have over a thousand projects. These are projects on the ground, getting done across the State to protect communities, build forest, ecological health.

220

00:47:07.210 --> 00:47:19.720

Secretary Crowfoot: And so, major scale up happening. The good news is, you know, we've been helped by Mother Nature this this year on Wildfire, which is probably the primary reason why we haven't seen huge catastrophic wildfires.

221

00:47:19.730 --> 00:47:29.019

Secretary Crowfoot: We're also seeing these projects actually make a difference. You heard about the prescribed fires making a difference protecting the Sequoias in Yosemite.

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00:47:29.160 --> 00:47:30.669

Secretary Crowfoot: But there are,

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00:47:30.710 --> 00:47:47.169

Secretary Crowfoot: you know, like boy, almost a dozen projects around the State that actually this year impacted fires that were uh moving in one direction that actually were stopped as a result of that, those those projects, so they're paying off. Point at make. Nick is

224

00:47:47.310 --> 00:48:01.380

Secretary Crowfoot: unprecedented Challenges? Yes, the scale of crisis is a little hard to get your head around. But you know our State leaders are stepping up with funding that we never even thought possible even two or three years ago.

225

00:48:01.390 --> 00:48:18.290

Secretary Crowfoot: So we are making progress. I could give you the same story on drought um, or increasingly on extreme heat. So we are taking action. But you know, one open question is, What does it look like in five or ten years. Um, And presumably we, You know this is only a down payment of what we have to spend,

226

00:48:18.860 --> 00:48:37.709

Nick Josefowitz: you know, and this and um, there's a question from from Gillian Ben. She and I apologize if I mispronounce your name, about which I think is really related to this, which is, how does one um reduce the impact of green tape? Um like how this sort of all the things that the State

227

00:48:37.740 --> 00:48:53.459

Nick Josefowitz: Sometimes the Federal Government suddenly cities put in place. To make some of these kind of projects the one needs to do on either in the kind of the wildfire is still in the sea level. Rise, resilience, see more cost just a lot more, and take a lot longer,

228

00:48:53.470 --> 00:49:03.780

Nick Josefowitz: Really incredible work in your agency around. Kind of um reducing the the green tape around prescribed Burns, for instance, and I was wondering if you thought that was a kind of a

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00:49:03.840 --> 00:49:11.870

Nick Josefowitz: a broader agenda, and one of the ways that one can make the fun sort of make the funding that we need um go a lot further.

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00:49:12.300 --> 00:49:31.810

Secretary Crowfoot: Absolutely. I mean so, for first of all, I would say very clearly, we need to be able to build what i'll call climate infrastructure faster and cheaper in California, and by that I mean natural infrastructure, like multi-benefit flood plain restoration to protect flood risk and provide habitat.

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00:49:31.820 --> 00:49:46.459

Secretary Crowfoot: I mean, like wildfire resilience projects, but also things like groundwater recharge projects modernizing water conveyance. You know solar offshore wind. We have to build stuff faster than we're able to. Right now.

232

00:49:46.470 --> 00:50:04.830

Secretary Crowfoot: Climate change is on the march, and if we're going to meet our clean energy goals that we're going to meet our clean transportation goals. We're going to actually stabilize our natural environment. We have to get stuff done more quickly and cost effectively than we have in the past. So a couple of years ago, we kicked off this process in our in our agency called cutting the green tape,

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00:50:05.020 --> 00:50:08.629

Secretary Crowfoot: and it was specifically focused on environmental restoration projects.

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00:50:08.640 --> 00:50:38.230

Secretary Crowfoot: Now get this ironically environmental restoration. Projects which are essentially, purely, environmentally beneficial um were delayed and significantly increased in cost because of environmental permitting and and oversight that it that they needed to get in place. And what I heard when I took this role was upwards of a third of a project's budget could

sometimes, for things like stream, bad restoration, or this floodplain habitat restoration. A third of the budget could be taken up with planning and permitting costs.

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00:50:38.460 --> 00:50:50.810

Secretary Crowfoot: And we said, That's crazy. We have to. We have to help this this environmental funding Go further, we have to get these projects um in place more quickly, because we have animals, fish, etc. That are in free fall.

236

00:50:50.820 --> 00:51:08.790

Secretary Crowfoot: So we basically looked in the mirror and said, What are we going to do? We brought everybody together. We got some external help. And now we're really shrinking the timeframe to actually deliver these projects and shrinking the budget. As a result, we also got the Legislature to give us actually the ability to exempt Sqa,

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00:51:08.800 --> 00:51:28.509

Secretary Crowfoot: the California Environmental Quality Act. If our director of the department efficient wildlife actually uh attest to the project being um environmentally beneficial without any environmental impacts, because we're focused on getting this stuff done more quickly. The challenge now is, we have to take that universe of projects and expand it.

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00:51:28.520 --> 00:51:35.210

Secretary Crowfoot: So we need to deliver those clean energy projects. The clean transportation projects. The water projects more quickly.

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00:51:35.220 --> 00:51:53.150

Secretary Crowfoot: So i'll say we have to cut the green tape or red tape. The governor's really animated about this, because at the end of the day, you know, I think folks recognize California has environmental safeguards that are the envy of the world, but we also have a system that's too complicated to build stuff that we need to build one hundred and fifty.

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00:51:53.160 --> 00:52:06.709

Secretary Crowfoot: And so our Legislature gets it, too, in the last legislative session through the budget we had some essentially a new process put in place for clean energy projects, and the California Energy Commission in our agency

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00:52:06.720 --> 00:52:35.550

Secretary Crowfoot: is now going to be a one-stop shop that clean energy developers can opt into for permitting as opposed to a local jurisdiction uh, and that one stop shop at at the Cdc. Will continue to consider The Coastal Commission needs the fish, and wildlife needs their statutory

obligations, but we'll put very clear timelines on getting that input, so that projects get a yes or no on permitting and any sort of modifications much more quickly to deliver those projects.

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00:52:35.560 --> 00:52:46.980

Secretary Crowfoot: Because, As you know, Nick, in the space of clean energy we have to bring on far more clean energy every year to actually meet our one hundred percent goal than we're able to right now. So this stuff has to change,

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00:52:47.510 --> 00:53:00.630

Nick Josefowitz: and there's something that's been working on a lot. It's great to hear your kind of energy and passion about that Um. In a number of different areas we just sponsored a bill which will examine, for instance, bike lanes and bus lanes from Sqa. We

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00:53:00.660 --> 00:53:17.830

Nick Josefowitz: sponsored a bill that would require um cities to automate permitting for solar rooftop and battery storage systems, and we we're very engaged in in this issue, and i'm I'm just thrilled to kind of hear your your passion around this. Um, I do want to quickly get to drought

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00:53:17.840 --> 00:53:26.559

Nick Josefowitz: um and water affordability, because I know that's something that's also we. We. We work on that as far, and it's something that is so important. Um!

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00:53:26.820 --> 00:53:44.280

Nick Josefowitz: And you know in in particular, one of the things that that we work a lot on is around urban um water systems. Um, And obviously not the largest users of water in the State, but one where we have huge opportunities to um to improve,

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00:53:44.290 --> 00:53:50.970

Nick Josefowitz: and um, and also ones where we have really deep equity issues. And I was wondering, You know, one of the things that we've been

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00:53:51.000 --> 00:54:10.199

Nick Josefowitz: pushing for it as part of a large coalition. Um is is more sort of support to help especially low income households um install water efficient appliances. Um, as a way of of being much more sort of resilient to drought as well, and and and this and lowering costs

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00:54:10.210 --> 00:54:12.239

Nick Josefowitz: um and uh



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00:54:12.840 --> 00:54:21.569

Nick Josefowitz: using less water obviously. Um. I was wondering how you know what what what your thoughts were on on kind of

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00:54:21.630 --> 00:54:34.380

Nick Josefowitz: an urban urban sort of water strategy. Um, in terms of kind of drought. Resilience? Um! And what role the kind of the state can play in that

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00:54:34.410 --> 00:54:36.699

Secretary Crowfoot: sort of two dimensions of this one is,

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00:54:37.840 --> 00:54:55.809

Secretary Crowfoot: we had an aha moment last year when we received about thirty percent of the anticipated runoff from the snow pack We got in the Sierra Nevada now last year. It wasn't a great snow year, but it wasn't horrible about seventy percent of average, and based on a one hundred year historic record,

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00:54:55.820 --> 00:55:08.820

Secretary Crowfoot: we anticipated a certain amount of water flowing into our largest state-controlled reservoir, Lake Orerville, when in fact, only about thirty percent of what we anticipated materialized in the reservoir. Why, one hundred and fifty

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00:55:08.830 --> 00:55:26.479

Secretary Crowfoot: mit ctl and uh hotter temperatures in the winter meant, You know, less of that precipitation was falling as snow. But importantly, record breaking hotter temperatures last spring meant more of that snow pack that did fall was absorbing into very dry soils with very thirsty plants, or evaporating into warmer temperatures one hundred and fifty

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00:55:26.490 --> 00:55:34.270

Secretary Crowfoot: so fast forward. What we've now projected, or our scientists have projected is we're going to lose about ten percent of our water supply

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00:55:34.370 --> 00:55:43.659

Secretary Crowfoot: by two thousand and forty, even even accounting for the variability between dry seasons, wet seasons, drought, and flood as a result of these hotter temperatures.

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00:55:43.670 --> 00:56:13.609

Secretary Crowfoot: So the Governor released the summer, the hotter dryer strategy which is really about. How do we supplant this uh the supply. We need to do it by doubling down on things like water, recycling. Obviously, better efficiency and elimination of water waste more stormwater capture. When these rains do come in the winter they're going to come, but they're going to come more intensely. Groundwater recharge for those depleted groundwater basins. Even desalination in certain places. So the urban drought strategy uh Nick is

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00:56:13.620 --> 00:56:33.729

Secretary Crowfoot: with the the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, or the East Bay, you know East Bay, mud or uh valley water in the South Bay is that they need to look at their water supplies and anticipate that reduction, and then augment and diversify their supplies. And then we need to support that through funding and policy. And that's what's happening.

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00:56:33.740 --> 00:56:40.569

Secretary Crowfoot: Affordability is a really big deal, because as they're making these investments, those investments cost money,

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00:56:40.580 --> 00:56:58.889

Secretary Crowfoot: and those investments are usually funded by ratepayers. And so you're looking at major ratepayer increases. So one of the questions is, Can the State actually support you know low-income water use ah water rate payers and let me get wonky for a second, which is okay, because it's spur

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00:56:58.900 --> 00:57:19.620

Secretary Crowfoot: um on the energy side under the Uh Cpu, c. The investor owned utilities have to have low income rate assistance programs. So what a third of Californians are on a lifeline program, and those are funded by the utilities, and essentially by balancing rates among those uh like me and you that can afford it, and those that can't afford it.

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00:57:19.630 --> 00:57:30.399

Secretary Crowfoot: If you go over on water, seventy percent of no eighty-five percent of water users in the State are uh provided water by public utilities

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00:57:30.410 --> 00:57:52.339

Secretary Crowfoot: and public utilities can't be required to actually have those little low income rate assistance programs. And actually it's considered legally, would be a rate shift and violate certain principles that in order to to create those low income programs, you'd actually need a ballot measure to actually shift the way that the public water utilities can actually do those programs.

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00:57:52.350 --> 00:58:19.819

Secretary Crowfoot: I've had real concerns around the idea of a big state administered low income rate assistance program, because I think it's better administered at the at the local or regional level. So I think one option is to really consider how do you empower utilities like those in the bay area to actually put in those low income rate assistance programs.

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00:58:19.830 --> 00:58:30.089

Nick Josefowitz: Um! And I think there's some examples of public water districts that have done this successfully. Um, But there's also a lot of examples of public water districts. You share your

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00:58:30.100 --> 00:58:56.460

Nick Josefowitz: legal. And I would say, God speed, let's do it. Yeah, um. And there's also a lot of examples of public water districts. You've done a terrible job of implementing that program. So we did some research um a year ago which looked at how um! How successful public water programs were, and we found some water programs that had less than a ten percent take up of their low income um assistance programs. Um, which is totally pathetic.

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00:58:56.470 --> 00:59:13.930

Nick Josefowitz: Um, I i'm gonna ask uh one like just a yes or no question. And then one final question after that. Um. So um Well, because we're coming up to time. Peter Trio asks what about enforcing? Stay wide. Urban growth limits in parallel to enabling density

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00:59:14.340 --> 00:59:17.830

Nick Josefowitz: stay wide open. Growth limits something we should be thinking about.

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00:59:19.620 --> 00:59:34.249

Secretary Crowfoot: Well, that's a really good question, you know I was I I've traveled up to Uh Portland, Oregon, for example, where I understand that they do have those uh urban growth limits, and that's been, I think, pretty successful in terms of bounding development. Um,

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00:59:34.780 --> 00:59:45.620

Secretary Crowfoot: you know i'm not sure I don't. You know my my world is is more is is really not hasn't been about um sort of the the limits of

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00:59:45.920 --> 00:59:56.650

Secretary Crowfoot: of you know where where to limit the urban development. So i'd have to. I want to be honest, and that you know I I haven't been asked that question before.

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00:59:56.720 --> 00:59:57.919

Secretary Crowfoot: Um,

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00:59:58.230 --> 01:00:12.689

Nick Josefowitz: that maybe you can answer then um as your last question. Um, If if the if you if your agency had a uh had an animal that you that you thought it identified with most,

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01:00:13.020 --> 01:00:28.439

Nick Josefowitz: and if anybody else has a good question, has has like, has thoughts on what what the animal should be, and and let's not do it bad because they're all California things are very, very. What. What would be the animal that you think your your agency identifies with most.

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01:00:28.650 --> 01:00:31.759

Secretary Crowfoot: Um, i'm going to say beaver

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01:00:31.950 --> 01:00:34.460

Secretary Crowfoot: um nature based

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01:00:34.600 --> 01:00:42.140

Secretary Crowfoot: super hardworking um useful, and ultimately really beneficial for resilience.

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01:00:42.150 --> 01:00:58.350

Secretary Crowfoot: And i'll say that we're bringing back. I have a sticker here, but it's not on my table. We're bringing back the beaver in California, which is really kind of a great metaphor for what we're trying to do in terms of reintegrating nature into across the State to address these issues.

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01:00:58.360 --> 01:01:08.880

Secretary Crowfoot: You know beavers were hunted to um to extinction in parts of the West for their pelts, then treated for over one hundred and fifty years like pests, and

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01:01:08.890 --> 01:01:18.689

Secretary Crowfoot: um that, you know, could be killed by a farmer with a permit. Um Increasingly we're realizing that beavers actually work wonders for our water systems.

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01:01:18.700 --> 01:01:29.989

Secretary Crowfoot: Um slowing down the water, spreading it out, um reducing wildfire risk uh recharging groundwater basins, providing environment for fish and other aquatic species.

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01:01:30.000 --> 01:01:39.979

Secretary Crowfoot: So we are now shifting the paradigm and focused within our agency. On identifying how we bring beavers back where it makes sense across the state.

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01:01:40.150 --> 01:02:04.959

Nick Josefowitz: Um. Well, I just I think we're gonna end on that because we're a time, and thinking of you with the beaver. Memoji is how I want to leave everybody and leave this conversation. Secretary. Thank you so much, but taking the time. Thank you for all the amazing work that you're doing on behalf of our state. We're incredibly grateful. Um and um. Thank you also for your service to spur during your internship.

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01:02:04.970 --> 01:02:16.440

Secretary Crowfoot: Um! And uh, we hope we can have you back. Keep up to great work. And then somebody who lived in the bay area for over twenty years. Who's now in Sacramento? Uh don't? Take for granted the the cool weather.

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01:02:16.450 --> 01:02:31.910

Secretary Crowfoot: There's a lot of us around across the rest of the state that are broiling as climate heats up so. Um never take that for granted in the bay. Okay, Well, it's nice and foggy here today. Thank you so much, secretary. We really appreciate it. Bye, bye, bye,