



California Water Plan

The California Water Plan is the State's strategic plan for sustainably managing and developing water resources for current and future generations. Required by [Water Code](#) Section 10005(a), it presents the status and trends of California's water-dependent natural resources; water supplies; and agricultural, urban, and environmental water demands for a range of plausible future scenarios.

The plan:

- Is updated every five years
- Provides a way for various groups to collaborate on findings and recommendations and make informed decisions regarding California's water future
 - Elected officials
 - Government agencies
 - Tribes
 - Water and resource managers
 - Businesses
 - Academia
 - Stakeholders
 - General public
- Can't mandate actions or authorize spending for specific actions
- Doesn't make project- or site-specific recommendations nor include environmental review or documentation as would be required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Requires policy- and law-makers to take definitive steps to authorize the specific actions proposed in the plan and appropriate funding needed for their implementation

Water Plan Update 2018

The final [California Water Plan Update 2018](#) has been released!

~~~

The goal for each plan update is to:

- Receive broad input and support from Californians
- Meet California Water Code requirements
- Guide State investments
- Advance [Integrated Regional Water Management](#) and regional [Sustainability](#).

You can contribute to updates.

- Visit our [Participation](#) page to learn about the various ways to take part.
- Subscribe to [California Water Plan eNews](#), our weekly electronic newsletter, for the latest information on the Water Plan.
- Read public comments.
- Submit your own comments.

## **History**

The development of the Water Plan dates back to the late 1800s. The first plan, which covered ideas for water distribution in the state, was put together in 1873. Subsequent reports (plans) were issued through the decades as DWR bulletins.

The initial Water Plan (known as Bulletin 3) was released in 1957 under the direction of our first director, Harvey Oren Banks, and was intended for “control, protection, conservation, distribution, and utilization of all the waters of California, to meet present and future needs for all beneficial uses and purposes in all areas of the state to the maximum feasible extent.”

Bulletin 3 and subsequent updates were mostly technical documents focused on water supply development. Over time, the plans were gradually expanded to reflect the growing conflicts over California’s limited water resources.

Since the 1998 update, the Water Plan has moved from a technical document focused on water supply development to an evaluation of options for addressing significant water issues in California.

---