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Harvest Water Program Awarded \$277.5 Million in Prop. 1 Funds

*Multi-purpose Project Will Use Up to 50,000 Acre-feet of Recycled Water
for Irrigation in South Sacramento County*

The [California Water Commission](#) on Wednesday awarded the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) \$277.5 million to help construct the Harvest Water Program, a conjunctive-use project that will supply treated wastewater to agricultural lands that also provide habitat to wildlife in southern Sacramento County. It is the first project in the [Water Storage Investment Program](#) (WSIP) to complete the Proposition 1 requirements and appear before the Commission for a final award hearing.

Prop. 1, also known as the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014, dedicated \$2.7 billion for investments in the public benefits of water storage projects, and designated the California Water Commission as the agency responsible for allocating the funds through a competitive process.

The Harvest Water Program will produce multiple ecosystem benefits while providing a reliable irrigation source for local agriculture. Building on the recently completed [Echo Water Project](#) — a [state-funded](#), \$1.7 billion upgrade to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant that equips it to produce wastewater to recycling standards for irrigation — the project will increase the streamflow volume in the Cosumnes River and extend the migration window for fall-run Chinook salmon; reduce the salinity load to the Sacramento River and Delta waterways; improve groundwater conditions for 5,000 acres of wetland and riparian forest; and enlarge the habitat for sandhill crane and many other threatened and endangered species. The recycled water will offset a significant portion of local groundwater use, contributing to sustainable use of the basin and the recovery of groundwater elevations.

The project will help advance California's long-term [water supply strategy](#), which includes the goal of expanding water storage capacity above and below ground by 4 million acre-feet in order to capture more storm runoff.

“This is a big step forward in the Water Storage Investment Program,” said Commission Chair Matt Swanson. “It is the culmination of years of hard work by Regional San and the state agencies whose job it is to ensure the people of California receive the public benefits promised by Prop. 1. It is a big moment for the Commission as well, seeing the first of these projects

through, and I look forward to more projects completing the statutory requirements so they can come before us for final funding.”

“Harvest Water will allow us to bank more water underground in the Sacramento region to help communities, farmers and wildlife, including sandhill cranes and salmon that depend upon the Cosumnes River,” said California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot. “It’s the kind of project we need more of to help buffer against drought and build California’s resilience to weather whiplash. I’m grateful to the Water Commission for navigating a complicated, lengthy process to convert Proposition 1 funding into this critical water storage.”

“As California prepares for a hotter, drier future, projects like Harvest Water are critical to expand the state’s water supplies, improve water quality, and alleviate ecological problems in our watersheds,” said Yana Garcia, Secretary for Environmental Protection. “I’m excited to see this project move to the next phase with new funding following more than \$1 billion in low interest loans from the State Water Board that allowed Regional San to transform its wastewater treatment facility. Once complete, Harvest Water will provide a sustainable, drought-resistant source of recycled water for agricultural irrigation and habitat conservation, alleviating pressure on the Delta and other water sources.”

The Commission has already disbursed \$14.3 million in early funding to the Harvest Water Program, to assist with planning activities including processing environmental documents and permits, as allowed by Prop. 1. Between the early funding and the most recent award, the Harvest Water Program has received a total of \$291.8 million in funding from Prop. 1.

The combined seven WSIP projects have the potential to add 2.77 million acre-feet in statewide water storage capacity, the state’s largest investment in water storage in a generation. For more information on WSIP, including general project schedules and timelines, visit cwc.ca.gov/Water-Storage.

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The nine-member California Water Commission uses its public forum to explore water management issues from multiple perspectives and to formulate recommendations to advise the director of the California Department of Water Resources, and as appropriate, the California Natural Resources Agency, the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve water planning and management in response to California’s changing hydrology. For more information, visit cwc.ca.gov.