

DRIP Collaborative Recommendation

Roles, Funding or co-funding from responsible parties

Part 0. Recommendation Declaration

To be submitted to the DRIP support team prior to commencing work on Part I.

Recommendation Proposer

Justine Massey, non-state NGO: Community Water Center. Received support from DRIP members Sierra Ryan, Tami McVay, and Andrew Altevogt

Recommendation Idea

Provide a brief (no more than 150 words) description of the idea for a recommendation.

Domestic wells are considered failing when they lack the supply or quality to serve their intended uses. California currently lacks a comprehensive approach to address the urgent drinking water needs of households served by failing domestic wells. We recommend outlining roles and responsibilities of various authorities to provide short-term and long-term drinking water solutions for existing domestic wells, and comprehensive planning to limit new development in areas with failing domestic wells until solutions are reached. As part of this framework, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and Nitrate Management Zones should fund interim and long-term solutions for domestic wells that have gone dry or are contaminated, or are at risk of going dry due to overextraction, in accordance with their responsibilities under CV-SALTS, the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. Overall planning and implementation of long-term solutions should be coordinated by a single entity with a responsibility to domestic well communities and with the authority to hold parties involved accountable to fulfilling their responsibilities. This entity could perhaps be a special office of the State Board responsible to the Executive Director and able to effectively coordinate with the Division of Drinking Water, Division of Financial Assistance, Office of Public Participation, and Division of Water Quality. Proposed roles are outlined below.

Focus Area

Drought Relevant Data
Drought Narrative
Drought Preparedness for Domestic Wells

Intended Benefit to the Drought Risk Management Cycle (Please check all that apply)

Mitigation, Preparation and Capacity

Forecasting and Monitoring

Response

Recovery

Part I: Recommendation Overview

Recommendation Title

Roles and Responsibilities

Description

In one or two paragraphs, please provide a brief overview of the recommendation and how it addresses the Focus Area problem statement. Supporting documentation to include an overview of existing trends, the reasons for urgent action, and people currently impacted.

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Impacts

What are the expected outcomes or benefits of this recommendation, and how will it specifically enhance drought resiliency in California?

Improved coordination for domestic well drought response and long-term solutions will result in fewer delays and more coherent implementation of California's laws and policies to preserve drinking water access.

What are the anticipated impacts or consequences of not adopting this recommendation?

Without this coordination, efforts to resolve dry domestic wells can be hampered by unresolved questions of jurisdiction and responsibility. Delays while residents are awaiting solutions for their drinking water needs are distressing and at odds with California's Human Right to Water law. Further, emergency response and interim supplies can cost the state millions. By clarifying these roles now, relevant agencies and responsible parties can get prepared, execute any necessary Memoranda of Understanding, and arrange for reliable funding mechanisms to go into effect when the need arises.

Implementing Parties and Partners

Who would be the implementing agency or entity (potentially multiple)? Please see below.

Which existing entities (e.g., departments or other agencies, private or nonprofit groups, community-based organizations) will the implementing agency or entity need to partner with for successful implementation of this recommendation? Please see below.

Describe the coordination required by federal, state, local and tribal governments to successfully implement this recommendation.

- State Water Board and/or Department of Water Resources
 - Develop a framework to facilitate (or require, when appropriate) domestic well water quality sampling and require that results be uploaded to a common platform
 - Set guidelines for what constitutes an adequate long-term solutions (eg. monitoring and maintenance requirements for POU/POE treatment)
 - Fund implementation of solutions when there is no party responsible for causing the urgent drinking water challenges—limited capacity with current deficit
 - Provide planning costs for consolidation projects
 - Analyze whether proposed fee structures will actually meet needs (ie GSA & MZ mitigation costs) & ensure accountability
 - Adjust DAC designation to acknowledge cost-of-living (especially applicable on the coast); refer to metrics developed in 2023 affordability analysis in the Needs Assessment
 - Develop specific cost-per-connection funding limits for domestic well consolidation projects that reflect the inherently higher cost of developing public water supply and distribution infrastructure from the ground up
 - Issue General Planning guidance for new domestic well developments
 - Provide additional support to technical assistance providers which offer well replacement services when the need for long-term solutions is greater than the available technical assistance capacity
- County, LAFCO, and/or local special districts
 - Track specific local needs and solutions and ensure they are met
 - Require domestic well sampling and assessment (ie. condition of the well, screened interval, depth to water table) and data sharing as part of well permitting
 - Outreach and well testing (directly or via contracted TA providers)
 - Facilitate discussions between local water agencies and struggling wells and water systems.
 - Manage a website with information on local services and licensed contractors (well drillers, water haulers)
 - Established contract with the State to pay for bottled water, hauling, or POU systems when funding is available—would require significantly more (and stable) funding to do this statewide
 - Deploy interim drinking water solutions if technical assistance providers aren't available in the county
 - LAFCO must Identify locally disadvantaged communities in outlying county areas and study service deficiencies in disadvantaged communities including deficiencies in water

- access. LAFCO must develop recommendations and cost estimates for extending services to communities through their Municipal Service Review. (Under SB 244)
- Community service districts/Public utility districts are obliged to consider all requests for interties and/or consolidation
 - Parties Responsible for Causing Urgent Drinking Water Challenges
 - Water districts, irrigation districts
 - Required cost share of feasibility study and solution implementation, based on contribution to declining groundwater levels or contamination.
 - Management Zones
 - Well Testing
 - Bottled Water
 - Short and long-term impacts from nitrate contamination
 - Remediation costs
 - Water quality monitoring for nitrate (and co-contaminants as some MZs have contracted with the state)
 - Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
 - Domestic well mitigation due to GSA management (overpumping, project impacts)
 - Aggregation of groundwater pumping fees and penalties
 - Groundwater pumping cost assessment
 - Representative Monitoring
 - Future parties
 - Ensure requirements are open for other programs established to be part of the same standards for pursuing long-term solutions
 - Technical Assistance Providers
 - Provide technical assistance including outreach, community engagement, planning and engineering assistance.
 - Provide third-party accountability to ensure equitable results.
 - Domestic Well Owners
 - Allow well soundings and water quality testing

[Alignment with Other Initiatives](#)

How does the recommendation align with and/or leverage existing state efforts, concurrent public or private initiatives?

This recommendation links existing responsibilities and clarifies how entities should coordinate so as to avoid delays in responding to domestic well drought emergencies.

[Implementation Time Frame](#)

Approximately how quickly could the proposed recommendation be implemented? Factor time needed to develop, design, permit, construct (if applicable). Select one timeframe:

- Short term (1-2 yrs.) Medium term (2-4 yrs.) Long term (4-5+ yrs.)

Part II: Implementation Considerations

Necessary Steps & Measuring Success

What are the key steps to adopt and implement action?

To help monitor progress and success, what thresholds and reporting can be identified to reflect successful implementation?

Potential Challenges

What issues or challenges might arise during implementation (e.g. authority or need for additional authority, funding or revenue streams, public awareness and perception, technical, interagency coordination)? List these hurdles and offer a brief description of how to address/mitigate them.

Are there foreseeable potential negative consequences or unintended impacts associated with implementing this recommendation?

Funding

What are the potential (estimated) costs to implement the recommendation? Is there both an implementation cost and ongoing costs? Briefly describe any assumptions behind the estimate.

What potential existing and/or future funding sources or mechanisms are available (e.g., grants, general fund, bond funds, rate payers, philanthropic foundations, etc.)? Does the recommendation require funding from the state and potentially matching funds?

Equity and Outreach

How does this recommendation align with established agency equity policies and how might the recommendation address any specific equity or justice concerns, as defined by the DWR Racial Equity Vision, during its implementation?

What sort of outreach is necessary for the successful implementation of the recommendation? Describe the target audience and the methods of outreach needed (e.g., communication, technical or financial assistance, partnering assistance).

Appendix I

Recommendation Process

1. Identification

Objective: Identify initial recommendation ideas and a DRIP member lead.

Lead Role: Confirm availability and identify support needed from DRIP members and other entities. Provide initial information and details.

Support Role: Lead and document discussion based on existing focus area problem statements and DRIP member's shared understanding.

2. Development

Objective: Build out the details of the recommendation using the provided template.

Lead Role: Build out recommendation, ensuring it aligns with broad problem statements. Identify required SME input. Attend at least one VM.

Support Role: Provide guidance, coordinate with SMEs, communicate with members, facilitate and document VMs.

3. Review

Objective: Facilitate member feedback and public input. Gauge the level of support and identify concerns.

Lead Role: Present recommendation and engage in discussions to gather feedback.

Support Role: Facilitate and document discussion, including action items to address. Initiate straw poll and summarize action items to address in refinement.

4. Refinement

Objective: Address concerns and build out implementation strategy.

Lead Role: Address concerns and action items to develop a complete recommendation for member determination.

Support Role: Provide guidance, coordinate with SMEs, communicate with members who voiced concerns, facilitate and document VMs.

5. Determination

Objective: Final review. Conduct a formal poll to determine collective support, assigning appropriate designations.

Lead Role: Present the final recommendation and answer clarifying questions.

Support Role: Facilitate and document discussion. Initiate poll and determine designation.

Appendix II

SMART Goals

SMART goals represent a framework for setting clear, well-defined objectives. This acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Each element of the SMART framework provides a comprehensive approach to goal setting, ensuring that objectives are concrete and attainable within a specific timeframe.

Specific: Goals should be clearly defined and specific, avoiding vagueness. This clarity helps in focusing efforts and clearly defining what is to be achieved.

Measurable: Goals need to have specific criteria for measuring progress. This allows for tracking of the goal's advancement and knowing when it has been accomplished.

Achievable: While goals should be challenging, they must also be realistic and attainable. This balance ensures that goals are feasible and within the ability to achieve.

Relevant: Goals should be relevant to the direction of the work or business. This ensures that the goal aligns with other relevant objectives and contributes to the overall strategy.

Time-bound: Providing a target date for deliverables is essential. This creates a sense of urgency and prompts a commitment to a deadline, helping to focus efforts on completion.

Incorporating the SMART framework into goal setting enhances the likelihood of success by providing a clear roadmap, making it a valuable tool in professional development and organizational planning.