



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency

(916) 653-9402 Lisa.Lien-Mager@resources.ca.gov

Alex Barnum, California Environmental Protection Agency

(916) 324-9670 Alex.Barnum@calepa.ca.gov

Steve Lyle, California Department of Food and Agriculture

(916) 654-0462 Steve.Lyle@cdfa.ca.gov

June 13, 2019

State Agencies Seek Input on Creating Climate-Resilient Water System

Public Encouraged to Submit Ideas through Multiple Venues this Summer

SACRAMENTO—State agencies are asking Californians to help shape a roadmap for meeting future water needs and ensuring environmental and economic resilience through the 21st century.

The effort seeks to broaden California's approach on water in the face of a range of existing challenges, including unsafe drinking water, major flood risks that threaten public safety, severely depleted groundwater aquifers, agricultural communities coping with uncertain water supplies and native fish populations threatened with extinction.

Input from the public will help the Natural Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Food and Agriculture craft recommendations to Governor Gavin Newsom to fulfill his [April 29 executive order](#) calling for a suite of actions to build a climate-resilient water system and ensure healthy waterways.

The agencies want ideas for actions needed now to help California cope with more extreme droughts and floods, rising temperatures, year-round wildfires, species declines, aging infrastructure, contaminated water supplies and changing demands for water. The input will help determine priorities and identify complementary actions to ensure safe and dependable water supplies, flood protection and healthy waterways for the state's communities, economy and environment.

"Think about California's diverse regions 30 years from now," Cal EPA Secretary Jared Blumenfeld said. "What can the state do now to best help people, the environment and the economy thrive even as California's natural fluctuations grow more variable and extreme?"

Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot urged Californians to think broadly, given scientists' expectations that the Sierra Nevada snowpack—source of much of the state's water supplies—will shrink in coming decades as storms grow warmer. At the same time, sea levels

are rising, and warmer average temperatures are affecting everything from soil moisture and wildfire risk to energy consumption and crop patterns.

“Water management is risk management, and our risks are changing,” said Crowfoot. “At the same time, our major water projects are aging, overdrawn aquifers must be brought into balance, and we’re struggling to restore native fish and wildlife populations. We’re counting on California’s water experts and the public to help us identify policies and projects that benefit all water users over time.”

State officials will solicit input through the summer at regularly scheduled and special public meetings of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture, California Water Commission, State Water Resources Control Board, and other state agencies. The state will work with universities, community organizations, water agencies and others to hold workshops and listening sessions around the state.

To see a calendar of events and learn how to provide input directly to the state agency team, please visit [WaterResilience.ca.gov](https://www.waterresilience.ca.gov). The agencies expect to submit recommendations to Governor Newsom later this year.

“California’s water history shows that the most durable solutions involve collaboration,” said Secretary of the Department of Food and Agriculture Karen Ross. “We’re one state with tremendous regional variety. We urge those of you who know your regions best to look ahead, think broadly, and consider what it will take to achieve regional resilience by 2050.”

Among the questions agency officials are considering:

- How can the state help communities ensure safe, affordable drinking water?
- What can the state do to better enable local and regional water districts to capture, store and move water?
- What state actions can support ongoing water conservation?
- How can the state better protect fish and wildlife and manage urban and agricultural water through the next drought?
- What can the state do now to prepare for economic adjustments as communities fully implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in coming years?
- Which state policies or laws no longer fit California’s water reality or public values?
- What are the most troublesome gaps in state data that, if filled, would ease regional water management?
- Are there proven technologies and forecasting tools that should be adopted across California to bolster the sustainability of water systems?
- What models from other states and nations should California consider?

The agencies encourage groups to work together to submit shared recommendations to the state.

###