

# California's Hydrodynamics

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER AND THE THREATS THAT WE FACE

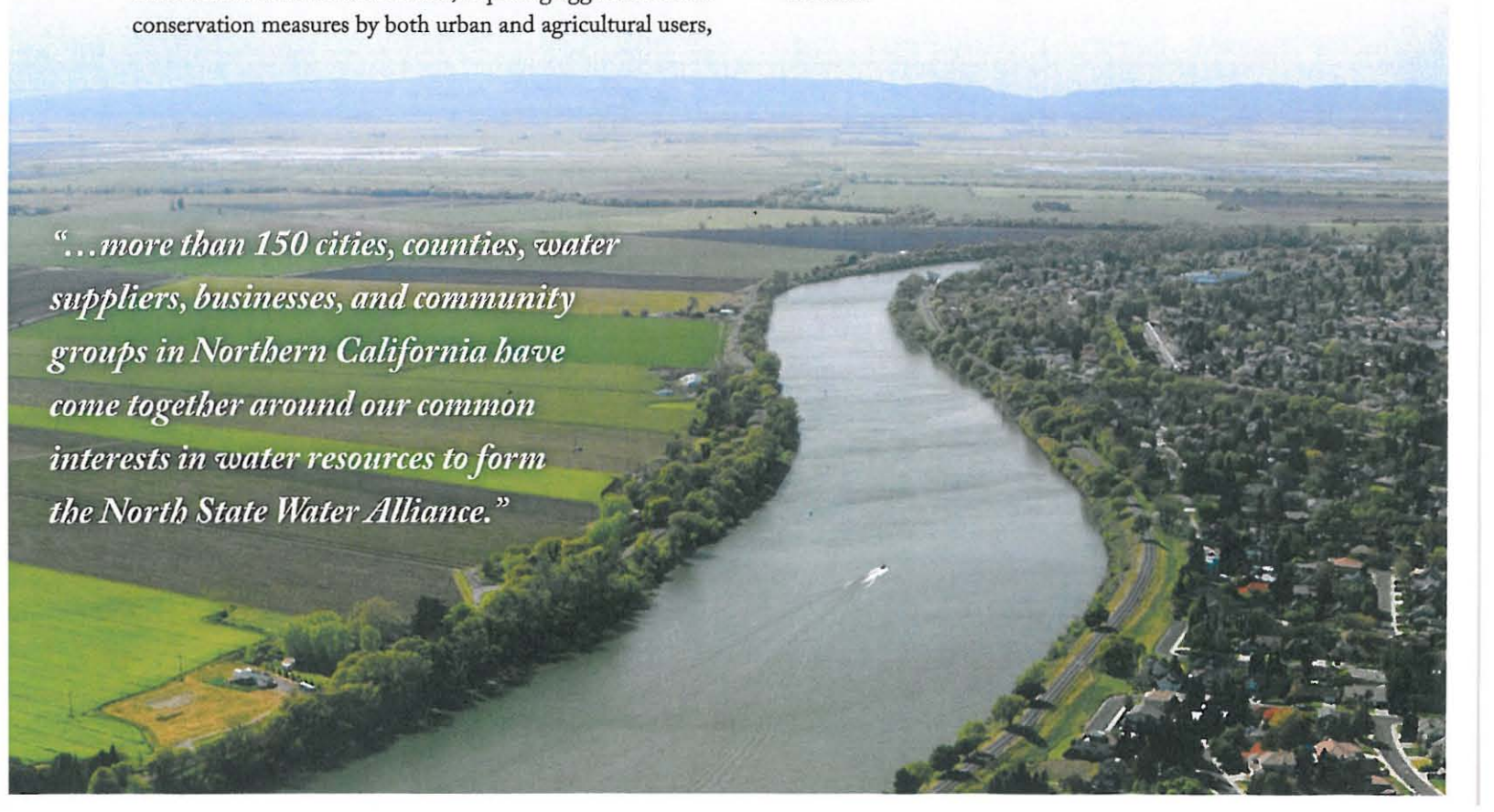
BY JOHN WOODLING

**W**ater... it defines Northern California. It fuels our economy and sustains the environment. It is intertwined with our landscapes and our quality of life. It provides for our recreation and clean, renewable hydropower. Despite the importance of water in Northern California, some take it for granted, believing we will always have adequate supplies of clean, affordable water to meet our needs. The Sacramento River and its tributaries are like a funnel through which water from the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Ranges flow through the valley and into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. While this water is critical to Northern California, exports from the Delta are also called upon to quench the thirst of tens of millions of Southern Californians and to irrigate millions of acres of San Joaquin Valley farms. It is no secret that political and hydrodynamic currents in the Delta are placing tremendous pressures on Northern California's water resources.

In 2009, the California legislature passed a package of legislation aimed at resolving the water supply and environmental crisis in the Delta, requiring aggressive water conservation measures by both urban and agricultural users,

and improving management of the state's groundwater resources. An \$11.1 billion water bond was proposed to help fund the necessary environmental and infrastructure improvements. The legislation and subsequent regulatory processes bring with them concerns that solving the problems of the Delta, and of those parts of California that depend on water exported from it, will create negative consequences for Northern California.

Just as water is integral to the north state, regional collaboration in addressing pressing issues has become the standard for how we do business in the Sacramento region and beyond. In this spirit, more than 150 cities, counties, water suppliers, businesses, and community groups in Northern California have come together around our common interests in water resources to form the *North State Water Alliance*. Five organizations, Metro Chamber, SACOG, Northern California Water Association, Regional Water Authority, and Mountain Counties Water Resources Association, brought their diverse perspectives and strengths together to lead and build the *Alliance*.



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The *Alliance* is a partnership committed to statewide water solutions that protect the economy, environment and quality of life in Northern California. Embedded in the *Alliance* is an inherent recognition that the Sacramento River watershed is truly unique. On the leading edge of balancing ecological and economic sustainability, it is also an exceptional place to live, work and raise a family. The region is a world-renowned mosaic of natural abundance: productive farmlands, wildlife refuges and forests; cities and rural communities, and meandering rivers that support fish, wildlife and natural habitats. In 1849 on the American River, this region became the birthplace of today's California.

**To protect these values, the Alliance and its leaders and supporters have all coalesced around the following important principles involving the Delta and the state's water resources:**

- Water rights priorities and area-of-origin assurances must be recognized and protected to ensure reliable supplies for all water uses and environmental needs in our region.
- Stakeholders in the North State must be given the opportunity to be fully included in and consulted on all aspects of development of a Delta solution and other state and federal water policies that affect the region.

A Delta solution and other state or federal actions must honor and not reduce or preempt the authority and responsibilities of cities, counties, and other local agencies to take actions that further the interests of the jurisdiction and its citizens.

**We will support a Delta solution that:**

- is based on sound science to ensure it is effective and implemented in an equitable manner,
- requires the beneficiaries of any actions associated with a Delta solution to fully fund the costs of such actions, and
- avoids or fully mitigates the negative economic, environmental, or societal impacts to areas in our region

To protect our interests, we need the support of all those who use and appreciate Northern California water. Whether you are a farmer or a manufacturer, an urban resident or a rural landowner, a business owner or an employee, you need to understand the importance of water and the threats that we face. Visit us at [www.northstatewater.org](http://www.northstatewater.org) to find out what you can do to help.

You can also join the Metro Chamber's Flood & Water Committee, email Johnnise Foster-Downs at [jdowns@metrochamber.org](mailto:jdowns@metrochamber.org)

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