

NORTH STATE WATER ALLIANCE

COMMITTED TO STATEWIDE WATER SOLUTIONS THAT PROTECT THE ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT, AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

The BDCP and the Further Need for Statewide Water Solutions

December 3, 2013

More than 150 cities, counties, water suppliers, businesses, and community groups in Northern California have unified around our common geography and shared interests with respect to water resources. The local leaders and the *North State Water Alliance (Alliance)*--on behalf of this special region upstream of the Bay-Delta--are committed to statewide water solutions that protect the economy, environment and quality of life in Northern California.

California needs a comprehensive statewide water plan—it must not focus only on new tunnels as part of a narrow Bay-Delta solution. We encourage Governor Brown to further develop an innovative and comprehensive California Water Action Plan that addresses water and related environmental challenges in all parts of the state and meets the Legislature's over-arching goals to meet the water supplies for all of California. As part of this plan, California needs more water, not just improved sharing across regions.

Today, the state and federal agencies are focused on the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). To be successful, the direct beneficiaries of the BDCP and related actions in the Bay-Delta must step forward and be fully responsible for any impacts or obligations (including appropriate mitigation) associated with any flows or funding requirements surrounding the Bay-Delta. More specifically, any proposed Bay-Delta actions must not injure any legal user of water or fish and wildlife habitat upstream of the Delta. The BDCP should also be fully integrated and logically sequenced with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and Delta Stewardship Council's (DSC) Bay-Delta planning and proceedings, as well as federal counterparts. The Bay-Delta and the co-equal goals would also benefit from integrating additional surface and groundwater storage in Northern California, such as Sites reservoir.

As the *Alliance* and its local entities evaluate the BDCP and related environmental documents, we will measure the BDCP against the following four policy pillars to determine whether it will affect the ability for water resources managers to assure sustainable water supplies for the economy and environment within the region--both now and for the next 50 years. The policy

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pillars were articulated by the Legislature in the 2009 Delta Reform Act, which expressly recognized the unique nature of the North State upstream of the Bay-Delta.

- **Regional sustainability:** The state policy on regional sustainability (Water Code §85021) mandates that “each region that depends on water from the Delta watershed shall improve its regional self-reliance for water through investment in water use efficiency, water recycling, advanced water technologies, local and regional water supply projects, and improved regional coordination of local and regional water supply efforts.” Water resources managers continue to implement this state policy. Conversely, the BDCP, SWRCB planning and other Delta actions should not interfere with or stifle upstream efforts to maintain or promote regional water sustainability and self-sufficiency in the North State.
- **No redirected impacts:** The Governor, Secretary of Interior and policy leaders in the BDCP process have emphasized that the BDCP will not redirect any impacts to areas upstream of the Delta. In their July 25, 2012 statement, the Governor and Secretaries confirmed that “State and U.S. governments will make sure implementation of BDCP will not result in adverse effects on the water rights of those in the watershed of the Delta, nor will it impose any obligations on water users upstream of the Delta to supplement flows in and through the Delta.” The North State is neither a party to nor a direct beneficiary of the BDCP, thus there must be no resultant impacts to water supplies or the economy and environment in the North State.
- **Water rights protections:** Water supplies for all beneficial purposes in this region depend upon the exercise of water rights and contracts. As a result, the Legislature expressly recognized that water rights and area of origin protections in the North State watersheds shall not be impaired or diminished as a result of any program or project in the Bay-Delta. (Water Code §85031.) Water right, contract and area-of-origin priorities must be recognized and fully implemented by state and federal agencies to ensure that reliable supplies for all water uses and needs can be exercised in our region. These water rights also provide a solid foundation for the operation of the state and federal water projects, thus helping to advance active water management throughout California.
- **Coequal goals:** The state’s co-equal goals call for “providing a more reliable water supply for California.” (Water Code §85054.) This includes areas in the North State upstream of the Bay-Delta, where water supply entities will provide reliable water supplies for the region. More specifically, this includes more reliable water supplies for all beneficial uses, including cities and rural communities, farm lands and forests, refuges and managed wetlands, recreation and the meandering streams, creeks, canals, and rivers that support fisheries and aquatic habitat.

The *Alliance* was formed around a common passion that the Sacramento Valley and the adjacent Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges is a truly unique place tied together by its water resources. On the leading edge of balancing ecological, economic and social sustainability, the region is an *exceptional* place to live, work and raise a family. The region joins together a world-renowned mosaic of natural abundance: productive farmlands and forests, wildlife refuges and managed wetlands, the State Capital, other dynamic cities and vibrant rural communities, and meandering streams, creeks, canals, and rivers that support and feed fisheries and natural habitats knitted into the landscape.

With reliable water supplies and *efficient* management of the region’s water resources, the *Alliance* and local leaders will continue to provide what’s *essential* to California’s future success and prosperity. Vibrant cities and rural communities, nourishment and sustenance from the fields, habitats for fish and wildlife, recreation and a special quality of life—the North State is home to all of this, and more.

We look forward to working with state and federal leaders and our various partners in developing a solution to the Bay-Delta that will be integrated with a comprehensive statewide water solution. If you have any questions, please call the North State Water Alliance partners below.

For more information and the list of Alliance participants, please visit the North State Water Alliance (NSWA) website at www.northstatewater.org.




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