

Executive Summary

California Water Plan Update 2018 (Update 2018) provides recommended actions, funding scenarios, and an investment strategy to bolster efforts by water and resource managers, planners, and decision-makers to overcome California's most pressing water resource challenges. It builds on progress made in *California Water Plan Update 2013*; reaffirms State government's unique role and commitment to sustainable, equitable, long-term water resource management; and introduces implementation tools to inform sound decision-making.

Challenges to Sustainability

For generations, California has represented much more than a place. It invokes images of exceptionally satisfying ways of life and well-being coupled with enduring, world-renowned natural resources. Yet the people and ecosystems of California are increasingly vulnerable to extremes that underscore the need to bolster planning and infrastructure to prepare for the effects of climate change. Update 2018 documents challenges that significantly affect the state's ability to manage water resources for sustainability. Among them:

- One in five Californians lives in a floodplain. More than \$580 billion in assets is at risk.
- Thousands of Californians lack access to safe, clean water and adequate sanitation.
- Many ecosystems and the services they provide continue to decline.
- Groundwater overdraft and unreliable water supplies persist in some regions.
- Extensive tree mortality has contributed to the most destructive wildfires in the state's history and in devastating mudslides.
- Climate change is exacerbating many critical challenges, including flood risk, reduced water supply, and wildfire.

Some communities that are proactively planning and investing in water management strategies have shown resilience. At the same time, many communities remain vulnerable — those with limited resources and insufficient technical, managerial, and financial capacity to manage water resources.

Bold Action to Overcome Challenges

This plan recommends significant additional investment in infrastructure and ecosystem improvements to overcome challenges to sustainability. It recommends actions to resolve systemic and institutional issues that contribute to many of the state's water challenges.

The recommended actions, listed in Table ES-1, are organized according to six goals for sustainability:

- Improve Integrated Watershed Management.
- Strengthen Resiliency and Operational Flexibility of Existing and Future Infrastructure.
- Restore Critical Ecosystem Functions
- Empower California's Under-Represented or Vulnerable Communities
- Improve Inter-Agency Alignment and Address Persistent Regulatory Challenges.
- Support Real-Time Decision-Making, Adaptive Management and Long-Term Planning.

The plan also describes scenarios to leverage existing funding for California water management and discusses some additional concepts that can inform funding decisions over the long term.

A Shared Vision for California's Water Future

Update 2018 envisions a future where all Californians benefit from reduced flood risk, more reliable water supplies, reduced groundwater depletion, and greater habitat and species resiliency. It suggests actions to help align decision-making processes, track outcomes and adaptively manage programs and investments to achieve the sustainability goals.

Table ES-1 Update 2018 Recommended Actions Organized by Goal

Goal	Action #	Description
Improve Integrated Watershed Management	1.1	Address the Water Management Needs of California's Most Vulnerable Communities
	1.2	Support the Role of Working Landscapes
	1.3	Promote Flood Managed Aquifer Recharge
Strengthen Resiliency and Operational Flexibility of Existing and Future Infrastructure	2.1	Improve Infrastructure and Promote Long-Term Management
Restore Critical Ecosystem Functions	3.1	Address Legacy Impacts
	3.2	Facilitate Multi-Benefit Water Management Projects
	3.3	Quantify Natural Capital
Empower California's Under-Represented or Vulnerable Communities	4.1	Improve Tribal Involvement in Regional Planning Efforts
	4.2	Engage Proactively with Disadvantaged Community Liaisons
Improve Inter-Agency Alignment and Address Persistent Regulatory Challenges	5.1	Incorporate Ecosystem Needs into Water Management Infrastructure Planning and Implementation
	5.2	Streamline Ecosystem Restoration Project Permitting
	5.3	Address Additional Regulatory Challenges
Support Real-Time Decision Making, Adaptive Management, and Long-Term Planning	6.1	Facilitate Comprehensive Water Resource Data Collection and Management Program
	6.2	Coordinate Climate Science and Monitoring Efforts
	6.3	Improve Performance Tracking
	6.4	Develop Regional Water Management Atlas
	6.5	Bolster Reporting Requirements for State Financial Assistance
	6.6	Expand Water Resource Education
	6.7	Explore Ways to Develop Stable and Sufficient Funding