



Fact Sheet on Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative

April 2019

Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order on April 29, 2019, directing three state agencies to develop a comprehensive strategy to build a climate-resilient water system and ensure healthy waterways through the 21st century.

1. What action did Governor Newsom take?

The Governor signed an executive order directing the secretaries of the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Food and Agriculture to prepare a water resilience portfolio that meets the needs of California's communities, economy and environment through the 21st century.

2. Why does the state need a water resilience portfolio?

California faces a range of water challenges, from severely depleted groundwater basins to vulnerable infrastructure to unsafe drinking water in many communities to uncertain water supplies for our cities and agriculture. Climate change magnifies the risk. There is widespread agreement that a coordinated portfolio of complementary actions is needed to build water resilience, ensure healthy waterways and meet long-term water needs. Five years of historic drought showed the importance of regional investments in a diverse water supply portfolio, including conservation, water recycling, groundwater storage and cleanup, and more. Pursuing a statewide portfolio of actions creates opportunities to build resilience, leverage past investments and meet multiple objectives.

3. What elements will be part of the portfolio?

The portfolio will integrate and build on programs, policies and investments already in place to build a climate-resilient water system. While specifics will be defined over the coming months, likely elements include making the most of every drop through recycling and conservation, expanding stormwater capture and groundwater recharge to their full potential, modernizing water infrastructure -- including in the Delta -- to withstand climate pressures, and advancing multi-benefit projects such as floodplains that improve flood protection, enhance habitat and recharge groundwater basins. The Governor's executive order emphasizes the need for innovation and new technologies, strengthened partnerships and regional approaches.

4. How will the three agencies carry out their charge?

The California Natural Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Food and Agriculture will establish a working group to develop the water resilience portfolio. The working group will inventory and assess current water supplies and the health of waterways. It will also assess projected future water needs, anticipated climate-driven impacts on water systems, including more severe droughts and floods, and other challenges.

The working group will gather input through a variety of public workshops and listening sessions, and hold regular meetings to review work in progress, consider public comment and develop a water resilience portfolio to recommend to the Governor.

5. Hasn't this already been done? How does this differ from previous planning efforts?

The Newsom Administration's portfolio initiative will build on previous work, including the California Water Action Plan released by the Brown Administration in 2014 and updated in 2016. It will take advantage of new data and lessons learned since then to reassess priorities in the Water Action Plan, identify potential new priorities for the Newsom Administration and identify ways to improve integration across state agencies to implement those priorities.

6. What does this mean for the Delta tunnels project?

Governor Newsom has stated that modernized Delta conveyance is needed as part of a water resilience portfolio for California. He has directed his team to take steps to advance a smaller capacity, strategically designed single tunnel to deliver water through the Delta. The Department of Water Resources will begin taking those steps in the coming days and weeks.

7. What are the next steps?

The agencies plan to establish the portfolio working group in the coming weeks and begin to inventory and assess current supplies and conditions. Public input will be gathered through workshops and other venues. A draft portfolio is expected to be submitted to the Governor later this year.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Executive Order N-10-19

WHEREAS, water is a human right, and is central to California's strength and vitality; and

WHEREAS, we face a range of existing water challenges, including unsafe drinking water across the state, 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; and

WHEREAS, climate change is having a profound impact on water and other resources, making the climate warmer and more variable, which reduces mountain snowpack, intensifies drought and wildfires, and drives shorter, more intense wet seasons that worsen flooding; and

WHEREAS, California continues to grow, with our population projected to grow to 50 million over the next several decades and our economic activities expanding as the world's fifth largest economy; and

WHEREAS, the future prosperity of our communities and the health of our environment depend on tackling pressing current water challenges while positioning California to meet broad water needs through the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, many state programs, policies and investments are being implemented, such as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and new urban water efficiency standards, that can be built upon to meet these evolving challenges; and

WHEREAS, providing clean, dependable water supplies to communities, agriculture, and industry while restoring and maintaining the health of our watersheds is both necessary and possible; and

WHEREAS, achieving this goal requires a broad portfolio of collaborative strategies between government, sovereign tribes, local communities, water agencies, irrigation districts, environmental conservationists, academia, business and labor leaders, and other stakeholders.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes of the State of California, do hereby issue this Order to become effectively immediately.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. The California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with the Department of Finance, shall together prepare a water resilience portfolio that meets the needs of California's communities, economy, and environment through the 21st century.

These agencies will reassess priorities contained within the 2016 California Water Action Plan, update projected climate change impacts to our water systems, identify key priorities for the administration's water portfolio moving forward, and identify how to improve integration across state agencies to implement these priorities.

2. These agencies shall first inventory and assess:
 - a. Existing demand for water on a statewide and regional basis and available water supply to address this demand.
 - b. Existing water quality of our aquifers, rivers, lakes and beaches.
 - c. Projected water needs in coming decades for communities, economy and environment.
 - d. Anticipated impacts of climate change to our water systems, including growing drought and flood risks, and other challenges to water supply reliability.
 - e. Work underway to complete voluntary agreements for the Sacramento and San Joaquin river systems regarding flows and habitat.
 - f. Current planning to modernize conveyance through the Bay Delta with a new single tunnel project.
 - g. Expansion of the state's drinking water program to ensure all communities have access to clean, safe and affordable drinking water.
 - h. Existing water policies, programs, and investments within state government.

3. This water resilience portfolio established by these agencies shall embody the following principles:
 - a. Prioritize multi-benefit approaches that meet multiple needs at once.
 - b. Utilize natural infrastructure such as forests and floodplains.
 - c. Embrace innovation and new technologies.
 - d. Encourage regional approaches among water users sharing watersheds.
 - e. Incorporate successful approaches from other parts of the world.
 - f. Integrate investments, policies and programs across state government.
 - g. Strengthen partnerships with local, federal and tribal governments, water agencies and irrigation districts, and other stakeholders.

4. These agencies shall conduct extensive outreach to inform this process, including to other state agencies, sovereign tribes, federal and local government, local water agencies, agricultural groups, environmental justice and environmental conservation organizations, local and statewide business leaders, academic experts and other stakeholders.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order shall be filed with the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice shall be given to this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 29th day of April 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Padilla", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and stylized.

ALEX PADILLA
Secretary of State