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## FACT SHEET

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### WATER FOR CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE

The 1976-1977 drought dramatically illustrated the importance of water to California's 23 million residents. After more than 20 years of study and planning under three administrations, the 1980 State Water Act (Senate Bill 200) has been approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. In the June, 1982 election, voters will have the opportunity to approve this legislation so we can move forward with completing the California Water Project.

### THE 1980 STATE WATER ACT

The State Water Act is a comprehensive water conservation and management program aimed at assuring adequate water supplies for all Californians. The measure also contains important provisions to enhance fish and wildlife and improve water quality—all without new state taxes.

The Peripheral Canal, a key element in the State Water Act, is the last vital step in completing the California Aqueduct—and completing it in an environmentally sound fashion. This and other facilities authorized by the State Water Act will provide urgently needed protection of water quality in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, assure adequate irrigation water for California agriculture, and help replace the Colorado River water which Southern California now depends on but will lose to Arizona by the mid-1980s because of a U.S. Supreme Court decision. The State Water Act will benefit the entire State of California.

- **Insures Against Drought** — In California there is an urgent need to develop additional water supplies as protection against drought. Based on a fifty-year average, California faces one dry year every four years. Unfortunately, every wet year millions of acre-feet of surplus water spill into the Pacific Ocean through the Delta — water **in excess** of what is needed to maintain the water quality of the Delta and San Francisco Bay. Facilities authorized by the State Water Act would conserve some of that surplus, and together with stored supplies would provide from 600,000 to 1 million acre-feet of additional water per year for use in drought periods.
- **Protects Fish and Wildlife** — Construction of the Peripheral Canal in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta will enhance the fish and wildlife in this environmentally sensitive area, returning these populations to the historical levels of 1922-1967. In addition to strong measures to protect water quality, “reverse flows” caused by Southern Delta pumping plants will be eliminated. These “reverse flows” have been cited as a major cause in the decline of fish populations in the Delta. The canal itself will be equipped with the most advanced fish screens available to protect migrating fish. Under the State Water Act, the Department of Water Resources acknowledges its responsibility for fish and wildlife protection in the estuary.
- **Guarantees Water Quality** — The State Water Act and its companion legislation, Proposition 8, provide strong legal guarantees — **as a part of the state constitution** — that water quality in the Delta will be protected. Under the State Water Act, only surplus water supplies will be exported. Construction of the Peripheral Canal will not affect the cleansing action of “flushing flows” in the San Francisco Bay. The canal will be equipped with 14 water release structures designed solely to improve water quality within the Delta itself by maintaining the delicate balance of fresh and salt water. These improvements will benefit not only the Delta but the entire estuary.
- **Helps Replace Lost Colorado River Water** — As a result of a U.S. Supreme Court decision, the Metropolitan Water District which serves most of Southern California, will lose more than half of its allotment from the Colorado River. The additional supply of water conserved by facilities authorized under the State Water Act, will help replace the water Southern California will lose to Arizona in the mid-1980s.
- **Protects Wild and Scenic Rivers** — In November 1980, California voters passed Proposition 8, a constitutional amendment protecting the North Coast Wild and Scenic Rivers. Proposition 8 is legally tied to the 1980 State Water Act (SB 200) and cannot go into effect unless voters approve this legislation. As companion measures, Proposition 8 and the State Water Act are designed to provide continued water resource development with stringent environmental protection. Under Proposition 8, the North's Wild and Scenic Rivers cannot be developed without approval from the voters or authorization by a two-thirds vote of the Legislature. Under current law, this decision could be made by a simple majority vote of the Legislature.



- **Protects Food Production** — The State Water Act is essential to meeting California's agricultural water needs in the coming years. During the 1976-1977 drought, a lack of water caused \$1.5 billion in crop losses. This brought financial hardship to many farmers, and caused food prices to rise. The facilities authorized by the State Water Act would help mitigate the effects of a dry year on agriculture. The surplus water saved by the Peripheral Canal in wet years, will help replenish Central Valley ground-water basins allowing storage of water for use in dry years.

## COST AND FINANCING

The Department of Water Resources estimates the construction cost of the Peripheral Canal to be \$600 million in 1980 dollars. Additional facilities authorized by the State Water Act and planned within the next 20 years bring the total cost of the project to \$2.1 billion. By the year 2000 this cost will escalate to \$5.1 billion with inflation.

The State Water Act will not require any new state taxes but will be financed primarily through revenue bonds and the California Water Fund, which includes tideland oil revenues and specified revenues from State Water Project contractors. The cost of this measure will ultimately be borne only by those who directly benefit from the measure or receive water from the State Water Project. The average family of five living in Southern California, which receives water from the State Water Project, will pay about \$10 per year for the vital water made available through the Peripheral Canal. The cost to northern counties will be less, due to lower transportation costs.

## STATEWIDE SUPPORT

The State Water Act has been developed with the support of three California administrations — Governor Edmund G. Brown, Governor Ronald Reagan, and Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. The Department of Fish and Game supports the State Water Act's authorization of the Peripheral Canal as the only alternative which will protect the wildlife of the Delta. Department representative Harold K. Chadwick, testifying before the California Water Commission stated: "More than 20 years of fishery research has led to an essentially unanimous opinion among fishery biologists that the canal is a better facility for exporting water from the Delta than any other alternative, **including the present system.**"

Many organizations are in support of the 1980 State Water Act as a reasonable measure designed to assure water supplies and, at the same time, protect the valuable environment of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Those groups include: Association of California Water Agencies; California Water Resources Association; California Chamber of Commerce; California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance; California Wildlife Federation; County Farm Bureaus in Kern, Orange, Santa Clara, and San Diego; as well as other environmental, labor, business and civic organizations.

**Figure 1: DELTA FACILITIES**

**DELTA FACILITIES**

The State Water Act authorizes construction of the Peripheral Canal — an earthen, tree-lined channel 400 feet wide and 30 feet deep designed to safely transport water from the Sacramento River near Hood to Clifton Court Forebay in the Southern Delta. The 42-mile long canal will be equipped with extensive fish screens and 14 water release structures designed solely to improve the water quality within the Delta.

