



Assessing a State Role in Financing Conveyance: Presentation of White Paper (Action Item)

Introduction

As directed by the Water Resilience Portfolio, the Commission has assessed a State role in financing conveyance projects to meet the needs of a changing climate. The Commission hosted expert presentations at Commission meetings and regional public workshops. The Commission used the information gathered from experts and public stakeholders to inform a white paper describing key issues and considerations, including findings and conclusions for state policymakers to consider as they weigh the financing options for water conveyance infrastructure. In developing its findings and conclusions, the Commission considered:

- The characteristics of resilient conveyance and how a conveyance project demonstrably contributes to climate resilience.
- The public benefits associated with conveyance projects, which ones the state may want to fund, and how the state might value those benefits.
- The financing mechanisms that project proponents can use to help advance conveyance projects that help meet needs in a changing climate.

At this meeting, Commission staff will present the white paper for Commission approval. The white paper has been revised to incorporate comments received from the public and Commissioners.

Commission Decision & Staff Recommendation

The Commission is being asked to approve the white paper presented by staff. The Commission may:

1. approve the white paper as written;
2. approve the white paper with modifications; or
3. send the paper back to staff for revisions.

If the Commission approves the white paper as written or with modifications, staff will share the white paper with state policymakers and the public. If the Commission sends the paper back to staff for revisions, staff will make the requested revisions and bring the paper back before the Commission at a future meeting.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the white paper. This white paper has been vetted by the Commission, other State agencies, and the public and is now ready to be used as

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guidance for shaping the State's role in financing climate-resilient conveyance. Lawmakers are currently considering bills that would fund repairs to major conveyance infrastructure in the State. This paper is well-positioned to be immediately impactful by informing the decisions they will make.

Background

On July 28, 2020, the California Natural Resources Agency, California Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture issued the final [Water Resilience Portfolio](#) (portfolio) in response to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-10-19, which calls for a "set of actions to meet California water needs through the 21st century." The portfolio outlines a broad suite of actions designed to move the state toward water resilience. The portfolio calls on the Commission to fulfill Action 19.4: assess a state role in financing conveyance projects that could help meet needs in a changing climate. Action 19.4 is embedded in a section of the portfolio that is focused on building connections, which includes actions designed to help increase physical connections and coordination between and among the decentralized elements of California's water system.

The Commission's work on conveyance implements Goal One of the Strategic Plan, which calls on the Commission to "serve as a primary public forum for the discussion of improving water management policy to assist regions in achieving climate resiliency ... including those actions of the Water Resilience Portfolio assigned to the Commission."

Meeting Overview

Assistant Executive Officer Laura Jensen will present the white paper to the Commission.

This is an action item.

Contact

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