



**Water Storage Investment Program: Early Funding Request**

**Introduction**

Southern California Water Bank Authority will present its request for early funding under the Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) for the Willow Springs Water Bank Conjunctive Use Project. The Commission will then decide whether to award funds for early funding. An early funding award cannot exceed five percent of a project's Maximum Conditional Eligible Determination (MCED). Early funding is a portion of the MCED not in addition to the MCED.

At its August 2020 meeting, the Commission adopted emergency regulations to allow applicants that did not receive early funding in the initial application period another opportunity to apply. On August 31, 2020, the Office of Administrative Law approved the regulations. Early funding allows for reimbursement of funds related to the completion of environmental documentation and permitting for WSIP projects that received an MCED.

**Commission Decision**

Based on the presentation and public comment the Commission can decide to not award early funding to the project. If that occurs, the applicant will not be able to access early funding. The applicant cannot appeal the decision or reapply for early funding under current regulations. If the Commission decides to award early funding, they will also determine the amount of funding to award. Staff would then work on an early funding agreement that controls the use and disbursement of the funding.

**Background**

Through the WSIP, the California Water Commission will invest nearly \$2.6 billion in the public benefits of water storage projects, consistent with the requirements of Proposition 1 (the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014), Chapter 8. In July 2018, the Commission made Maximum Conditional Eligibility Determinations, decisions that set the amount of Proposition 1 funding available to a given project, for eight projects that will create more than four million acre-feet of storage capacity. Since then, applicants have been working to complete the Proposition 1 requirements, which include obtaining permits and environmental documents, contracts for the administration of public benefits, and contracts for non-Proposition 1 funding before returning to the Commission for a final award hearing.

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This agenda item implements Goal Four of the Commission's Strategic Plan, which calls on the Commission to carry out its statutory responsibilities for the Proposition 1 Water Storage Investment Program.

**Meeting Overview**

The Southern California Water Bank Authority has requested to appear at the September Commission meeting to present their request for early funding.

This is an action item.

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