

Department of Water Resources Strategic Plan – Edition 2023

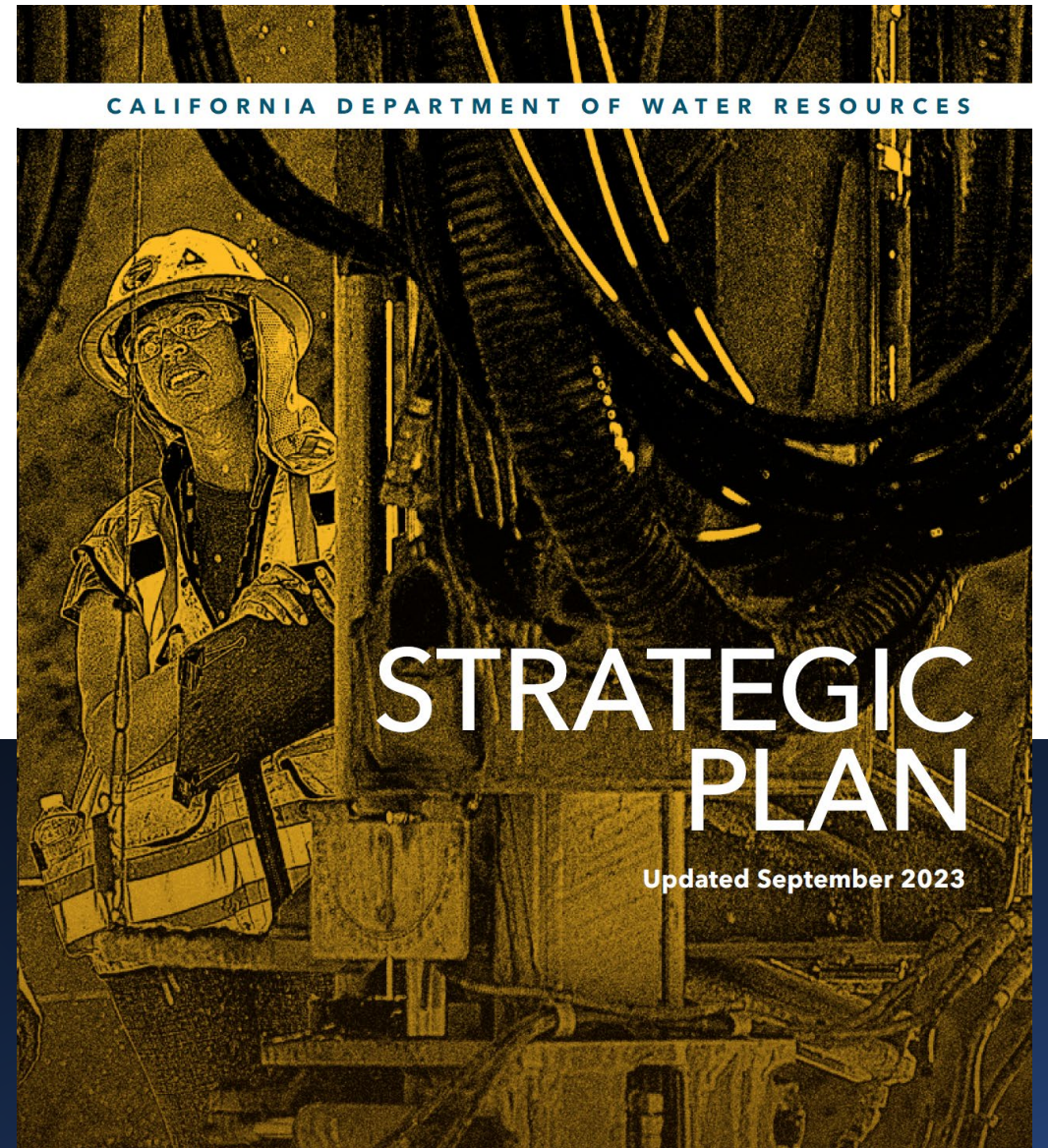
California Water Commission
January 17, 2023

Agenda

- Strategic Plan Overview
- Plan Alignment
- Q&A

Strategic Plan

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Context

- DWR was founded in 1955 following a devastating flood.
- The Department initiated and completed the largest state-built water system, the State Water Project. Today, the SWP service area represents the 8th largest economy in the world.
- In recent years, the Department's role has expanded providing extensive local assistance, regulating dam safety, and educating the public about water.
- Though past problems may have lent themselves to single-purpose solutions, the challenges ahead will nearly all demand integrated strategies.
- As we are re-building our aging and failing water systems, we must seize the opportunity to make the services they provide more equitable, as well as take advantage of nature-based solutions, which can be more sustainable.

Strategic Plan Approach

- The Plan sets a shared vision of priority actions that call on all of us to integrate and transform water management
- Living document, with annual review
- 5-year time scale
- Posted on public website:
www.water.ca.gov

What is Different?



REDUCED 21 GOALS TO 5 GOALS



MOVED AWAY FROM SILOED
ACTIONS TO MULTI-OWNERSHIP
APPROACH



NEW DIGITAL PLATFORM

Implementation Expectations

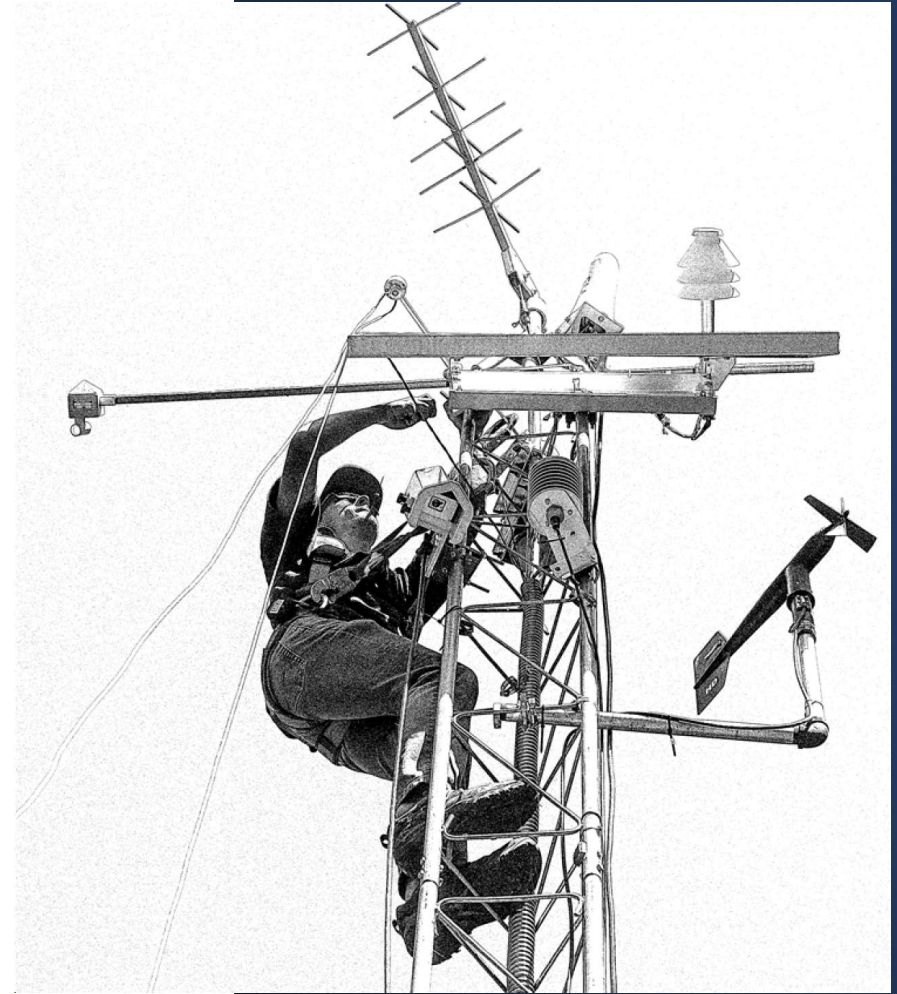
- This plan is ambitious and will challenge DWR's current operating procedures.
- With this monumental shift in approach, we expect to adjust and iterate frequently.
- Maintaining flexibility is key to implementation.
- DWR is committed to providing an annual update on Strategic Plan implantation to the California Water Commission

Goal 1: Be an Employer of Choice

DWR seeks to create a culture of excellence that is welcoming, challenging, rewarding, and fun.

To create an environment where employees can thrive, DWR dedicates resources that empower employees to innovate, collaborate, and advance within and beyond the organization.

In close collaboration with experts from academia, Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies, DWR will work to advance thought leadership across the water management sector.



Objective 2: Foster a Culture of Excellence

Action 2: By 2025, develop and adopt policies and best practices for conducting research to support the growth of DWR science leaders and co-produce research with others.

Opportunity for the Commission: Request briefing from Lead Scientist to understand Department research contributions and priorities.

Action 5: By 2025, embed climate change experts in each Division to better inform planning, design, and project implementation.

Opportunity for the Commission: Request briefing from Deputy Director of Climate Resilience on the DWR's Climate Action Plan and organizational approach to climate change.



Goal 2: Build Community Capacity

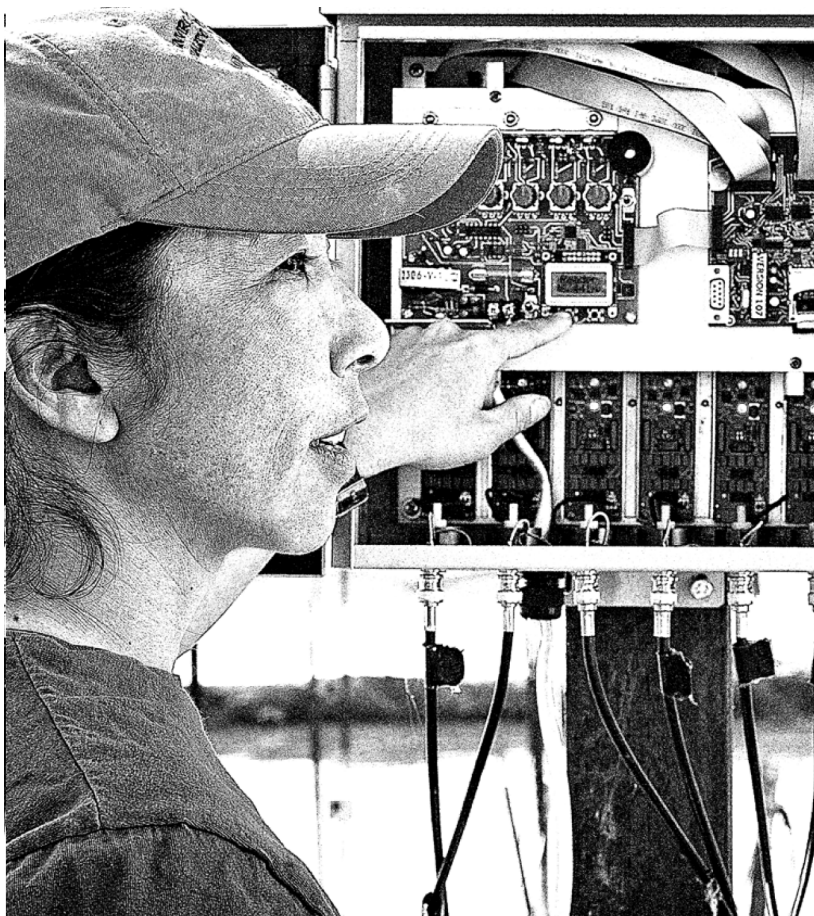
DWR is entrusted to support safe and sustainable management of water for all Californians. Now and in the past, some communities have enjoyed fewer benefits and/or carried a larger burden of the impacts of water management decision making, including relatively greater risks of flooding and water shortages.

Now with the accelerating pressures from climate change, it is even more critical to invest in and develop water strategies that address the needs of all Californians. DWR also seeks to build authentic and trusting relationships with the communities we serve through improved outreach and engagement and expanding technical and financial assistance.



Objective 1: Practice Authentic and Meaningful Outreach and Engagement

- **Action 1:** By 2024, offer annual open house listening sessions for partners, industry, academia, and the public to provide feedback to the Department.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Co-lead listening sessions and provide synthesis of public comments and recommendations for improvement of service.*
- **Action 2:** By 2025, develop and adopt best management practices for community engagement.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Provide input and contribute to action deliverable.*
- **Action 3:** By 2025, develop and adopt best management practices for Tribal engagement.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Provide input and contribute to action deliverable.*



Objective 2: Empower Communities with Technical and Financial Assistance

- **Action 10:** Annually expand targeted outreach to underserved communities for drought and flood emergencies, preserving ecosystems, and fulfilling the Human Right to Water.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Adopt as best practice and mirror action in next Strategic Plan.*

Goal 3: Pursue Innovative Infrastructure Solutions

Much of California's water infrastructure is reaching the end of its lifecycle in an era that demands innovative infrastructure solutions.

DWR must act boldly to adapt and modernize our infrastructure including use of nature-based solutions and by recognizing our watersheds as vital infrastructure.

Acknowledging the interconnectedness of managing natural and built infrastructure, DWR will work with local, federal, and other partners to advance more integrated, flexible, and reliable water management systems.



Objective 1: Modernize Infrastructure and Integrate Nature-Based Solutions

- **Action 1:** By 2024, all major infrastructure and investment decisions will be informed by formal findings regarding climate resilience, equity, and environmental stewardship.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** Review and report on how SWP is implementing this action.
- **Action 9:** By 2026, develop case studies of past projects that have incorporated nature-based principles, and use them to inform future infrastructure project design.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** Provide input and contribute to action deliverable, with specific attention to SWP activities.

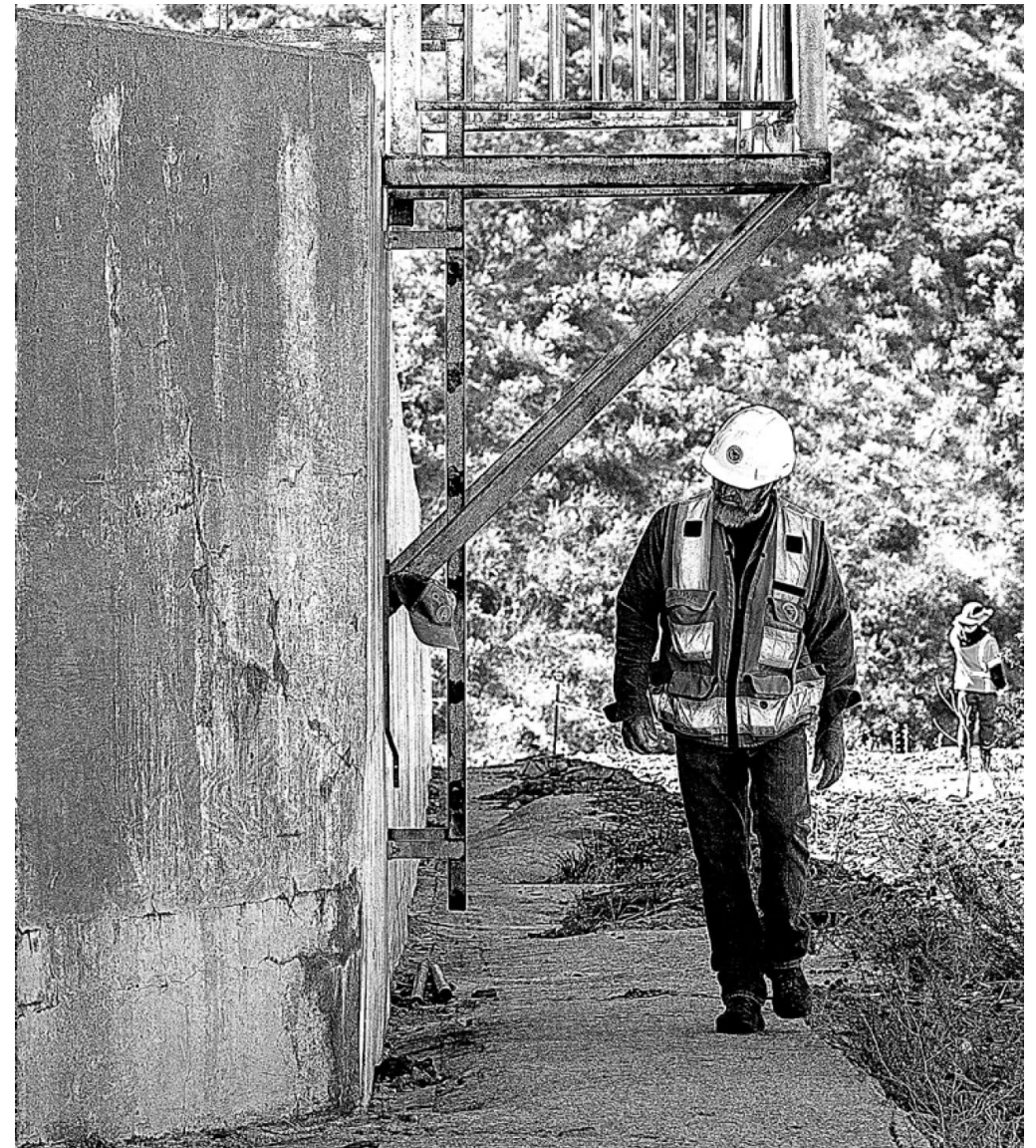


Goal 4: Respond to Public Safety Emergencies

Natural disasters are becoming more frequent and more extreme. In response, DWR is working to optimize the management of water resources for the improved protection of lives, infrastructure, and the environment.

DWR plays a significant role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies that stem not only from drought and flood, but also energy shortages, wildfires, earthquakes, and other natural disasters.

DWR will work to better protect communities and the natural environment by ensuring well-trained personnel and building strong public safety partnerships.



Objective 1: Prepare for Emergencies

- **Action 3:** By 2025, every employee will complete introductory emergency preparedness training that describes DWR's role in emergencies and provides an overview of the Standardized Emergency Management System and Incident Command System.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Voluntarily participate in emergency preparedness training to remain informed of the Department's role during emergencies.*
- **Action 6:** By 2028, identify and map the interconnections and dependencies of DWR-owned or controlled infrastructure with other infrastructure systems.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Provide input and contribute to action deliverable, with special attention to SWP.*
- **Action 7:** Continue to annually engage with external agency partners and frontline communities in preparation for emergencies.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Adopt as best practice and mirror action in next Strategic Plan.*

Goal 5: Integrate and Transform California Water Management

Actions:

- By April 2024, identify persistent and complex dilemmas where solutions demand integration.
- By October 2024, assess potential opportunities for innovative problem-solving, such as the availability of willing and capable partners, aligned funding, regulatory flexibility, subject matter expertise, and Region Office leadership.
- By 2025, empower cross-divisional groups reflecting the talent, diversity, and experience of our staff, to pilot integrated solutions in collaboration with tribes, local agencies, NGOs, philanthropy, and the federal government.
- **Opportunity for the Commission:** *Brief Commission on potential opportunities DWR has identified for innovative problem-solving and collaborative solutions.*

Strategic Plan Alignment

Strategic Plan Alignment With Other Plans

- The Strategic Plan does not seek to supersede or conflict with existing state directives or Administration plans (e.g Water Resilience Portfolio or Water Supply Strategy).
- This Plan is designed to encourage innovation and operational efficiency within the Department to deliver on its mission.
- Integrating our work and expertise will require strong matrixed teams that will need to form new methods of sharing responsibility and resources.
- This Plan is guiding the development of the State Water Project Strategic Plan which will be presented to the Commission at an upcoming meeting.

Questions?