



Water Storage Investment Program: Pulse Flow Water Types and Conveyance
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Introduction

The California Water Commission (Commission) administers the Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) to fund the public benefits associated with water storage projects using funds from Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), codified at Water Code section 79750 *et seq*, and supplemented by funds from Proposition 4, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4).

Three WSIP projects, Chino Basin Program, Kern Fan Project and Willow Springs Water Bank Conjunctive Use Project, propose to provide pulse flows from Lake Oroville, a State Water Project facility, to benefit spring-run Chinook salmon as their ecosystem public benefit. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) are working with the “pulse flow projects” to implement the pulse flows using State Water Project facilities. Providing a pulse flow requires a series of decisions and water exchanges to produce an ecosystem benefit. Ultimately, DWR and CDFW will have an agreement with a decision-making process that allows for the pulse flows without adversely impacting State Water Project operations. Other agreements with the pulse flow projects and their partners are also needed to produce the ecosystem public benefits required by WSIP.

DWR will present background information about Article 21 or “surplus water” and Table A or “State Water Project contract water” which will be primary sources of water to the Kern Fan Project and the Willow Springs Water Bank Conjunctive Use Project. DWR will also present information about the constraints under which the water will be moved or conveyed through the State water system to these projects.

Background

Through the WSIP, the Commission will invest \$2.65 billion in the public benefits of water storage projects, consistent with the requirements of Proposition 1 and Proposition 4. In July 2018, the Commission made Maximum Conditional Eligibility Determinations (MCEDs), which set the amount of WSIP funding potentially available to each project. One project received a final award at the June 2023 Commission meeting. The remaining WSIP applicants successfully met Proposition 1 interim requirements by the deadline of January 1, 2022, and are working to complete the remaining statutory requirements. These include obtaining permits and completing environmental documents, executing contracts for the administration of public benefits, and completing contracts for non-public benefit cost share. When the applicant

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completes these requirements, the applicant will return to the Commission for a final award hearing, at which the Commission will decide whether to award final funding.

On November 19, 2025, the Commission approved [modifying its WSIP regulations](#). The modification allows the Commission to increase the amount of conditional funding committed to a project on a case-by-case basis, to account for inflation and increased public benefits. These supplemental funding determinations can be made prior to or after the final funding hearing.

This agenda item relates to Goal One of the [Commission's Strategic Plan](#), which calls on the Commission to implement the WSIP to achieve public benefits.

Meeting Overview

At the August meeting, David Okita, Program Engineer from DWR, will provide an overview of the pulse flow water types and conveyance for the pulse flow projects in the WSIP. Following his remarks, the Commission will hear Tribal and public comment on the information presented. Commissioners will then have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments, and to direct staff or invite applicants to supply specific information to the Commission for its consideration at a later meeting.

This is an informational item.

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