



FACT SHEET

HOW WOULD YOU SPEND \$10 BILLION TO IMPROVE WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY IN CALIFORNIA?

The California Department of Water Resources has proposed to spend at least \$10 billion of water ratepayer funds to build two massive tunnels under the San Francisco Bay-Delta. Inaptly named “WaterFix,” this environmentally destructive project would drain even more water from the Bay-Delta, a critical but flow-starved estuary. WaterFix ignores the overwhelming scientific evidence that we must reduce water diversions from the Bay-Delta estuary to save the struggling West Coast salmon fishery and restore the health of native fish. The project also fails to account for the expected impacts of climate change, which will make the Bay-Delta’s water supply from the Delta more variable and less reliable than it is today.

PROVEN ALTERNATIVES FOR BETTER WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY

California water providers have proposed a wide variety of projects that, unlike WaterFix, allow us to increase water supply reliability, reduce diversions from the Bay-Delta, create thousands of well-paid jobs in local communities, and

improve regional water security in the face of climate change and threats of natural disasters. Paying for WaterFix would divert funds away from these projects. A sampling of these projects include:

PROJECT	WATER SUPPLY YIELD	COST
Carson Regional Water Recycling Project ¹	168,000 acre-feet (AF) per year	\$2.7 billion capital cost \$129M annual O&M cost
Pure Water San Diego ² (Phases 1, 2 and 3 of this project)	90,000 AF/year	\$3 billion
Tillman Groundwater Replenishment Project ³	30,000 AF/year	\$450M capital cost \$22M annual O&M Cost
Santa Clara Valley Water District – Expedited Purified Water Program ⁴	45,000 AF/year	\$800M capital cost (2014 dollars) \$23.5M annual O&M cost
San Luis Reservoir Expansion Project – increase capacity by 130,000 acre feet ⁵	Up to 43,000 AF/year	\$360M capital cost (2013 estimate)
Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion (from 160TAF to 275 TAF) ⁶	~ 41,000 AF/year on average for agricultural and urban water use and 46,000 AF/year for South of Delta wildlife refuges	\$862M capital cost \$9.4M annual O&M costs, including pumping costs
South San Joaquin Irrigation District Irrigation Enhancement Project ⁷	73,000 AF/year	\$325M capital cost \$8M annual O&M costs
Total	536,000 AF/year	\$8.5 billion capital cost

These projects are in addition to innumerable projects to improve water use efficiency being pursued by water districts, which remain the most cost-effective ways to meet current and future water needs in California.⁸

INVESTMENTS TO MAINTAIN EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

With limited money to spend, it is vitally important that California repair existing water supply infrastructure. Paying for WaterFix would also divert funds away from these projects. The 2017 Oroville Dam crisis highlights the need to adequately maintain our existing infrastructure. As of October 2017, the State has estimated that the cost of emergency response and repairs to Oroville Dam is \$660 million, and many believe the final cost will be significantly higher.⁹

In his 2016-2017 budget, Governor Jerry Brown estimated that there was more than \$13 billion in deferred maintenance for levees, dams, canals, and other water infrastructure operated by the Department of Water Resources.¹⁰ This estimate does not include the cost of deferred maintenance for dams and other infrastructure maintained by either the federal government or local agencies. Moreover, the State estimates that it will cost between \$17-21 billion over the next 30 years to implement the 2017 Central Valley Flood Protection Plan, which would maintain and upgrade levees, restore floodplains, and repair other infrastructure to prevent flooding in the Central Valley.¹¹

IT'S YOUR MONEY—WHAT DO YOU WANT TO PAY FOR?

ENDNOTES

- 1 The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, "Metropolitan Study Demonstrates Feasibility of Large-Scale Regional Water Recycling Program," news release, January 9, 2017, www.mwdh2o.com/PDF_NewsRoom/RRWP_FeasibilityStudyRelease.pdf.
- 2 City of San Diego Public Utilities Department, *Pure Water San Diego FAQ*, 2016, www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/pure_water_san_diego_faq_-_10-20-16.pdf. David Garrick, "San Diego plans to borrow \$1.2B for ambitious water recycling program," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, October 17, 2017, www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/politics/sd-me-pure-water-20171017-story.html.
- 3 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, "Groundwater Replenishment," www.ladwp.com/GWR.
- 4 Joint Recycled Water Committee, City of Sunnyvale/Santa Clara Valley Water District, "Expedited Recycled and Purified Water Update" (committee agenda memo, San Jose, CA, June 2, 2015), www.valleywater.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=12665.
- 5 U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, *Reclamation: Managing Water in the West: San Luis Reservoir Expansion Draft Appraisal Report*, December 2013, www.usbr.gov/mp/slpp/docs/2013-11-19-draft-san-luis-expansion-appraisal-report.pdf.
- 6 California Water Commission, *Executive Summary: Proposition 1 Water Storage Investment Program Funding Application, Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project*, August 2017, cwc.ca.gov/WISPDocs/CCWD_Tab3_EligProjInfo_3-2_ExecSumm.pdf. California Water Commission, *Total Project Cost Estimate: Proposition 1 Water Storage Investment Program Funding Application, Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project*, August 2017, cwc.ca.gov/WISPDocs/CCWD_Tab6_BenCalcMonetResil_6-9_TotalProjCostEst.pdf.
- 7 South San Joaquin Irrigation District, "Pressurized Irrigation Service," www.ssjid.com/district-services/pressurized-irrigation.htm. John Holland, "Irrigation District Explores Remaking Entire Water System," *Water Deeply*, September 14, 2015, www.newsdeeply.com/water/articles/2015/09/14/irrigation-district-explores-remaking-entire-water-system.
- 8 Heather Cooley and Rapichan Phurisamban, *The Cost of Alternative Water Supply and Efficiency Options in California*, Pacific Institute, October 2016, pacinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/PI_TheCostofAlternativeWaterSupplyEfficiencyOptionsinCA.pdf.
- 9 Dale Kasler, "Cost of Oroville dam repair nearly doubles as unexpected problems emerge," *The Sacramento Bee*, October 19, 2017, www.sacbee.com/news/local/article179858341.html. In addition, landowners, businesses, and residents have filed more than \$1 billion in claims for damages against the State relating to the evacuation and flooding caused by the near-failure of the dam.
- 10 Mac Taylor, *The 2016-17 Budget: Governor's General Fund Deferred Maintenance Proposal*, Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), February 2016, www.lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/3353.
- 11 California Department of Water Resources, *Central Valley Flood Protection Plan 2017 Update*, August 2017, www.water.ca.gov/cvfmpp/docs/2017/2017CVFPPUpdate-Final-20170828.pdf.