

**BAY AREA WATER SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

September 11, 2026

Correspondence and media coverage of interest between August 19, 2026 and September 10, 2026

From: Tom Smegal, BAWSCA CEO/General Manager
To: Steve Ritchie, SFPUC Asst. General Manager, Water Enterprise
Date: September 4, 2026
Subject: SFPUC's Millbrae Operations Center Improvements Project Alternatives Comparison

From: Dennis Herrera, SFPUC General Manager
To: Asm. John Harabedian, JLAC, Chair
Sen. Christopher Cabaldon, JLAC Vice Chair
Debra Garnes, Seismic Safety Commission, Chair
David Rabbitt, Seismic Safety Commission, Vice Chair
Stefan Cajina, North Central Section Division of Drinking Water, Chief
Date: September 1, 2026
Subject: FY 2025-26 Annual Report Water System Improvement Program

From: Peter Drekmeier, Yosemite Rivers Alliance
To: SFPUC Commission
SFPUC Citizen's Advisory Committee
BAWSCA Board of Directors
Date: August 26, 2026
Subject: SFPUC Alternative Water Supply Plan, 2021 and SFPUC Urban Water Management Plan, 2026.

From: Dave Warner
To: Louis Vella, BAWSCA Chair
Tom Smegal, BAWSCA CEO/General Manager
Tom Francis, BAWSCA Water Resources Manager
Date: August 24, 2026
Subject: AGM Ritchie misinformation during BAWSCA design drought agenda item on 2026-07-16.pdf

Press Release

Date: August 31, 2026
Source: Modesto Irrigation District
Subject: Tuolumne River Partners launch next habitat restoration project

Date: August 20, 2026
Source: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Subject: New Six-Mile Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail Opens August 24. Local and regional leaders celebrate completion of latest segment of Bay Area Ridge Trail

Water Supply Conditions:

Date: September 10, 2026
Source: SF Gate
Subject: This year's unusual El Niño just got even stronger

Water Supply Management:

Date: September 7, 2026
Source: Phys.org
Article: New digital tool shows exactly where California's water goes - and how climate Change might disrupt it

Date: September 2, 2026
Source: Axios San Francisco
Article: How local researchers are turning fog into water

Date: August 19, 2026
Source: Mercury News
Article: Opinion Why California's next El Niño won't end the state's water challenges

Date: August 21, 2026
Source: ACWA
Article: Planning for California's Water Future Starts Now

Bay Delta Plan:

Date: September 10, 2026
Source: Politico
Article: Newsom's big water deal is in trouble

Date: September 8, 2026
Source: Politico
Article: No Deal

Date: September 4, 2026
Source: Bakersfield.com
Article: Fong, Valadao throw cold water on state plan to rework flows from delta

Date: August 20, 2026
Source: Maven's Notebook
Article: Joint Statement: Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program could be the best path Forward for California if key concerns are addressed

Date: August 20, 2026
Source: State Water Board
Article: Bay Delta Plan: State Water Board releases final draft plan to protect California's Bay-Delta, water and wildlife

Date: August 19, 2026
Source: Action News Now
Article: California's San Francisco Bay-Delta water protections set for modernization

Water Supply Policy:

Date: September 8, 2026
Source: CBS News
Article: Proposition 45 would overhaul parts of California's environmental review process

Water Supply Policy, cont'd.:

Date: September 4, 2026
Source: Mercury News
Article: A new California law will ban watering decorative grass, even in non-drought years, starting Jan. 1

Date: September 2, 2026
Source: ABC News
Article: Bay Area lawmakers push data center transparency, send bills to Newsom

Date: August 24, 2026
Source: Maven
Article: Water Foundation White Paper: Water and data centers

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September 4, 2026

Steven Ritchie, Assistant General Manager – Water Enterprise
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
525 Golden Gate Avenue, 13th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102

SUBJECT: SFPUC's Millbrae Operations Center Improvements Project Alternatives Comparison

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

BAWSCA appreciates the effort that went into the preparation of an alternative layout for the proposed Millbrae Operations Center Improvements. It is my understanding that further discussions will take place in the coming weeks with the SFPUC, the City of Millbrae, and BAWSCA.

BAWSCA has reviewed the comparison tables provided by the SFPUC for the alternatives in consideration. In preparation for discussions noted above, this letter provides some preliminary questions which could inform the proposed discussions.

Information Shared with Interested Parties

SFPUC produced a cover letter and 1-page scoring/evaluation summary sheets for each alternatives considered. The alternative that preserves the OSH building and adjacent parking was labeled as "Alternative 2026" and the alternative that repurposes the OSH building and surrounding parking was labeled as "Alternative 2025". The summary sheets for each alternative included:

- A sketch/schematic showing the site layout;
- A table showing the improvements and their approximate size (square footage); and
- A scoring of the alternative from the perspective of: Operations, Cost, Environmental, and Constructability.

SFPUC has subsequently responded to emails from Assemblymember Papan's staff. That response included a cost breakdown by key site facility for each alternative.

BAWSCA Questions in Advance of Future Meetings with the Parties

1. An Alternatives Analysis Report would address missing information

- Has the SFPUC prepared an alternatives analysis report that provides context to understand how project costs were estimated and how the project schedule was estimated? BAWSCA believes an actual report would allow the parties to better understand how the cost summaries were developed.
- How do differing schedules for the two alternatives play into the cost estimate? Specifically, are the costs presented in Net Present Value and/or how does the cost for Alternative 2026 account for inflation (as the differing timelines suggest that some of the increased cost of the Alternative 2026 could be due to inflation)?
- Are the costs for Alternative 2025 more "certain", since work on that option has advanced significantly, and there is no similar advancement for Alternative 2026?

2. *The approach to alternative scoring has not been explained*

- Written discussion/documentation regarding the project scoring (the approach followed, who took part in the scoring, why these scoring categories were selected, min and max points to award, etc.) is important to better understand the SFPUC's internal evaluation process. An alternatives analysis report, as referenced in the above comment, is where such a discussion could be placed.

3. *The potential impact on wholesale water rates for each of the two alternatives should be provided*

- Both alternatives have substantial costs to regional ratepayers, and both have different implementation schedules. BAWSCA is interested in understanding how those differing costs and schedules will impact their respective financing as part of the SFPUC's Water Enterprise CIP budget implementation. Assuming the SFPUC will ask for BAWSCA's input on the two alternatives, rate impacts should be provided.
- On the 1-page summary for Alternative 2025, you note that the alternative's cost is the "Highest capital cost to achieve goals but is not unaffordable". How is affordability being defined (why is this alternative "not unaffordable")? Such a discussion could be included in an alternatives analysis report.

4. *How certain is the schedule and cost for Alternative 2026?*

- As noted in an email to Assemblymember Papan's staff, Alternative 2026 must be further developed should it be selected. Is the implementation timeline and the associated cost for Alternative 2026 subject to more significant uncertainty than Alternative 2025?

5. *Does implementation of Alternative 2026 have an impact on the SFPUC's 10-Year CIP?*

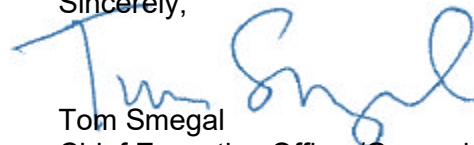
- If the Alternative 2026 were to move forward, does the SFPUC envision the need to adjust its 10-year CIP to make room for the extra project costs and/or mitigate rate impacts (for example, dropping or delaying critical projects)?

6. *Are there potential costs and benefits from either alternative that are not described on the 1-page summaries (this discussion could be placed in an alternatives analysis report)?*

- Is there benefit in constructing a new operations building vs. retrofitting an existing one?
- What is the estimated financial cost of the current project delay (as required to develop the 2026 Alternative)?

BAWSCA looks forward to the continued engagement with the SFPUC and the other parties as discussions on the alternatives move forward.

Sincerely,



Tom Smegal
Chief Executive Officer/General Manager

cc: BAWSCA Board of Directors
Alison Kastama, SFPUC BAWSCA Liaison



**Hetch Hetchy
Regional Water System**
Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

525 Golden Gate Avenue, 13th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
T 415.554.3155
F 415.554.3161
TTY 415.554.3488

August 24, 2026

Tom Smegal
Chief Executive Officer and
General Manager
Bay Area Water Supply and
Conservation Agency
155 Bovet Road, Suite 650
San Mateo, CA 94402

Tom Williams
City Manager
City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue
Millbrae, CA 94030

Via email to tsmegal@bawsc.org; twilliams@ci.millbrae.ca.us

Re: Millbrae Operations Center Improvements Project Alternatives Comparison

Dear Mr. Smegal and Mr. Williams:

As described in our letters of March 31 and June 26, 2026, to Assemblymembers Papan, Stefani, and Haney, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission has developed the attached an alternative plan for Millbrae Operations Center Improvements Project ("Alternative 2026"). The attached document also includes the alternative developed in 2025 for ease of comparison ("Alternative 2025"). To ensure that the Millbrae Operations Center continues to function as a critical component of the Regional Water System, Alternative 2026 was developed to provide for the same operational space and colocation requirements as Alternative 2025, while allowing the OSH retail operations to remain. Alternative 2026 compresses our needed facilities into three new buildings within the currently SFPUC-occupied portion of our El Camino Real property, but at an additional cost.

We are sharing these alternatives and their comparisons with you to provide a basis for all parties to consider the merits and costs of each. Work on our Alternative 2025 remains paused at the 35% design level, and we look forward to meeting with you to hear your thoughts before formulating our final Project recommendation.

Sincerely,


Dennis J. Herrera
General Manager

Daniel Lurie
Mayor

Joshua Arce
President

Stephen E. Leveroni
Vice President

Avni Jamdar
Commissioner

Kate H. Stacy
Commissioner

Meghan Thurlow
Commissioner

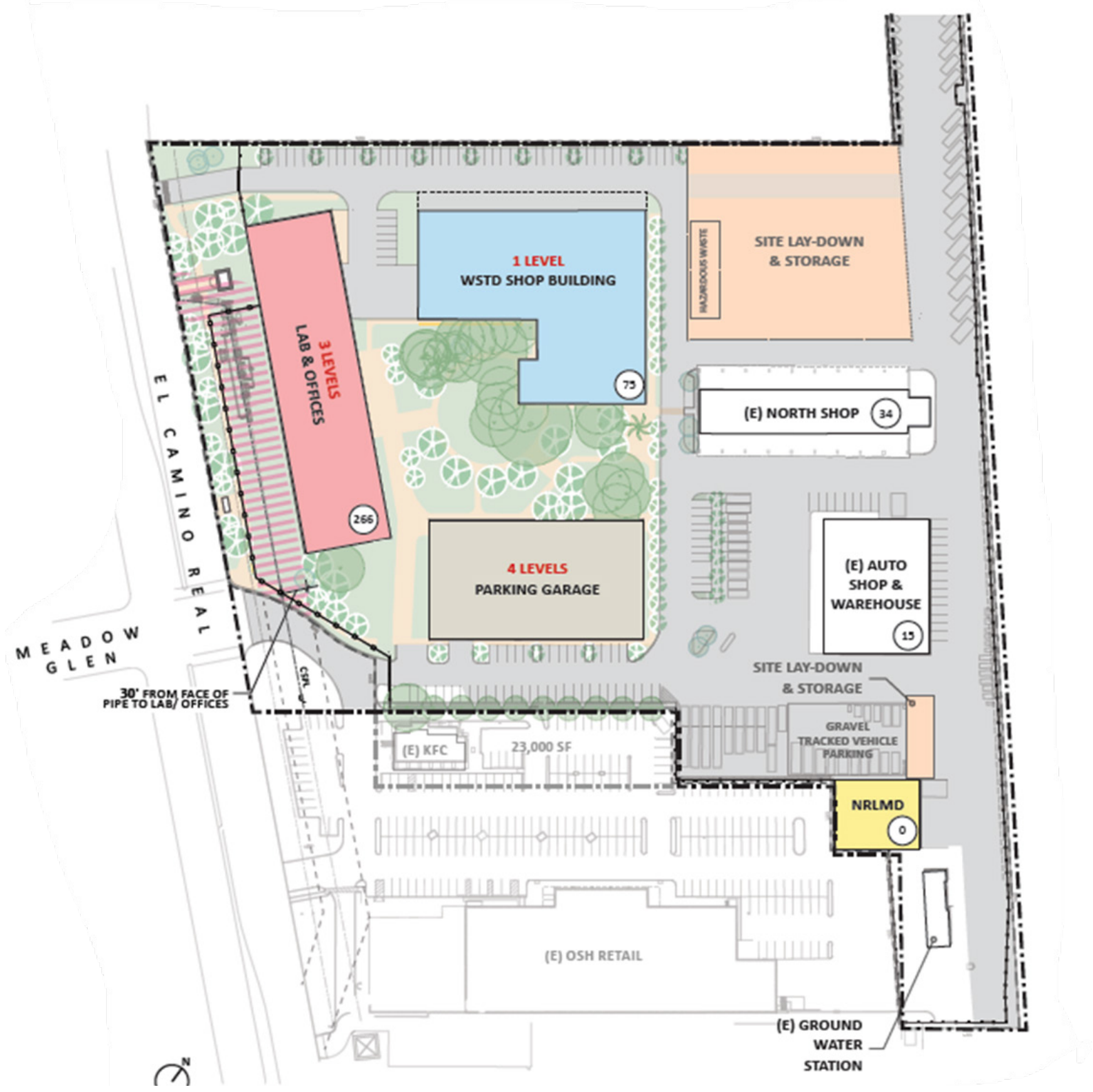
Dennis J. Herrera
General Manager



Mr. Smegal and Mr. Williams
August 24, 2026
Page 2 of 2

cc: Honorable Assemblymember Diane Papan
Honorable Assemblymember Catherine Stefani
Honorable Assemblymember Matt Haney
Honorable Daniel Lurie, San Francisco Mayor
Louis Vella, Chair, Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency
Board of Directors
Joshua Arce, President, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Steven R. Ritchie, SFPUC, Assistant General Manager, Water

Enclosures: Alternative 2026 and Alternative 2025

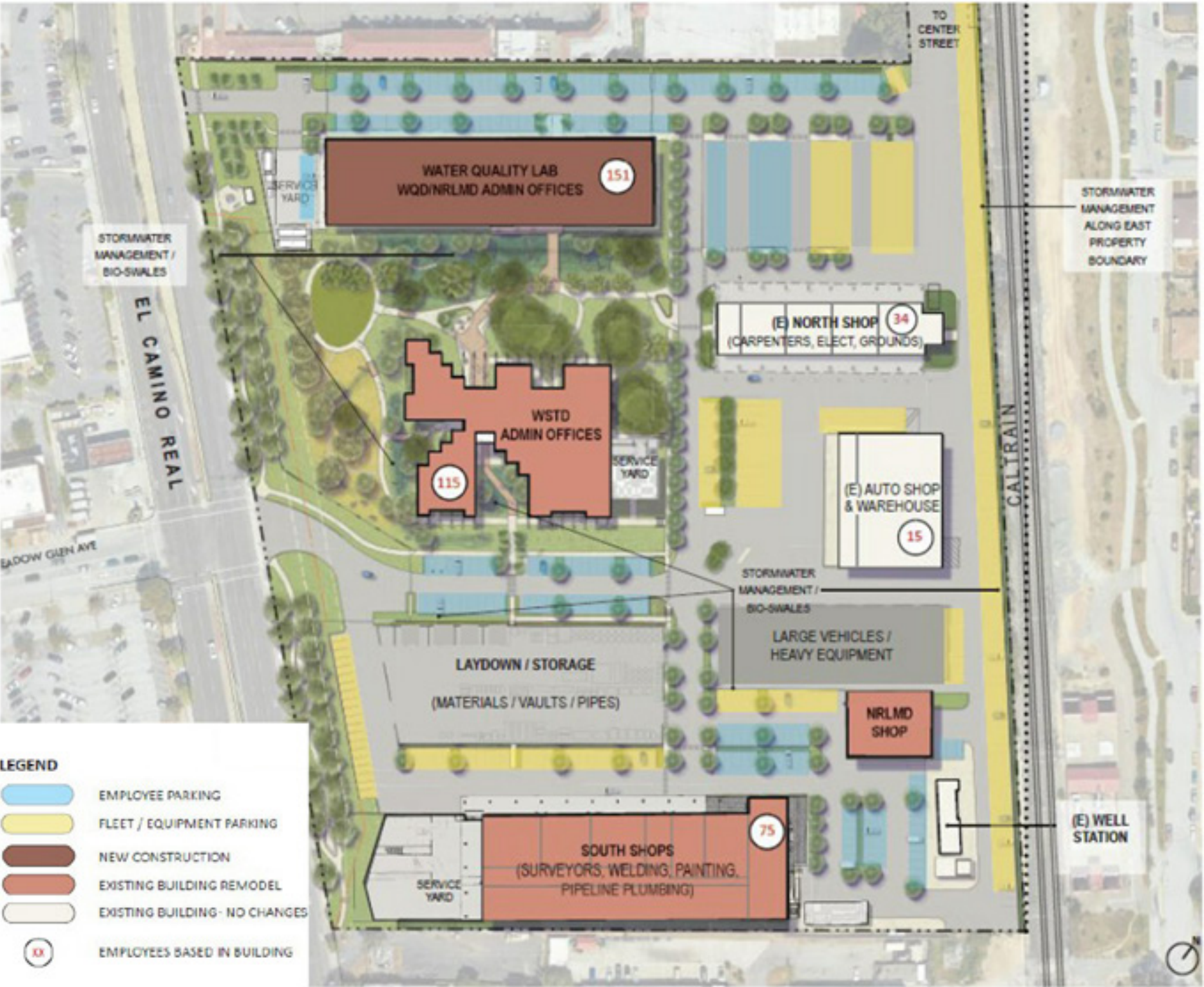


Alternative 2026

- New Lab/Admin Building
- New Shops Building
- New Garage
- WSTD Storage Re-Use
- Covered and Open Storage / Lay Down Area

Proposed Improvements	Area (SF)
New Water Quality Lab Building/WSTD Admin Building	83,295
New Shops and Covered Storage Building	35,820
New Garage	111,888
Covered Equipment Storage	12,000
WSTD Storage Re-Use	7,440
Total New or Remodeled Office/Lab Area	83,295
Total New Workshop/Storage/Staging/Parking Area	204,648
Total Area	287,943
Construction Schedule	2030 to 2036
Estimated Project Cost	\$484,000,000
Cost Estimate Class	Class 4

Scoring		
Operations	8	• Provides consolidated workspace, but space is more constrained • Meets current workspace needs, but may not meet future laboratory and operational workspace expansion needs • Operations may be impacted during construction because of the confined footprint • Less area for circulation
	4	• Highest capital cost that exceeds the CIP budget • Includes additional escalation costs due to extended schedule • Includes additional costs due to re-design and sunk costs • Includes additional design and construction costs since there will be 3 new buildings
Environmental	6	• Moderate CEQA review • Likely requires a Mitigated Negative Declaration • Removes a large number of significant trees with a small amount of new green space • Limited amount of new landscaping, tree plantings and public artwork along El Camino • Visual impacts due to tall lab/office building and garage structure • Limited construction footprint
	3	• Construction activities will need to be carefully coordinated due to confined footprint • Difficult construction sequencing due to limited laydown areas and close proximity to new and existing buildings • Will need to relocate some admin staff to temporary trailers to complete construction on lab/office • Construction near existing admin building will be disruptive to occupants • Major construction near large diameter pipeline and historic meter house
Constructability		
Total Score	21	



- Alternative 2025
- New Lab Building
 - Remodel Admin Building
 - WSTD Storage Re-Use
 - Re-Purpose OSH Store into South Shops
 - Covered and Open Storage/Lay Down Area

Proposed Improvements	Area (SF)
New Water Quality Lab Building	57,985
New South Shop	18,949 ^a
New Water Supply Admin Building	-
Remodeled Water Supply Admin Building	25,310
WSTD Storage Re-Use	7,440
Covered Equipment Storage	12,000
Covered Material Storage	16,871
Exterior Storage and Lay Down Area	37,500
Re-Use Water Supply Admin Building with Lab Renovation and Addition	-
Total New or Remodeled Office/Lab Area	83,295
Total New Workshop/Storage/Staging Area	92,760
Total Area	176,055
Construction Schedule	2027 to 2032
Estimated Project Cost	\$428,000,000
Cost Estimate Class ^d	Class 4

Scoring		
Operations	10	• Meets current and future operational workspace needs • Provides consolidated, efficient workspace • Provides sufficient shop space • Provides sufficient lab space • Minimizes disruption to operations
	5	• Highest capital cost to achieve goals but is not unaffordable
Environmental	6	• Moderate CEQA review • Requires a Mitigated Negative Declaration • Provides installations of a significant number of trees, landscaping, screening, and public artwork along El Camino
	6	• Will need to relocate admin staff temporarily to Rollins Rd. facility to complete construction on admin building (Rollins Rd. facility will be vacant since staff will be moved into the new lab building) • Maintains operational functionality during construction
Constructability	6	
Total Score	27	



San Francisco
Water Power Sewer
Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

525 Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-3155
sfpuc.gov

September 1, 2026

Assembly Member John Harabedian – Chair
Senator Christopher Cabaldon – Vice-Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
1020 N Street, Room 107
Sacramento, CA 95814

Debra Garnes, Chair
David Rabbitt, Vice Chair
Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission
3650 Schriever Avenue
Mather, CA 95655

Mr. Stefan Cajina, Chief
North Coastal Section, Division of Drinking Water
State Water Resources Control Board
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Building P, Second Floor
Richmond, CA 94804

**Subject: Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Annual Report
Water System Improvement Program
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission**

Dear Assembly Member Harabedian, Senator Cabaldon, Commissioner Garnes,
Commissioner Rabbitt, and Chief Cajina,

In accordance with Section 73502(c) of the California Water Code, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) is pleased to submit the enclosed Annual Report describing progress made on the implementation of the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP) during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026.

SFPUC remains committed to working collaboratively with its Regional Wholesale and Retail customers and all program stakeholders and partners to ensure the successful delivery of the WSIP. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (415) 554-1600 if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Herrera, General Manager
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Daniel Lurie
Mayor

Joshua Arce
President

Stephen E. Leveroni
Vice President

Avni Jamdar
Commissioner

Kate H. Stacy
Commissioner

Meghan Thurlow
Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
General Manager

OUR MISSION: To provide our customers with high-quality, efficient, and reliable water, power and sewer services in a manner that values environmental and community interests and sustains the resources entrusted to our care.



Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Joshua Arce, President, SFPUC Commission
 The Honorable Stephen E. Leveroni, Vice President, SFPUC Commission
 The Honorable Avni Jamdar, Commissioner, SFPUC Commission
 The Honorable Kate H. Stacy, Commissioner, SFPUC Commission
 The Honorable Meghan Thurlow, Commissioner, SFPUC Commission
 Tom Smegal, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Bay Area
 Water Supply & Conservation Agency
 Thomas (Tom) Francis, Water Resources Manager, Bay Area Water
 Supply & Conservation Agency
 Vlad Rakhamimov, Staff Engineer, North Coastal Section, Division of
 Drinking Water, State Water Resources Control Board
 Marco Pacheco, San Francisco District Engineer, Division of Drinking
 Water, State Water Resources Control Board
 Darrin Polhemus, Deputy Director, Division of Drinking Water, State
 Water Resources Control Board
 Daniel Newton, Assistant Deputy Director Northern California Drinking
 Water Field Operations Branch Division of Drinking Water State Water
 Resources Control Board
 Lori Nezhura, Acting Executive Director, Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety
 Commission
 Jia Wang-Connelly, Senior Structural Engineer, Seismic Safety
 Commission
 Louis Vella, Chair, BAWSCA
 Karen Hardy, Vice-Chair, BAWSCA
 BAWSCA Member Agencies (distributed by BAWSCA)



HETCH HETCHY
WATER SYSTEM
IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM

2025-2026

Annual Report

Water System Improvement Program

Rebuilding Today For a Better Tomorrow



Hetch Hetchy
**Regional
Water
System**

Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

September 1, 2026

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FY 2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pursuant to the reporting requirements of the Wholesale Regional Water System Security and Reliability Act, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) submits this report documenting the progress achieved on the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP) during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026). This report addresses only the WSIP Regional projects (referred to as the Regional Program). These are the projects that benefit both San Francisco retail customers and the SFPUC's suburban wholesale customers. The Wholesale Regional Water System Security and Reliability Act does not require the SFPUC to report on the WSIP Local projects (referred to as the Local Program), which primarily benefit San Francisco retail customers.

The WSIP is a \$4.8 billion-dollar, multi-year program to upgrade the SFPUC's Regional and Local Water Systems. The program is delivering capital improvements that enhance the SFPUC's ability to provide reliable, affordable, high quality drinking water in an environmentally sustainable manner to its 26 wholesale customers and regional retail customers in Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties, and to 800,000 retail customers in the City and County of San Francisco. The WSIP is structured to cost-effectively meet water quality requirements, improve seismic and delivery reliability goals through the year 2030, and fulfill water supply objectives through the year 2018.

Progress was made on the implementation of the WSIP during FY 2025-26. Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, the overall completion of the Regional Program is at 99.3%. As of the end of the reporting period, planning, environmental, design, and construction phases were 91.3%, 99.9%, 100.0%, and 99.5% complete, respectively. The focus of the program continued to be planning and construction of the two remaining projects and administrative closeout of projects that recently completed construction. As of June 30, 2026, planning and construction were in progress on two (2) Regional projects valued at \$214 million, while construction was in close-out or had been completed on 49 Regional projects valued at \$3,582 million.

Support programs that were continued during FY 2025-26 included environmental compliance and public outreach. All status updates in this Annual Report are referenced to the latest baseline scope, budget and schedule, approved on April 9, 2024, which is referred to as the "March 2024 Revised WSIP Baseline."

The scope of the WSIP is based on the primary Level of Service (LOS) goals used to determine project design criteria as follows: water quality (maintain high water quality); seismic reliability (reduce vulnerability to earthquakes); delivery reliability (increase delivery reliability and improve ability to maintain the system); and water supply (meet customer water needs in non-drought and drought periods). In addition, two overarching program goals include sustainability (enhance sustainability in all system activities); and cost effectiveness (achieve a cost-effective, fully operational system). The LOS Goals and Objectives have been maintained and were expanded in November 2023, including a few new and more detailed objectives.

The LOS Goals and Objectives have continued to be foundational for prioritizing capital program

needs and defining project-level performance criteria. Each WSIP project that reaches construction substantial completion contributes to increasing the overall reliability of the system and achieving progress towards meeting the LOS goals and objectives. As of end of FY 2025-26, 41 of the 43 Regional WSIP projects with specific LOS goals had achieved their LOS goals and objectives. The two Regional WSIP projects with water supply as a primary LOS goal that have not yet been completed are the Alameda Creek Recapture Project (ACRP) and the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project (RGSRP). The other Regional WSIP projects (support projects and WSIP Closeout projects) do not have specific LOS goals.

The status of schedule forecasts and variances for all WSIP Regional Projects as of June 30, 2026 is provided in the report. As of June 30, 2026, the overall WSIP is forecasted to complete in June 2032, which is consistent with the current baseline schedule approved as part of the March 2024 Revised WSIP Baseline. Any future proposed schedule changes will be noticed to the public and approved by the SFPUC Commission, in accordance with the requirements of California State Law AB1823.

All WSIP Regional Projects are currently forecasted to be completed on budget in accordance with the March 2024 Revised WSIP Baseline, and there is remaining construction and Director's Reserve cost contingencies of \$12.9 million to mitigate potential future risks. Potential cost increases for completing the Alameda Creek Recapture Project are being reviewed; any future proposed budget changes will be noticed to the public and approved by the SFPUC Commission along with any corresponding proposed schedule changes.

Significant achievements in FY 2025-26 included the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project Phase 2A construction contract achieving final completion and the Phase 2B construction continuing its progress.

For the other active Regional project, Alameda Creek Recapture Project, the project made progress in its two phases. For Phase A: WD-2825R Alameda Creek Recapture Project construction contract, which was previously terminated and closed out, the project Closeout Document and Dossier were completed. For Phase B: the project team evaluated multiple facility alternatives and developed a draft Alternative Analysis Report. Also, the project team has coordinated with the quarry operator on development of the erosion repair plan for the pond banks.

As it would generally be overly conservative to plan for 100% of future potential risks, the SFPUC has elected to use the "80% confidence level" as a relatively conservative estimate of future construction cost risk for the WSIP. Namely, the "80% confidence level" represents the amount of construction cost for which one can be 80% confident that future cost risk will not exceed this level. The construction cost risk exposure at the "80% confidence level" at the end of the reporting period was \$0.3M, which compares to \$0.5M at the end of last year's reporting period. This decrease is the result of the expiration of all remaining Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project construction cost risks.

The remaining forecast construction contingency as of June 30, 2026 was \$0.04 million after all current trends have been considered. In addition, the current forecast WSIP Director's Reserve Fund was \$12.9 million. Therefore, a total of approximately \$12.9 million is available to fund potential future project or program changes and future risks, including both construction risks and unforeseen soft (non-construction) costs. If one conservatively assumes that up to \$1.0 million is needed for future soft cost risk, this will leave approximately \$11.9 million available to fund potential future construction risks as well as potential future project or program changes that would be noticed appropriately in a future program revision.

At 99.3% completion and with 41 of 43 Regional WSIP projects with specific LOS goals and objectives currently in service, the overall WSIP is in the Closeout Phase. It is essential to continue to implement best practices that have helped to make the WSIP successful to date and to continue to look for opportunities to become more efficient as the SFPUC strives to bring the WSIP to completion.

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Table of Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS

- 1.0 OVERALL PROGRAM PROGRESS
 - 2.0 PROGRAMMATIC INITIATIVES (FY2025-26)
 - 3.0 LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) GOALS
 - 4.0 PROJECT SCHEDULES
 - 5.0 PROJECT BUDGETS
 - 6.0 ACHIEVEMENT AND CHALLENGES
 - 7.0 RISK MANAGEMENT
 - 8.0 PROGRAM DELIVERY STRATEGY FOR CLOSEOUT PHASE
 - 9.0 STATUS OF AB 1823 PROJECTS
- APPENDIX A – WSIP Quarterly Report Regional Projects (Q4/FY 2025-2026)**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AB	Assembly Bill
ACRP	Alameda Creek Recapture Project
ARM	Active Risk Management
BAWSCA	Bay Area Water Supply and Conservative Agency
BDPL	Bay Division Pipelines
BHR	Bioregional Habitat Restoration
CDRP	Calaveras Dam Replacement Project
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CM	Construction Management
CMIS	Construction Management Information System
DRB	Dispute Resolution Board
EBMUD	East Bay Municipal Utility District
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FY	Fiscal Year
HTWTP	Harry Tracy Water Treatment Plant
JOC	Job Order Contract
LOS	Level of Service
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
PCCP	Pre-stressed Concrete Cylinder Pipe
RBOC	Revenue Bond Oversight Committee
RGSRP	Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SFPUC	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
SJPL	San Joaquin Pipeline
SSF	South San Francisco
SVWTP	Sunol Valley Water Treatment Plant
WSIP	Water System Improvement Program

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1.0 OVERALL PROGRAM PROGRESS

1.1 Program Status Summary

Steady progress has been made on the implementation of the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP) during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026) with overall progress on the Regional Program at 99.3% complete.

As indicated in Table 1-1, planning, environmental, design, and construction phase are 91.3%, 99.9%, 100.0%, and 99.5% complete respectively. Note that Planning phase completion appeared to decrease over the year. This is because the Alameda Creek Recapture Project, which was returned to the planning phase, extended its forecast for completing the planning phase during the past year, resulting in an overall decrease in percent completion within the planning phase for the program. The project’s budget and schedule will be re-evaluated at the completion of the Alternatives Analysis phase, which is currently underway.

Table 1-1: WSIP Regional Program Performance¹

Phase	June 30, 2025 % Planned	June 30, 2025 % Actual	June 30, 2026 % Planned ²	June 30, 2026 % Actual
Planning	100.0%	94.5%	100.0%	91.3%
Environmental	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%	99.9%
Design	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%
Bid & Award	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%
Construction	99.9%	99.4%	99.9%	99.5%
Closeout	99.4%	94.6%	99.4%	95.7%
Program Cumulative	99.9%	99.3%	99.9%	99.3%

¹ Percent completion does not include Support Projects in the WSIP Regional Program.

² Incorporates the March 2024 Revised WSIP Baseline schedule and budget revisions.

In recent years, the focus of the program has been on construction activities and administrative closeout of completed projects. Table 1-2 compares the number of projects in each phase and their corresponding total approved value at the beginning of the reporting period (June 30, 2025) to those at the end of the reporting period (June 30, 2026). As of the end of the reporting period, planning and construction were in progress on two Regional projects valued at \$214 million, and 49 additional projects with a total value of \$3,582 million were in close-out or have been completed.

Table 1-2: Status of WSIP Regional Projects

Project Phase	Number of Projects (June 30,2025 Status)	Total Project Value (\$M) (June 30,2025 Status)	Number of Projects (June 30,2026 Status)	Total Project Value (\$M) (June 30,2026 Status)
Planning	1	\$51	1	\$51
Design	0	\$0	0	\$0
Bid & Award	0	\$0	0	\$0
Construction	1	\$164	1	\$164
Closeout	1	\$96	1	\$96
Completed	48	\$3,485	48	\$3,485
Not Applicable ¹	1	\$12	1	\$12
Total	52	\$3,808	52	\$3,808

1. The "Not Applicable" category is for a project that does not include construction: the Long-Term Mitigation Endowment.

1.2 Program Baseline Budget and Schedule

The program budget and schedule were originally adopted by the SFPUC on March 1, 2003. The program at the time was referred to as the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The scope of the CIP was changed significantly following the adoption of Level of Service (LOS) goals in early 2005. The program changes were so substantial that the program was renamed the WSIP, and a new program budget and schedule were adopted on November 29, 2005. Since the scope of the 2005 Revised WSIP is in general representative of the program being implemented today, the 2005 budget and schedule are considered the original "Baseline Budget and Schedule."

Subsequently, the WSIP Baseline Budget and Schedule were revised in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024 and these revisions were approved by the SFPUC on February 26, 2008, July 28, 2009, July 12, 2011, April 23, 2013, April 22, 2014, December 8, 2015, April 26, 2016, February 14, 2017, April 10, 2018, April 14, 2020, April 26, 2022, and April 9, 2024, respectively. All status updates in this Annual Report are referenced to the latest Baseline Budget and Schedule, approved on April 9, 2024, which is referred to as the "March 2024 Revised WSIP."

2. PROGRAMMATIC INITIATIVES (FY2025-26)

This section describes some of the more important programmatic initiatives undertaken during FY 2025-26.

2.1 Environmental Program

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA environmental review for all WSIP Regional projects is complete. The total number of CEQA documents approved for WSIP Regional projects is: 17 Environmental Impact Reports certified, seven Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declarations approved, and 13 Categorical Exemptions issued.

Resource Agency Permits

Permitting is complete for all WSIP Regional projects. One hundred and one (101) permits were obtained from the resource agencies (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, State Water Resources Control Board, Regional Water Quality Control Board, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission). Completion of California Department of Fish and Wildlife Incidental Take Permit compensation requirements for the San Joaquin Pipeline Project has not yet been achieved due to a lack of available mitigation bank credits for purchase. SFPUC is awaiting a final agency approval for a new mitigation bank to sell credits and anticipates completing the purchase of the remaining mitigation bank credits by the end of 2026.

Environmental Construction Compliance

During FY 2025-26, the WSIP environmental construction compliance staff, led by the Environmental Management Group, participated in construction of one San Francisco Regional project, the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project. Environmental construction compliance activities included contractor training; biological resources surveys and monitoring; archeological monitoring, stormwater management; coordination with San Francisco Planning Department and other resource agencies; compliance inspection activities; and implementation of required local, State, and Federal reporting procedures.

The WSIP continues through this year to have no resource agency permit violations.

Environmental inspections on the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project – Phase 2B began during FY 2025-26 and were typically performed bi-weekly. There were no significant environmental compliance events during the year on this project. Construction of the habitat compensation sites under the Bioregional Habitat Restoration Project in the Sunol and Peninsula Regions is complete. In addition, on-site revegetation continued on WSIP project sites in areas that were only temporarily affected by construction, as required by CEQA mitigation measures and resource agency permits. As reported last year, on-site revegetation was completed at Crystal Springs/San Andreas Transmission Upgrade, but the project permits require continued long-term site monitoring and as-needed remedial action to prevent the removed invasive tree species from reestablishing, which continued last year.

Revegetation activities also continued and will continue next year at the Calaveras Dam Replacement Project and Lower Crystal Springs Dam Stilling Basin Connecting Channel projects. These are the remaining three WSIP projects with ongoing on-site revegetation requirements. Revegetation activities were initially performed under the Vegetation Restoration of WSIP Post Construction Sites Project (CUW 38803) and are now continuing under Water Enterprise operations budget but are being managed by the Environmental Management Group.

¹ As reported in FY 2023-24, the construction contract for the Alameda Creek Recapture Project in the Sunol Region project was terminated. As such, Environmental Inspections on this project have been suspended.

2.2 Public Outreach Program

The Communications and Public Outreach Teams continued to build public awareness and support for the WSIP and its projects in FY 2025-26.

Tours

Tours are a tremendous resource to educate stakeholders about our projects. Escorted tours of our local, regional, and Sierra Nevada systems include portions devoted to the Water System Improvement Program. Board members and staff of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), members of the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee, Civil Grand Jury, and local elected officials' offices have attended past system tours and observed completed Water System Improvement Program projects and facilities.

Continued Project Promotion on sfpuc.gov

The WSIP Communications Team continued to create and update a new suite of WSIP project pages as part of the new SFPUC website: [SFPUC.gov/construction](https://sfpuc.gov/construction). These project updates include streamlined pages that highlight the WSIP projects and their benefits.

Government Relations – Regional Groundwater Project

The WSIP Communications Team continued to act as liaison between the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project team and the neighborhoods and municipalities in which the groundwater wells are located regarding access and construction issues.

Industry Awards

The WSIP program has received 66 industry awards since 2010.

3.0 LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) GOALS

3.1 WSIP Goals and Objectives

Table 3-1 provides a summary of the WSIP goals and objectives that were included in the Programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the WSIP that was adopted and approved in 2008. On November 28, 2023, the SFPUC Commission approved Amended and Updated Water Enterprise LOS Goals and Objectives. The previous LOS Goals and Objectives that are listed below are still the fundamental goals for the remaining WSIP projects. These goals have been maintained and expanded, and a few new and more detailed objectives have been added that are listed in Table 3-2 below. The Water Enterprise LOS Goals and Objectives have continued to be foundational for prioritizing capital program needs and defining project-level performance criteria.

Table 3-1: WSIP Goals and Objectives

Program Goal	System Performance Objective
<u>WATER QUALITY</u> Maintain high water quality	- Design improvements to meet current and foreseeable future federal and state water quality requirements. - Provide clean, unfiltered water originating from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and filtered water from local watersheds. - Continue to implement watershed protection measures.
<u>SEISMIC RELIABILITY</u> Reduce vulnerability to earthquakes	- Design improvements to meet current seismic standards. - Deliver basic service to the three regions in the service area (East/South Bay, Peninsula, and San Francisco) within twenty-four (24) hours after a major earthquake. Basic service is defined as average winter-month usage, and the performance objective for design of the regional system is 229 mgd. The performance objective is to provide delivery to at least 70 percent of the turnouts in each region, with 104, 44, and 81 mgd delivered to the East/South Bay, Peninsula, and City of San Francisco, respectively. - Restore facilities to meet average-day demand of up to 300 mgd within thirty (30) days after a major earthquake.
<u>DELIVERY RELIABILITY</u> Increase delivery reliability and improve ability to maintain the system	- Provide operational flexibility to allow planned maintenance shutdown of individual facilities without interrupting customer service. - Provide operational flexibility to minimize the risk of service interruption due to unplanned facility upsets or outages. - Provide operational flexibility and system capacity to replenish local reservoirs as needed. - Meet the estimated average annual demand of up to 300 mgd under the conditions of one planned shutdown of a major facility for maintenance concurrent with one unplanned facility outage due to a natural disaster, emergency or facility failure/upset.

Program Goal	System Performance Objective
<u>WATER SUPPLY</u> <i>Meet customer water needs in non-drought and drought periods</i>	• <i>Meet an average annual water demand of 265 mgd from the SFPUC watersheds for retail and wholesale customers during non-drought years for system demands through 2019.</i> • <i>Meet dry-year delivery needs through 2019 while limiting rationing to a maximum 20 percent system-wide reduction in water service during extended droughts.</i> • <i>Diversify water supply options during non-drought and drought periods.</i> • <i>Improve use of new water sources and drought management, including groundwater, recycled water, conservation, and transfers.</i>
<u>SUSTAINABILITY</u> <i>Enhance sustainability in all system activities.</i>	• <i>Manage natural resources and physical systems to protect watershed ecosystems.</i> • <i>Meet, at a minimum, all current and anticipated legal requirements for protection of fish and wildlife habitat.</i> • <i>Manage natural resources and physical systems to protect public health and safety.</i>
<u>COST-EFFECTIVENESS</u> <i>Achieve a cost-effective, fully operational system</i>	• <i>Ensure cost-effective use of funds.</i> • <i>Maintain gravity-driven system.</i> • <i>Implement regular inspection and maintenance program for all facilities.</i>

Note that the first four goals, Water Quality, Seismic Reliability, Delivery Reliability, and Water Supply, are the goals that are used to determine project design criteria. The last two goals, Sustainability and Cost-Effectiveness, are overarching program goals that are not applied to specific criteria at the project level. Thus, these last two goals are infrequently referred to in project and program documents.

3.2 Progress Towards Meeting LOS Goals

The scope of the WSIP is based on the first four LOS goals described above – Seismic Reliability, Delivery Reliability, Water Quality, and Water Supply. Each project that reaches construction substantial completion contributes to increasing the overall reliability of the system and achieving progress towards meeting the LOS goals. The SFPUC remains committed to achieving all the LOS goals established for the system.

Table 3-2 lists the projects with their individual contributions to LOS goals and indicates which projects have been substantially completed. This tabulation demonstrates the progress that has been achieved in the WSIP toward meeting these goals. As of the end of FY2025-26, 41 of the 43 Regional WSIP projects with specific LOS goals have achieved their LOS goals and objectives. The other nine Regional WSIP projects (Support projects and WSIP Closeout projects) do not have specific LOS goals.

Table 3-2: Progress Towards Meeting LOS Goals

Project Number	Project Name / Construction Contract	Actual / Approved Substantial Completion Date	Water Quality ²	Seismic Reliability ²	Delivery Reliability ²	Water Supply ²	Actual Operational Service Start	Construction Progress Toward LOS Goals
San Joaquin Projects								
CUW36401	Lawrence Livermore Water Quality Improvement (Completed)	08/31/10	P				08/31/10	100%
CUW37301	San Joaquin Pipeline System (Completed) (A) HH935A Crossovers (B) HH935B Western Segment (C) HH935C Eastern Segment	(A) 01/06/12 (B) 05/27/13 (C) 06/21/13			P		(A) 01/06/12 (B) 05/27/13 (C) 06/21/13	100%
CUW37302	Rehabilitation of Existing San Joaquin Pipelines (Roselle Crossover; Completed)	05/13/11			P		05/13/11	100%
CUW38401	Tesla Treatment Facility (Completed) (A) DB116 Tesla Treatment Facility Design-Build Contract (B) HH953 Tesla Portal Protection	(A) 06/24/11 (B) 08/05/13	P	S	S		(A)06/24/11 (B)08/05/13	100%
Sunol Valley Projects								
CUW35201	Alameda Creek Recapture	11/18/22				P		0%
CUW35501	Standby Power Facilities - Various Locations (Completed) (A) WD-2553 East Bay - Standby Power Facilities (B) WD-2511 Peninsula - Standby Power Facilities	(A) 09/11/08 (B) 04/15/10		P	S		(A)09/11/08 (B)04/15/10	100%
CUW35901	New Irvington Tunnel (Completed)	09/19/15		S	P		02/27/15	100%
CUW35902	Alameda Siphon #4 (Completed)	12/16/11		P	S		12/16/11	100%
CUW37001	Pipeline Repair & Readiness Improvements (Completed) (A) WD-2530 Phase A 8 Pipe Storage Sites (B) WD-2530 Phase B Pipe Rolling Machine Facility @ Sunol Yard	(A) 02/09/07 (B) 07/14/08		P	S		(A) 02/09/07 (B) 07/14/08	100%

Project Number	Project Name / Construction Contract	Actual / Approved Substantial Completion Date	Water Quality	Seismic Reliability	Delivery Reliability	Water Supply	Actual Operational Service Start	Construction Progress Toward LOS Goals
CUW37401	Calaveras Dam Replacement (Completed) (A) WD-2551 Calaveras Dam Replacement (B) WD-2729 Alameda Creek Diversion Dam	(A) 04/12/19 (B) 02/15/19		S	P	S	(A) 04/12/19 (B) 02/15/19	(A) 100% (B) 100%
CUW37402	Calaveras Reservoir Upgrades (Completed)	10/06/05	P				10/06/05	100%
CUW37403	San Antonio Backup Pipeline (Completed)	12/31/14			P		12/31/14	100%
CUW38101	SVWTP Expansion & Treated Water Reservoir (Completed)	05/17/13	P		P		05/17/13	100%
CUW38601	San Antonio Pump Station Upgrade (Completed)	06/30/11			P		06/30/11	100%
Bay Division Projects								
CUW35301	BDPL Nos. 3&4 Crossover/ Isolation Valves (Completed)	11/15/07		P			11/15/07	100%
CUW35302	Seismic Upgrade of BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 (Completed)	10/26/15		P			06/20/14	100%
CUW36301	SCADA System - Phase II (Completed)	11/29/10			P		11/29/10	100%
CUW36801	BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Tunnel (Completed)	05/20/15		P	S		10/15/14	100%
CUW36802	BDPL Reliability Upgrade – Pipeline (Completed) (A) WD-2541 East Bay (B) WD-2542 Peninsula (C) WD-2665 Cordilleras	(A) 12/09/11 (B) 06/13/12 (C) 03/05/13		P	S		(A) 12/09/11 (B) 06/13/12 (C) 03/05/13	100%
CUW36803	BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Relocation of BDPL Nos. 1 & 2 (Completed)	05/28/10			P		05/28/10	100%
CUW38001	BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 – Crossovers (Completed)	08/15/12		P	S		08/15/12	100%
CUW38901	SFPUC/EBMUD Intertie (Completed)	09/07/07			P		09/07/07	100%
CUW39301	BDPL No. 4 Condition Assessment PCCP Sections (Completed)	02/06/09		P	S		02/06/09	100%
Peninsula Projects								
CUW35401	Lower Crystal Springs Dam Improvements (Completed)	11/20/11			P	S	11/20/11	100%
CUW35601	New Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel (Completed)	07/14/11		P	S		07/14/11	100%
CUW35701	Adit Leak Repair - Crystal Springs/Calaveras (Completed)	11/30/07			P		11/30/07	100%
CUW36101	Pulgas Balancing – Inlet / Outlet Work (Completed)	02/02/06	P		S		02/02/06	100%
CUW36102	Pulgas Balancing - Discharge Channel Modifications (Completed)	10/23/09			P		10/23/09	100%

Project Number	Project Name / Construction Contract	Actual / Approved Substantial Completion Date	Water Quality	Seismic Reliability	Delivery Reliability	Water Supply	Actual Operational Service Start	Construction Progress Toward LOS Goals
CUW36103	Pulgas Balancing - Structural Rehabilitation & Roof Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	07/26/11	P		S		07/26/11	100%
CUW36105	Pulgas Balancing - Modifications of Existing Dechloramination Facility <i>(Completed)</i>	08/27/12	P		S		08/27/12	100%
CUW36501	Cross Connection Controls <i>(Completed)</i>	11/26/08	P				11/26/08	100%
CUW36601	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Demo Filters <i>(Completed)</i>	01/11/06		P	S		01/11/06	100%
CUW36603	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Coagulation & Flocculation/Remaining Filters <i>(Completed)</i>	12/21/09		P	S		12/21/09	100%
CUW36701	HTWTP Long -Term Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	09/08/15		P	S		09/08/15	100%
CUW36702	Peninsula Pipelines Seismic Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	10/30/15		P			10/30/15	100%
CUW36901	Capuchino Valve Lot Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	02/14/08			P		02/14/08	100%
CUW37101	Crystal Springs/San Andreas Transmission Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	06/30/14		P	S		09/02/14	100%
CUW37801	Crystal Springs Pipeline No. 2 Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	01/31/13		P	S		01/31/13	100%
CUW37901	San Andreas Pipeline No. 3 Installation <i>(Completed)</i>	03/29/11		P	S		03/29/11	100%
CUW39101	Baden & San Pedro Valve Lots Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	03/31/11		P	S		03/31/11	100%
San Francisco Regional Projects								
CUW30103	Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery (A) WD-2600 Test Well Drilling (B) WD-2668 Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery (C) Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery (Phase 2A) (D) Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery (Phase 2B)	(A) 07/23/12 (B) 12/31/17 (C) 12/22/23 (D) 10/31/25				P	(A) 07/23/12 (B) 07/27/22	(A) 100% (B) 100% (C) 100% (D) 40%
CUW35801	Sunset Reservoir - North Basin <i>(Completed)</i>	09/19/08		P	S		09/19/08	100%
CUW37201	University Mound Reservoir - North Basin <i>(Completed)</i>	05/25/11		P	S		05/25/11	100%

1 Support projects and WSIP Closeout projects are not listed in the table above since these projects do not have specific Level of Service (LOS) goals.

2 LOS Goals (P =Primary, S =Secondary)

Of the two remaining projects that contribute to LOS goals, Alameda Creek Recapture Project and Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project, one was in planning and the other in construction phase, respectively, at the end of the reporting period and forecasted to complete on schedule under the approved March 2024 Revised WSIP.

4.0 PROJECT SCHEDULES

As of June 30, 2026, the overall WSIP is forecast to be complete in June 2032, which is consistent with the current baseline schedule approved as part of the March 2024 Revised WSIP. The March 2024 Revised WSIP extended the overall approved completion date from February 1, 2027 to June 30, 2032. Any future proposed schedule changes would need to be noticed to and approved by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, in accordance with the requirements of AB1823.

4.1 Tracking and Controlling Project Schedules

The WSIP Management Team continues to pro-actively monitor and control program and project schedules. Detailed business processes, well defined procedures, and best practices are in place to support early identification of schedule issues and timely development of recovery plans to mitigate any forecast delays as required.

The WSIP uses best practices common in the industry and best available information to forecast dates at the time of publication of the WSIP Quarterly Reports. It is important to note that forecast dates can move each month based on the latest, best available data from the individual project teams (including information from the construction contractor in the field).

4.2 Project Schedule Forecast and Variances

The status of schedule forecasts and variances for WSIP Regional Projects is shown in Table 4-1 as of the end of FY 2025-26. The table provides the original 2005 baseline and the current approved completion dates for each project. Additionally, the current forecast completion date for each project is provided. As can be seen in the table, two active Regional WSIP Projects are currently forecasted to be completed on schedule in accordance with the current approved completion dates. Other support projects that do not involve construction and the Program Management Project are forecasted to complete on schedule, with the exception of the Long-Term Mitigation Endowment, which is an ongoing endowment fund to support sustainable environmental mitigation efforts, and thus it is not associated with a schedule.

Table 4.1: Project Schedule Forecast and Variances

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Completion	Current Approved Completion ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Completion	Schedule Variance (Calendar Days)
San Joaquin Region					
CUW36401	Lawrence Livermore Water Quality Improvement <i>(Completed)</i>	11/7/2011	7/31/2013	7/31/2013	-
CUW37301	San Joaquin Pipeline System <i>(Completed)</i>	3/25/2014	3/31/2016	3/31/2016	-
CUW37302	Rehabilitation of Existing San Joaquin Pipelines <i>(Completed)</i>	6/30/2014	10/31/2014	10/31/2014	-
CUW38401	Tesla Treatment Facility <i>(Completed)</i>	7/1/2011	1/30/2015	1/30/2015	-
CUW38701	Tesla Portal Disinfection Station <i>(Combined with CUW38401)</i>	9/2/2011	6/29/2007	6/29/2007	-
CUWSJ10101	WSIP Closeout - San Joaquin <i>(Completed)</i>	-	3/31/2021	3/31/2021	-
Sunol Valley Region					
CUW35201	Alameda Creek Recapture Project	5/25/2012	6/30/2032	6/30/2032	-
CUW35501	Standby Power Facilities - Various Locations <i>(Completed)</i>	12/6/2010	12/22/2010	12/22/2010	-
CUW35901	New Irvington Tunnel <i>(Completed)</i>	9/17/2013	3/31/2018	3/31/2018	-
CUW35902	Alameda Siphon #4 <i>(Completed)</i>	4/14/2011	6/28/2013	6/28/2013	-
CUW37001	Pipeline Repair & Readiness Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	3/30/2007	4/16/2009	4/16/2009	-
CUW37401	Calaveras Dam Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	5/25/2012	3/31/2022	3/31/2022	-
CUW37402	Calaveras Reservoir Upgrades <i>(Completed)</i>	2/17/2006	7/28/2006	7/28/2006	-
CUW37403	San Antonio Backup Pipeline <i>(Completed)</i>	6/29/2012	6/30/2016	6/30/2016	-
CUW38101	SVWTP Expansion & Treated Water Reservoir <i>(Completed)</i>	7/9/2013	10/31/2014	10/31/2014	-
CUW38102	SVWTP Calaveras Road <i>(Eliminated)</i>	-	12/14/2007	12/14/2007	-
CUW38201	SVWTP Treated Water Reservoir <i>(Combined with CUW38101)</i>	12/21/2010	3/2/2007	3/2/2007	-
CUW38601	San Antonio Pump Station Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	12/12/2011	6/29/2012	6/29/2012	-
CUWSVI0101	WSIP Closeout - Sunol Valley <i>(Completed)</i>	-	12/31/2022	12/31/2022	-

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Completion	Current Approved Completion ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Completion	Schedule Variance (Calendar Days)
Bay Division Region					
CUW35301	BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossover/ Isolation Valves <i>(Completed)</i>	9/30/2008	7/31/2009	7/31/2009	-
CUW35302	Seismic Upgrade of BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 <i>(Completed)</i>	10/15/2012	7/30/2018	7/30/2018	-
CUW36301	SCADA System - Phase II <i>(Completed)</i>	2/24/2012	5/28/2013	5/28/2013	-
CUW36801	BDPL Reliability Upgrade / Tunnel <i>(Completed)</i>	1/31/2014	8/30/2016	8/30/2016	-
CUW36802	BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Pipeline <i>(Completed)</i>	1/31/2014	3/31/2016	3/31/2016	-
CUW36803	BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Relocation of BDPL Nos. 1 & 2 <i>(Completed)</i>	-	5/28/2010	5/28/2010	-
CUW38001	BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossovers <i>(Completed)</i>	4/24/2013	6/30/2014	6/30/2014	-
CUW38901	SFPUC/EBMUD Intertie <i>(Completed)</i>	2/7/2007	3/20/2014	3/20/2014	-
CUW39301	BDPL No. 4 Condition Assessment PCCP Sections <i>(Completed)</i>	5/1/2008	2/6/2009	2/6/2009	-
CUWBDP0101	WSIP Closeout - Bay Division <i>(Completed)</i>	-	3/31/2021	3/31/2021	-
Peninsula Region					
CUW35401	Lower Crystal Springs Dam Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	8/16/2011	12/28/2012	12/28/2012	-
CUW35601	New Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel <i>(Completed)</i>	10/28/2010	8/17/2012	8/17/2012	-
CUW35701	Adit Leak Repair - Crystal Springs/Calaveras <i>(Completed)</i>	7/3/2008	7/31/2008	7/31/2008	-
CUW36101	Pulgas Balancing - Inlet/Outlet Work <i>(Completed)</i>	5/11/2006	5/11/2006	5/11/2006	-
CUW36102	Pulgas Balancing - Discharge Channel Modifications <i>(Completed)</i>	8/5/2013	7/30/2010	7/30/2010	-
CUW36103	Pulgas Balancing – Structural Rehabilitation and Roof Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	1/29/2013	12/28/2012	12/28/2012	-
CUW36104	Pulgas Balancing - Laguna Creek Sedimentation <i>(Eliminated)</i>	-	12/31/2007	12/31/2007	-
CUW36105	Pulgas Balancing - Modifications of the Existing Dechloramination Facility <i>(Completed)</i>	-	3/20/2013	3/20/2013	-
CUW36501	Cross Connection Controls <i>(Completed)</i>	5/15/2009	4/30/2009	4/30/2009	-

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Completion	Current Approved Completion ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Completion	Schedule Variance (Calendar Days)
CUW36601	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements (Demo Filters) <i>(Completed)</i>	7/3/2006	11/14/2006	11/14/2006	-
CUW36602	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Remaining Filters <i>(Combined with CUW36603)</i>	9/8/2010	2/22/2008	2/22/2008	-
CUW36603	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Coagulation & Flocculation/ Remaining Filters <i>(Completed)</i>	9/8/2010	7/28/2010	7/28/2010	-
CUW36701	HTWTP Long-Term Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	4/8/2014	12/30/2016	12/30/2016	-
CUW36702	Peninsula Pipelines Seismic Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	-	7/6/2016	7/6/2016	-
CUW36901	Capuchino Valve Lot Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	7/24/2009	8/19/2008	8/19/2008	-
CUWPW0101	WSIP Closeout – Peninsula <i>(Completed)</i>	-	12/30/2021	12/30/2021	-
San Francisco Regional					
CUW30103	Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery	2/27/2014	12/7/2027	12/7/2027	-
CUW35801	Sunset Reservoir - North Basin <i>(Completed)</i>	5/6/2009	9/10/2010	9/10/2010	-
CUW37201	University Mound Reservoir - North Basin <i>(Completed)</i>	3/10/2011	3/29/2013	3/29/2013	-
Support Projects					
CUW36302	System Security Upgrades <i>(Completed)</i>	-	4/19/2019	4/19/2019	-
CUW38801	Programmatic EIR <i>(Completed)</i>	6/20/2007	6/30/2009	6/30/2009	-
CUW38802	Bioregional Habitat Restoration	-	12/30/2027	12/30/2027	-
CUW38803	Vegetation Restoration of WSIP Construction Sites <i>(Completed)</i>	-	6/30/2016	6/30/2016	-
CUW38804	Long Term Mitigation Endowment	-	10/1/2024	12/24/2026	814
CUW39201	Program Management Project	6/29/2014	6/30/2032	6/30/2032	-
CUW39401	Watershed and Environmental Improvement Program <i>(Completed)</i>	6/28/2013	6/30/2022	6/30/2022	-

¹ Incorporates the March 2024 Revised WSIP schedule

5.0 PROJECT BUDGETS

As of June 30, 2026, the forecasted overall WSIP total program cost (regional and local projects) is \$4,792.8M, which is the same as the current Commission Approved Budget (March 2024 Revised WSIP). As of the end of FY 2025-26, the current forecasted remaining construction contingency is \$0.04M, not including contingency budget reserved to cover the June 2026 forecasted construction change orders (approved, potential, and pending change orders) and anticipated trends on currently active construction contracts. In addition to the remaining contingency for active projects, there is currently \$12.9M in the WSIP Director's Reserve to cover future potential project/program risks.

5.1 Tracking and Controlling Project Budgets

The WSIP Management Team pro-actively monitors and controls program and project budgets. The following business processes, procedures, and best practices are in place to allow for the identification of budget issues early and to ensure measures are taken to control potential cost increases whenever required.

Monthly Statusing and Monthly Progress Meetings

According to WSIP Procedures, PM5.05 (Monthly Statusing) and PM5.07 (Monthly Progress Meetings), WSIP project teams prepare monthly budget updates/forecasts for all project phases, and review and analyze them to identify cost issues and projected cost overruns at project completion. These updates allow for the measurement of performance against baseline. In quarterly standing review meetings, all current and projected cost overruns are discussed and evaluated, and project teams are expected to address the issues and come up with a plan to mitigate project variances.

Change Management

WSIP Procedure PM5.02 (Change Management) is used by the WSIP Management Team to control any scope changes that may cause cost overruns. According to this procedure, no project-level scope, budget, and/or schedule changes can be implemented without review and approval of the Change Control Board and the WSIP Director.

Management of Construction Costs

Construction cost changes are governed by the Contract General Conditions, Section 00700, Article 6 – Clarifications and Changes in the Work, together with the Supplementary Conditions, Section 00800, as applicable. The Contract requirements, together with the supporting CM Business Processes, CM Plan and CM Procedures, are enforced to ensure diligent and pro-active management of WSIP construction costs. Unlike the progress schedules, which are updated monthly, WSIP cost information is tracked and updated on a near-real-time basis in the construction management information system (CMIS). Construction progress invoices are processed monthly, and all actual costs are summed at the program, regional, and project levels.

Control of Remaining Delivery Costs

The WSIP Management Team, with the support of SFPUC upper management, has been implementing significant reductions in both City and consultant resources at the program and project levels in recent years to reduce and better control the remaining delivery costs of the WSIP.

5.2 Project Budget Forecast and Variances

The status of cost forecasts for WSIP Regional Projects is shown in Table 5-1 as of the end of FY 2025-26. The Table provides the original 2005 baseline budget and the current approved budget for each project. Additionally, the current forecast cost for each project (or final accrued cost for completed projects) is provided. As can be seen in the table, all WSIP Regional Projects are currently forecasted to be completed on budget. Additional detail regarding the forecasts presented below may be found in the WSIP Quarterly Report for the 4th Quarter of FY 2025-26 (Appendix A).

Table 5.1: Project Budget Forecast and Variances

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Cost	Current Approved Cost ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Cost	Cost Variance
San Joaquin Region					
CUW36401	Lawrence Livermore Water Quality Improvement <i>(Completed)</i>	\$4,235,258	\$4,198,247	\$4,198,247	-
CUW37301	San Joaquin Pipeline System <i>(Completed)</i>	\$352,732,000	\$203,177,750	\$203,177,750	-
CUW37302	Rehabilitation of Existing San Joaquin Pipelines <i>(Completed)</i>	\$80,000,000	\$21,168,797	\$21,168,797	-
CUW38401	Tesla Treatment Facility <i>(Completed)</i>	\$101,643,001	\$113,225,331	\$113,225,331	-
CUW38701	Tesla Portal Disinfection Station <i>(Combined with CUW38401)</i>	\$20,731,270	\$2,081,278	\$2,081,278	-
CUWSJ10101	WSIP Closeout - San Joaquin <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$2,015,908	\$2,015,908	-
Sunol Valley Region					
CUW35201	Alameda Creek Recapture Project	\$18,809,304	\$48,967,395	\$48,967,395	-
CUW35501	Standby Power Facilities - Various Locations <i>(Completed)</i>	\$9,949,735	\$12,950,566	\$12,950,566	-
CUW35901	New Irvington Tunnel <i>(Completed)</i>	\$214,650,004	\$339,945,523	\$339,945,523	-
CUW35902	Alameda Siphon #4 <i>(Completed)</i>	\$78,577,000	\$64,730,538	\$64,730,538	-
CUW37001	Pipeline Repair & Readiness Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	\$5,591,770	\$5,178,466	\$5,178,466	-
CUW37401	Calaveras Dam Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	\$256,511,407	\$794,059,379	\$793,940,522	\$188,857
CUW37402	Calaveras Reservoir Upgrades <i>(Completed)</i>	\$1,740,055	\$1,690,552	\$1,690,552	-

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Cost	Current Approved Cost ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Cost	Cost Variance
CUW37403	San Antonio Backup Pipeline <i>(Completed)</i>	\$7,677,000	\$53,562,178	\$53,562,178	-
CUW38101	SVWTP Expansion & Treated Water Reservoir <i>(Completed)</i>	\$133,108,002	\$129,593,674	\$129,593,674	-
CUW38102	SVWTP Calaveras Road <i>(Eliminated)</i>	-	\$34,654	\$34,654	-
CUW38201	SVWTP Treated Water Reservoir <i>(Combined with CUW38101)</i>	\$102,436,436	\$5,056,596	\$5,056,596	-
CUW38601	San Antonio Pump Station Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	\$41,854,000	\$12,886,140	\$12,886,140	-
CUWSVI0101	WSIP Closeout - Sunol Valley <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$5,558,385	\$5,297,216	\$261,169
Bay Division Region					
CUW35301	BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossover/Isolation Valves <i>(Completed)</i>	\$27,600,158	\$27,045,626	\$27,045,626	-
CUW35302	Seismic Upgrade of BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 <i>(Completed)</i>	\$66,792,849	\$70,524,332	\$70,524,332	-
CUW36301	SCADA System - Phase II <i>(Completed)</i>	\$36,098,999	\$9,473,039	\$9,473,039	-
CUW36801	BDPL Reliability Upgrade / Tunnel <i>(Completed)</i>	\$572,022,634	\$272,364,089	\$272,364,089	-
CUW36802	BDPL Reliability Upgrade – Pipeline <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$216,795,625	\$216,795,625	-
CUW36803	BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Relocation of BDPL Nos. 1 & 2 <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$3,046,981	\$3,046,981	-
CUW38001	BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossovers <i>(Completed)</i>	\$36,616,911	\$29,913,049	\$29,913,049	-
CUW38901	SFPUC/EBMUD Intertie <i>(Completed)</i>	\$8,598,851	\$9,167,306	\$9,167,306	-

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Cost	Current Approved Cost ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Cost	Cost Variance
CUW39301	BDPL No. 4 Condition Assessment PCCP Sections <i>(Completed)</i>	\$2,000,000	\$1,937,599	\$1,937,599	-
CUWBDP0101	WSIP Closeout - Bay Division <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$3,322,156	\$3,322,156	-
Peninsula Region					
CUW35401	Lower Crystal Springs Dam Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	\$27,752,222	\$34,860,072	\$34,860,072	-
CUW35601	New Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel <i>(Completed)</i>	\$83,222,790	\$81,435,610	\$81,435,610	-
CUW35701	Adit Leak Repair - Crystal Springs/Calaveras <i>(Completed)</i>	\$3,748,452	\$2,787,322	\$2,787,322	-
CUW36101	Pulgas Balancing - Inlet/Outlet Work <i>(Completed)</i>	\$1,667,532	\$1,765,938	\$1,765,938	-
CUW36102	Pulgas Balancing - Discharge Channel Modifications <i>(Completed)</i>	\$8,111,422	\$2,910,007	\$2,910,007	-
CUW36103	Pulgas Balancing - Structural Rehabilitation and Roof Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	\$36,712,846	\$20,227,447	\$20,227,447	-
CUW36104	Pulgas Balancing - Laguna Creek Sedimentation <i>(Eliminated)</i>	-	\$505,127	\$505,127	-
CUW36105	Pulgas Balancing - Modifications of the Existing Dechloramination Facility <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$5,391,353	\$5,391,353	-
CUW36501	Cross Connection Controls <i>(Completed)</i>	\$6,111,779	\$3,948,727	\$3,948,727	-
CUW36601	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements (Demo Filters) <i>(Completed)</i>	\$4,381,375	\$3,067,903	\$3,067,903	-

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Cost	Current Approved Cost ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Cost	Cost Variance
CUW36602	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Remaining Filters <i>(Combined with CUW36603)</i>	\$16,079,372	\$1,424,510	\$1,424,510	-
CUW36603	HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Coagulation & Flocculation/ Remaining Filters <i>(Completed)</i>	\$9,741,617	\$18,604,937	\$18,604,937	-
CUW36701	HTWTP Long-Term Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	\$167,570,000	\$273,894,602	\$273,894,602	-
CUW36702	Peninsula Pipelines Seismic Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$38,779,772	\$38,779,772	-
CUW36901	Capuchino Valve Lot Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	\$3,573,782	\$2,803,153	\$2,803,153	-
CUW37101	Crystal Springs/San Andreas Transmission Upgrade <i>(Completed)</i>	\$148,582,655	\$189,649,573	\$189,649,573	-
CUW37801	Crystal Springs Pipeline No. 2 Replacement <i>(Completed)</i>	\$93,926,000	\$56,070,509	\$56,070,509	-
CUW37901	San Andreas Pipeline No. 3 Installation <i>(Completed)</i>	\$42,029,941	\$27,519,716	\$27,519,716	-
CUW39101	Baden and San Pedro Valve Lots Improvements <i>(Completed)</i>	\$47,319,999	\$24,993,478	\$24,993,478	-
CUWPWI0101	WSIP Closeout – Peninsula <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$13,560,086	\$13,556,312	\$3,774
San Francisco Regional Region					
CUW30103	Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery	\$39,233,443	\$158,350,433	\$158,350,433	-

Project Number	Project Name	2005 Approved Cost	Current Approved Cost ¹	June 2026 Forecasted Cost	Cost Variance
CUW35801	Sunset Reservoir - North Basin <i>(Completed)</i>	\$61,975,999	\$64,270,725	\$64,270,725	-
CUW37201	University Mound Reservoir - North Basin <i>(Completed)</i>	\$102,882,610	\$43,266,312	\$43,266,312	-
Support Projects					
CUW36302	System Security Upgrades <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$14,397,894	\$14,397,894	-
CUW38801	Programmatic EIR <i>(Completed)</i>	\$9,271,001	\$10,734,567	\$10,734,567	-
CUW38802	Bioregional Habitat Restoration	-	\$93,341,983	\$93,341,983	-
CUW38803	Vegetation Restoration of WSIP Construction Sites <i>(Completed)</i>	-	\$2,111,546	\$2,111,546	-
CUW38804	Long Term Mitigation Endowment		\$12,000,000	\$12,000,000	-
CUW39201	Program Management Project	\$52,076,000	\$121,642,048	\$122,025,847	(\$383,799)
CUW39401	Watershed Environmental Improvement Program <i>(Completed)</i>	\$20,000,000	\$20,079,150	\$20,079,150	-

6.0 ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

WSIP implementation is organized geographically to make program delivery more manageable and to take into account project adjacency issues. This section highlights the achievements and challenges of the Program's five regional teams.

6.1 San Joaquin Region

The status of all regional projects in the San Joaquin Region as of the end of FY 2025-26 is summarized in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1: Status of San Joaquin Regional Projects as of June 30, 2026

Project/Contract Name	Status
Lawrence Livermore Water Quality Improvement	Completed
SJPL System – Crossovers	Completed
SJPL System - Western Segment	Completed
SJPL System - Eastern Segment	Completed
Rehabilitation of Existing SJPLs - Roselle	Completed
Tesla Treatment Facility	Completed
Tesla Portal Protection	Completed
WSIP Closeout - San Joaquin	Completed

All of the San Joaquin Region's eight projects were completed in prior reporting periods.

6.2 Sunol Valley Region

The status of all regional projects in the Sunol Valley Region as of the end of FY 2025-26 is summarized in Table 6-2.

Table 6-2: Status of Sunol Valley Regional Projects as of June 30, 2026

Project/Contract Name	Status
Alameda Creek Recapture Project	Planning
Standby Power Facilities - Various Locations	Completed
New Irvington Tunnel	Completed
Alameda Siphon #4	Completed
Pipeline Repair & Readiness Improvements	Completed
Calaveras Dam Replacement	Completed
Calaveras Reservoir Upgrades	Completed
San Antonio Backup Pipeline	Completed
SVWTP Expansion & Treated Water Reservoir	Completed
San Antonio Pump Station Upgrade	Completed
WSIP Closeout - Sunol Valley	Completed

As of June 30, 2026, 10 projects have been completed and one project was in planning.

Alameda Creek Recapture Project

Achievements

The project includes two phases: Phase A: WD-2825R Alameda Creek Recapture Project construction contract was terminated and closed out. The project Closeout Document and Dossier were completed. Phase B: the project team evaluated multiple facility alternatives and developed a draft Alternative Analysis Report. The project team provided comments to the quarry operator on the erosion repair plan for the pond banks.

Challenges

Future challenges as the project requirements are better defined will be identified and tracked. Any potential future changes to project scope, schedule or budget will be appropriately forecasted, publicly noticed, and brought to the Commission for approval, and any additional budget requirements will be requested in a future SFPUC 10-Year Capital Plan budget process.

6.3 Bay Division Region

The status of all regional projects in the Bay Division Region as of the end of FY2025-26 is summarized in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3: Status of Bay Division Regional Projects as of June 30, 2026

Project/Contract Name	Status
BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossover/Isolation Valves	Completed
Seismic Upgrade of BDPL Nos. 3 & 4	Completed
SCADA System - Phase II	Completed
BDPL Reliability Upgrade – Tunnel (Bay Tunnel)	Completed
BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Pipeline	Completed
BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Relocation of BDPL Nos. 1 & 2	Completed
BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossovers	Completed
SFPUC/EBMUD Intertie	Completed
BDPL No. 4 Condition Assessment PCCP Sections	Completed
BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossover/Isolation Valves	Completed
WSIP Closeout - Bay Division	Completed

All of the Bay Division Region's 11 projects were completed in previous reporting periods.

6.4 Peninsula Region

The status of all regional projects in the Peninsula as of the end of FY2025-26 is summarized in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4: Status of Peninsula Regional Projects as of June 30, 2026

Project/Contract Name	Status
Lower Crystal Springs Dam Improvements	Completed
New Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel	Completed
Adit Leak Repair - Crystal Springs/Calaveras	Completed
Pulgas Balancing - Inlet/Outlet Work	Completed
Pulgas Balancing - Discharge Channel Modifications	Completed
Pulgas Balancing - Structural Rehabilitation and Roof Replacement	Completed
Pulgas Balancing - Modifications of the Existing Dechloramination Facility	Completed
Cross Connection Controls	Completed
HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Demo Filters	Completed
HTWTP Short-Term Improvements - Coagulation & Flocculation/ Remaining Filters	Completed
HTWTP Long-Term Improvements	Completed
Peninsula Pipelines Seismic Upgrade (Phases 1 / 2 / 3)	Completed
Capuchino Valve Lot Improvements	Completed
Crystal Springs/San Andreas Transmission Upgrade	Completed
Crystal Springs Pipeline No. 2 Replacement	Completed
San Andreas Pipeline No. 3 Installation	Completed
Baden and San Pedro Valve Lots Improvements	Completed
WSIP Closeout – Peninsula Region	Completed

All of the Peninsula Region's 18 projects were completed in previous reporting periods.

6.5 San Francisco (Regional) Region

The status of all regional projects in the San Francisco Region as of the end of FY 2025-26 is summarized in Table 6-5.

Table 6-5: Status of San Francisco Regional Projects as of June 30, 2026

Project/Contract Name	Status
Regional Groundwater Storage & Recovery	(A) Phase 1 Test Wells: Completed (B) Phase 1 Construction: Completed (C) Phase 2A: Construction: 100% complete ¹ (D) Phase 2B: Construction: 50% complete
Sunset Reservoir - North Basin	Completed
University Mound Reservoir - North Basin	Completed

¹ Status of construction percentage complete is based on original contract cost plus approved cost change orders.

As of June 30, 2026, only one of the three San Francisco Regional projects is still active, the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project, which includes four construction contracts. The first and second were completed in an earlier reporting period; the third achieved Final Completion this reporting period and closeout is continuing; the fourth is in construction as all encroachment permits, easements and access agreements are in place.

Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery

Achievements

The remaining project, Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery, is split into two phases, and as noted above, four construction contracts, identified under this project as Contracts A, B, C, and D. Contract A of Phase 1, to build test wells, was completed in a previous reporting period. For Phase 1 Contract B, to build 13 production wells and treatment facilities, construction was completed in a previous reporting period. The remaining work under Phase 1 includes providing power to a remote analyzer for the Treasure Island Well Station and installing fencing and gates at several well stations. For the Treasure Island Well Station remote analyzer, a new easement is needed for PG&E to provide power, but the property owner where the easement is needed has been uncooperative and negotiations are continuing. Construction of some miscellaneous fencing/gate work through a Job Order Contract (JOC) task order (TO) has been completed and design for remaining miscellaneous fencing/gate work has been completed and a new JOC TO is being initiated.

For Phase 2A (Contract C), Final Completion was achieved this reporting period, but during testing of the flowmeter that was repaired and reinstalled by the contractor, it was discovered that the flowmeter may not provide the necessary accuracy. The project team is working with a consultant to design a new replacement flowmeter to be installed through a separate JOC TO.

For Phase 2B (Contract D), all easements, encroachment permits, and access agreements were procured, and construction is in progress. For the Linear Park Well and Treatment Facility, a draft 100% design for the raw water ammonia removal system was completed and being routed for review. This ammonia treatment work will be completed through a change order to this construction contract.

Challenges

For Phase 2A (Contract C) WD-2878A, a new flowmeter is being designed and will be installed through a JOC TO. Construction to replace the flowmeter may not be completed until next year.

For Phase 2B (Contract D), a proposed PG&E interrupter switch vault that is required for electrical service for the well station was found to be in conflict with the Sunset Supply Pipeline, which PG&E required a redesign of the interrupter switch location and distribution conduits. This will delay construction completion, and the duration of the delay may not be fully known until PG&E completes their design in late 2026.

7.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 WSIP Risk Management Protocol

Risk registers for a project’s construction contract are developed with the project team, comprised of the project construction manager, operations analyst, project engineer, QA inspector, communications/public outreach personnel, environmental personnel, safety personnel, and scheduler. These individuals identify the specific risks to the project, and then meet with the risk analyst/risk manager in order to provide a qualitative assessment of all risks, propose mitigation methods to prevent risks from becoming realized, and address the potential impacts from the risks should they materialize. Once the qualitative assessment of the risk register is completed, a smaller team, consisting of the project manager, project engineer, and project construction manager, reviews each individual risk thoroughly in order to identify the probability of occurrence along with the probable cost and schedule impacts. Once the risk register has been finalized with these values, meetings to update the risk register occur between the project construction manager, project manager, and risk analyst on a monthly basis.

As it would generally be overly conservative to plan for 100% of future potential risks, the SFPUC has elected to use the “80% confidence level” as a relatively conservative estimate of future cost risk for the WSIP. Namely, the “80% confidence level” represents the amount of cost for which one can be 80% confident that future cost risk will not exceed this level. The “80% confidence level” is determined with the use of the Active Risk Manager (ARM) software in which the software takes the identified project/program risks and performs a Monte Carlo simulation. This takes the likelihood of each risk along with the minimum, most likely, and maximum cost of each risk and performs 1000 iterations of the risk calculation to produce probable cost impact of the risks for the project. This probable cost impact can be expressed in terms of confidence level (confidence level vs. probable cost curve).

7.2 Status of Risk to Active Construction Projects

During FY 2025-26, the WSIP team continued to implement and refine its Risk Management Program. A total of eight construction risks became inactive during the reporting period. All three remaining risks for the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project - Phase 2A expired in July 2025, and five risks for the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project - Phase 2B were no longer active by November 2025.

As of June 30, 2026, seven construction risks were included in the Phase 2B reporting, including six open risks and one mitigated risk. This brought the total number of active construction risk registers and the total number of individual risks managed through ARM and included in this report as of the end of the reporting period to one and seven, respectively.

Whenever new risk registers are developed, cost impact estimates are prepared to quantify each risk. Risk assessment workshops are held with the project teams responsible to update and track the risk registers. Table 7-1 summarizes the WSIP’s active construction risk registers loaded into the ARM software application as of the end of the reporting period.

Table 7-1: Summary of Active Construction Risk Registers as of June 30, 2026

Construction Contract ¹	Date ²	Number of Risks ³	Risk Value (\$M) ⁴
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Oct-24	7	0.3
Cumulative active risks at 80% confidence level		7	0.3

1. Excludes WSIP Local Region, Bioregional Habitat Restoration, and Security contracts.

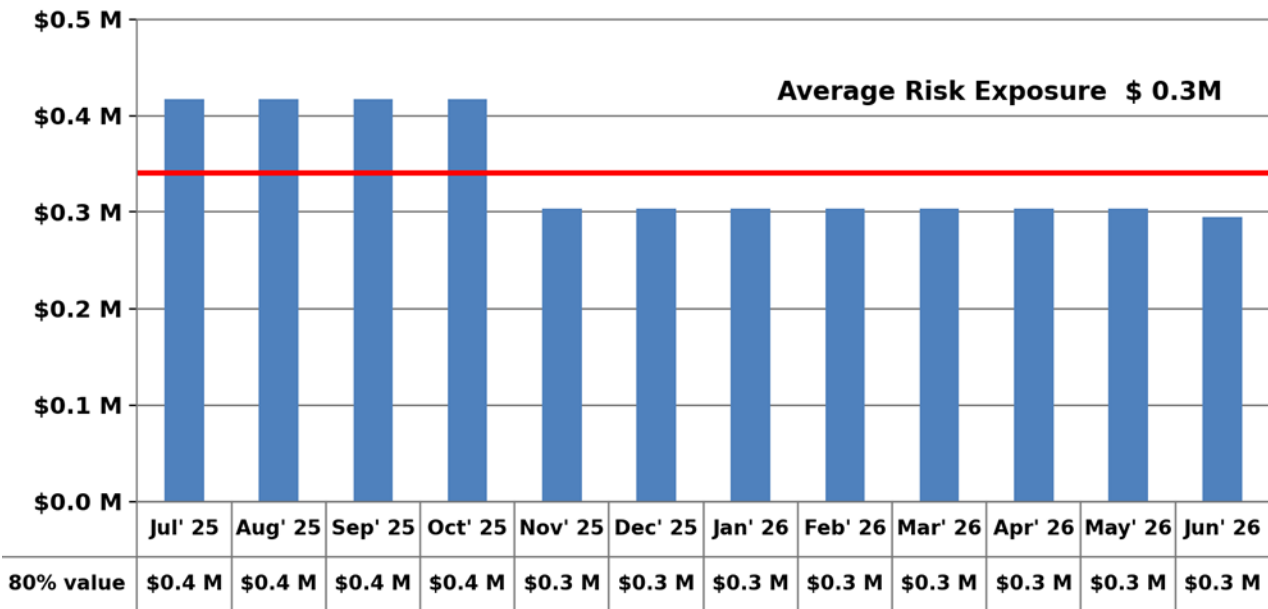
2. Date when construction risk register was first created and loaded in ARM.

3. Number of individual risks recorded in register as of June 30, 2026.

4. Total value of all risks at 80% confidence level as of June 30, 2026.

Figure 7-1 shows that the reporting period began with cumulative risk exposure at the 80% confidence level of approximately \$0.4M in July 2025, down from \$0.5M in June 2025 due to the expiration of all remaining risks for the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project - Phase 2A. Risk exposure remained at approximately \$0.4M through October 2025. In November 2025, risk exposure decreased to \$0.3M after two Phase 2B risks were no longer active, including the risk related to acquiring permits. This decrease was partially offset by an increase in the probability and estimated cost of PG&E startup delays. Risk exposure remained at approximately \$0.3M through May 2026. In June 2026, it decreased slightly from \$303K to \$295K due to a reduction in the probability of encountering unknown utilities from 30% to 10%. The reporting period ended with cumulative risk exposure at the 80% confidence level of approximately \$0.3M.

Figure 7-1: WSIP 80% Confidence Level Construction Risks for FY 2025-26



The WSIP Risk Management System ranks construction contract risks based on a combination of the likelihood of occurrence and the potential cost impact to the SFPUC should they occur. Table 7-2 provides a description of the program's 10 largest risks.

Mitigation plans are developed for each risk identified in the risk register for active construction projects. Mitigation plans may change over the life of the risk until the risk is closed due to not having occurred. Action items derived from the risk mitigation plans are individually assigned to construction management (CM) team members and tracked in the ARM software through completion.

All seven of the current top risks for active WSIP construction contracts, based on likelihood of occurrence and potential cost impact, belong to the Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project - Phase 2B. The current highest risk relates to PG&E startup delays. The second highest risk relates to scope changes. The third highest risk pertains to unexpected challenges during startup and testing. Table 7-2 below lists the top seven risks along with their cost impacts and mitigation strategies.

Table 7-2: Top 10 WSIP Risks as of June 30, 2026

Project	Risk Description	Occurrence Probability	Risk Value ¹ (\$K)	Mitigation
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	PG&E Startup Delays	75%	100	Consider bringing a generator.
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Scope changes	70%	75	Acquire earlier direction from WE and management.
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Unexpected challenges during startup and testing	70%	60	Start the startup and testing plan early.
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Cal Water not ready to accept equipment to operate and maintain upon turnover	30%	40	Coordinate with Cal Water regarding state augmentation or a service contract.
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Security issues resulting in vandalism and/or loss of stored equipment	30%	50	Contractor to secure equipment.
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Possible delays in delivery of critical equipment due to supply chain issues	25%	50	Obtain early submission from the contractor for long lead items.
Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Phase 2B	Encountering unknown utilities	10%	40	Early potholing.

¹. Most likely cost of each risk. The lowest and highest costs of each risk are also recorded in ARM

8.0 PROGRAM DELIVERY STRATEGY FOR CLOSEOUT PHASE

At 99.3 percent completion as of June 30, 2026 and with 41 of 43 regional WSIP projects with specific Level of Service (LOS) goals and objectives currently in service, the overall WSIP is in the Closeout Phase. Nevertheless, there are still two active projects with potential current or future risks that, should these risks be realized, could have a negative schedule and/or budget impact to the program. Therefore, it is essential to continue to implement the best practices that have helped to make the WSIP successful to date, and to continue to look for opportunities to become increasingly efficient as the SFPUC strives towards bringing the WSIP to successful completion.

8.1 Plan to Ensure Ongoing and Increasing Cost-Efficient Practices

As has been the practice since the program was established, the WSIP Director will continue to meet with project teams on a rotation at least quarterly in order to review status of every project. As a result of these meetings, staffing adjustments are made in real time to ensure project teams work within the existing budgets, and where appropriate, budget forecasts and resources are adjusted as necessary to help ensure successful completion of every project. Staffing levels will continue to be tracked, and appropriate staff adjustments made accordingly to ensure staffing levels stay within the remaining available budget.

In addition, industry best practice Construction Management (CM) Business Processes and Procedures continue to be implemented to ensure the available funds are used efficiently and effectively, with emphasis on identification of cost savings wherever possible. The primary features of the best practice processes and procedures that facilitate monitoring and control of WSIP construction are summarized below.

- Change Management - All Owner-requested changes require approval by a Change Control Board, with final approval by the WSIP Director. All changes are required to support Level of Service (LOS) goals and objectives, and independent cost estimates are required for large changes in advance of contractor pricing.
- Trends Management - Project Teams are required to re-assess trend values monthly to ensure accurate cost forecasting. Trends are also audited by the Program CM Management Team and discussed and reviewed monthly with the WSIP Director.
- Risk Management - SFPUC continues to proactively monitor and manage construction risk on all active projects. Risk registers are updated monthly by each Project Team, and thorough review and discussion of the Risk Register is periodically conducted by the Program CM Management Team. Discussion includes review of mitigation measures as well as probabilities and potential impacts (cost and time) to reflect up-to-date overall project risk exposure.
- Schedule Management – SFPUC continues to aggressively apply strong schedule control on construction activities and continuously evaluate contractor schedules to ensure approved milestones are met. Project schedule forecasts are reported every month and reviewed and discussed with the Program CM Management Team. Mitigation measures are applied to delays incurred beyond the contractor's contract due to unforeseen conditions. Schedule recoveries are enforced by the Project Teams.
- Quarterly Project Review Meetings – Quarterly review meetings are conducted with the WSIP Director to review overall project budget & schedule forecasts as measured against the approved baseline.

8.2 Adequacy of Current Approved Schedules and Budget Contingencies

The schedule forecasts presented in this report show that the two remaining construction projects in the program are forecast to be complete by the current approved program completion date of June 30, 2032. As discussed in Section 7 of this report, the program-level risk analysis shows that the remaining program risk exposure at the “80 confidence level” is \$0.3 million for active construction contracts as of June 30, 2026.

The remaining forecast construction contingency as of June 30, 2026 is \$0.04 million after all current trends have been considered. In addition, the current forecast WSIP Director’s Reserve Fund is \$12.9 million. Therefore, a total of approximately \$12.9 million is available to fund future risks, including both construction risks and unforeseen soft (non-construction) costs.

9.0 STATUS OF AB 1823 PROJECTS

The status of the 10 projects identified in Assembly Bill (AB) 1823 is summarized in Table 9-1. As of June 30, 2026, all 10 projects have been completed.

Table 9-1: Status of AB 1823 Projects as of June 30, 2026

Project Name	Status
New Irvington Tunnel	Completed
Alameda Siphon #4	Completed
Calaveras Dam Replacement	Completed
BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossover/ Isolation Valves	Completed
Seismic Upgrade of BDPL Nos. 3 & 4	Completed
BDPL Reliability Upgrade – Tunnel (Bay Tunnel)	Completed
BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Pipeline	Completed
BDPL Nos. 3 & 4 Crossovers	Completed
New Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel	Completed
Crystal Springs/San Andreas Transmission Upgrade	Completed

It should be noted that the original list of projects in AB 1823 includes the BDPL Nos. 1 & 2 - Repair of Caissons/Pipe Bridge Project. That project was removed from the WSIP following completion of a facilities condition assessment that led to the addition of a fifth conduit parallel to BDPL Nos. 1 & 2 to the SFPUC capital program. The conduit, referred to as BDPL No. 5, was completed as part of the BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Tunnel and BDPL Reliability Upgrade - Pipeline projects.

Half of the ten projects listed in AB 1823 contributed to the construction of a new seismically designed lifeline that carries water from the Sunol Valley in the East Bay to the mid-Peninsula. That lifeline involves six segments contracted out separately that have all achieved substantial construction completion in past reporting periods and are in service: Alameda Siphon #4, New Irvington Tunnel, BDPL Reliability Upgrade (East Bay Reaches), BDPL Reliability Upgrade – Tunnel (Bay Tunnel), BDPL Reliability Upgrade (Peninsula Reaches) and New Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel.

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APPENDIX A

WSIP Quarterly Report

Regional Projects (Q4/FY 2025-2026)

Report available on the SFPUC Website at the following address:
<https://sfpuc.org/construction-contracts/water-infrastructure-improvements>

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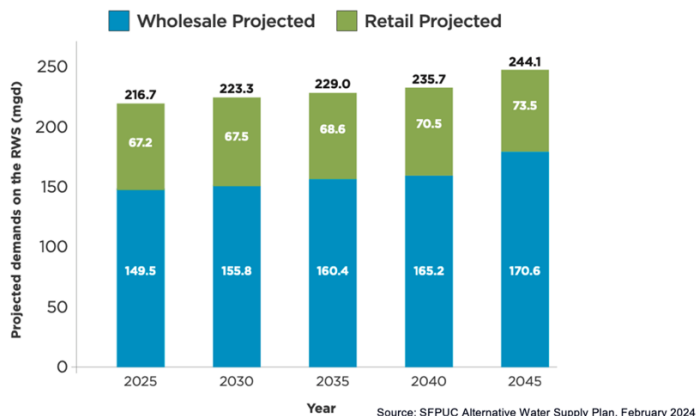
August 26, 2026

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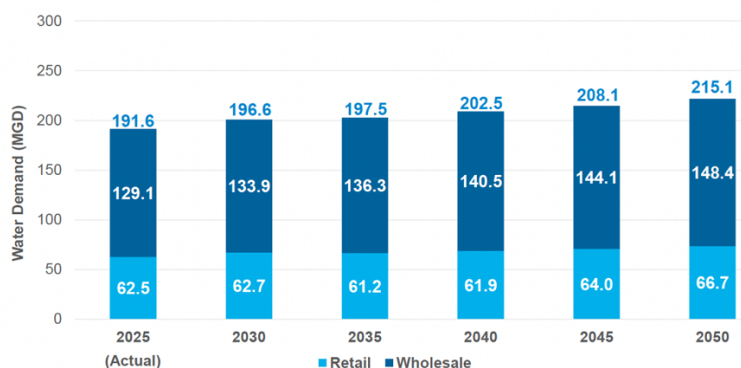
Hi Folks,

I'm curious if anyone has any thoughts on the following two graphs. They were produced two years apart, yet the demand projections are vastly different. The top graph is from the SFPUC's Alternative Water Supply Plan (February, 2024) and the bottom graph is from an April 14, 2026 Urban Water Management Plan presentation.

Figure 2-7: Projected Retail and Wholesale Demands on the RWS (2025-2045)



Total Retail Demands on the RWS and Wholesale Purchase Projections Under the UWMP Scenario



Sincerely,

Peter Drekmeier

Peter Drekmeier
Policy Director

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Lourdes Enriquez

From: Dave Warner <dwar11@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2026 12:10 PM
To: Ivella10@aol.com; Tom Smegal; Tom Francis
Subject: Design drought misinformation at July's BAWSCA Board meeting
Attachments: Attachment - AGM Ritchie misinformation during BAWSCA design drought agenda item on 2026-07-16.pdf

Dear Chair Vella, CEO Smegal and Water Resources Manager Francis,

SFPUC Assistant General Manager Ritchie conveyed a surprising amount of misinformation during the design drought discussion at July's Board meeting. As you know, not only did the topic generate considerable discussion from the Board, but it also is a potential lynchpin for supply reliability, risk, affordability and the coming decision on interruptible customers.

His misinformation was sufficiently material that it could have affected Board members' views on pressing the SFPUC to revisit its design drought model.

Please take a few minutes to meet or have a call with me to discuss how to best rectify the situation. The first objective is for Board members to have reliable information for making a considered call on the design drought. Second is to resolve the situation in a way that is respectful to AGM Ritchie's years of public service.

Here are some examples of misinformation. A full list is attached.

- **Omitted chart data leads to false conclusion:** The chart showing upcountry storage levels for the 2012-2015 drought and what storage would look like if the drought continued for two more years at 2014 and 2015 precipitation levels, was misleading at best. Bay Area storage was excluded. **It appeared that supply would not last another year. The conclusion would be wrong.** If Bay Area storage had been included, at the end of the two additional years there would have been 295 TAF still in storage, enough to last a third harsh year.^[1]
- **Denying that 100,000 acre feet of Bay Area storage was available:** In response to Director Nash's questions about local storage not being included in supply, AGM Ritchie stated, "Yes, we didn't have that extra 100,000 acre feet available. No that water was already going away as well." **This was not accurate. At the low point of the drought, Bay Area storage was at 137,000 acre feet.** In fact Bay Area storage stayed at roughly this level through the entire drought. It seems to make sense operationally for local reservoirs to be the last source of supply and to be kept full except for flood control.
- **The supply impact of Calaveras dam reconstruction was not mentioned:** Related to the chart, it would have been appropriate for AGM Ritchie to disclose that at the start of the drought Calaveras reservoir was 50 TAF below its normal storage level because of its dam replacement project (2011-2019).

- **Incorrectly implying LTVA data is solely based on history:** In response to Director Stone's question about a probability analysis on the design drought, AGM Ritchie asserted both that assuming the future will be like the past is not a good idea and that all probability data is based on history. This is incorrect. The SFPUC's 26,000 years of stochastic data incorporates a number of global climate models and climate scientists' elicitations to 2040 and 2070 in the context of considering varying levels of carbon emissions.^[2] A 100+ page technical report included in the LTVA discusses this in detail.
- **Stated that the LTVA produced "made up data":** In response to Director Stone's question about the 26,000 years of stochastic data, AGM Ritchie replied that it was "made up data." With this statement he has now gone on record discrediting the SFPUC's 2021 LTVA, a scientifically robust study that incorporated the latest climate science at the time, looking into the future to 2040 and 2070. The LTVA is one of the best tools we have to understand the risks associated with climate change. With climate science continuing to advance, it is a tool that the SFPUC should consider updating.

There are several other examples in the attachment.

It would be great to discuss this further in a meeting or call.

Kind regards,

Dave

Attachment

^[1] The presentation was not clear as to whether or not the dead-pool had already been removed from projected storage levels. If not, even after deducting the dead-pool there would still have been adequate supply to last a third harsh year.

^[2] The researchers settled on using RCP8.5, considered a less optimistic scenario of carbon emissions.

Attachment

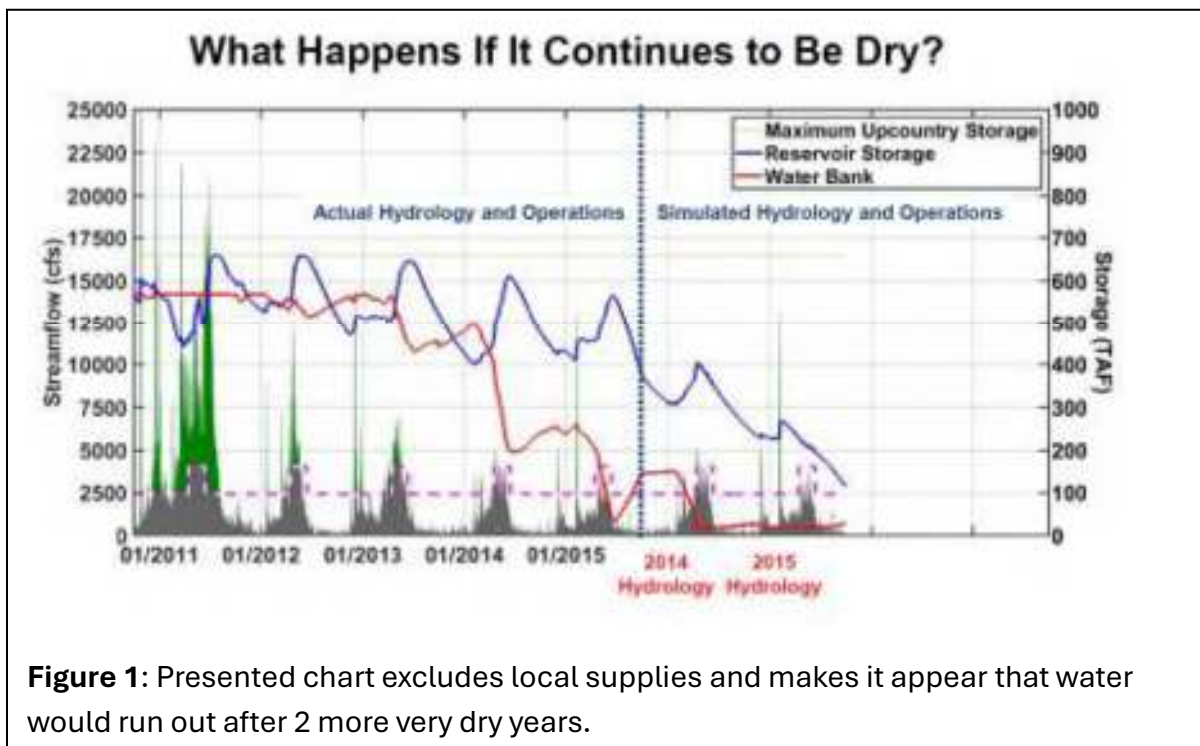
The following is a list of misinformation and omissions made by AGM Ritchie during the design drought agenda item at BAWSCA's July 17th board meeting.

Example A: Omitted chart data leads to false conclusion

What provided: Simulated drought chart as shown in figure 1

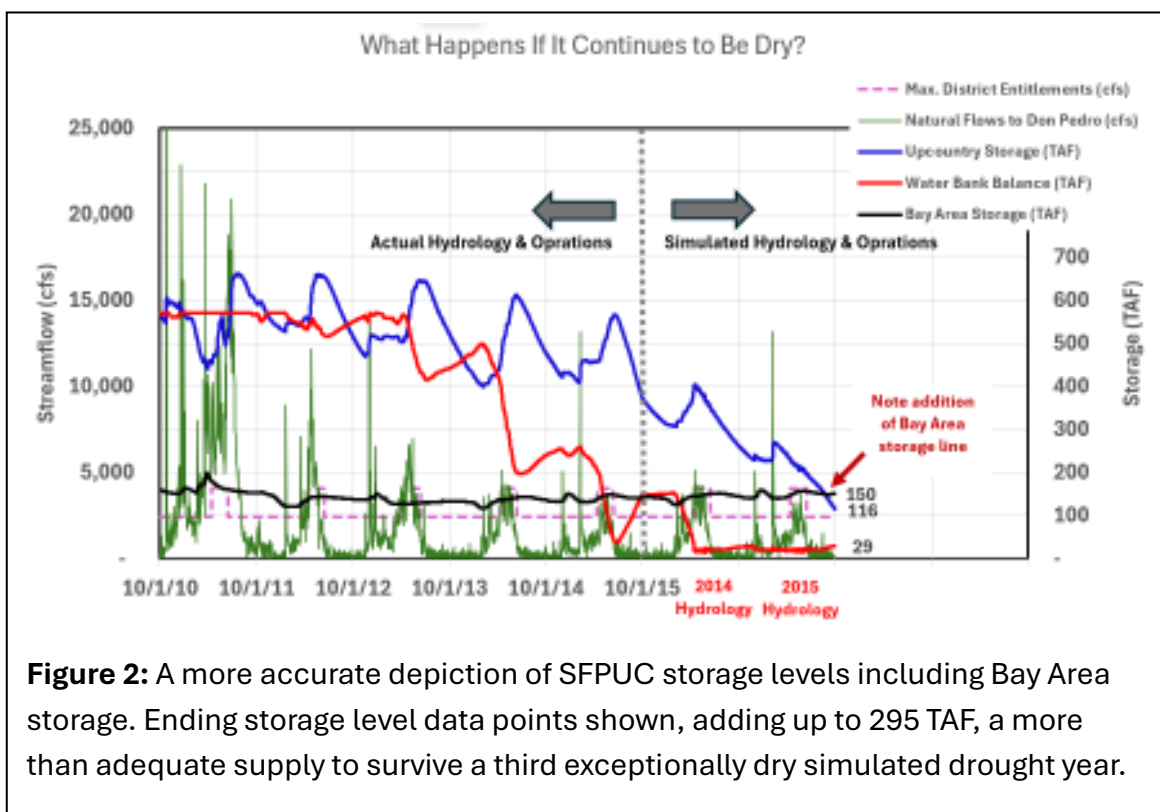
When presented: 30:10

Issue: The chart does not include local storage and appears to show that if the drought had lasted more than two years longer, the SFPUC would have run out of water. If the chart had included local supplies it would have been clear that water would have lasted a third simulated year. For risk assessment by Board members it should have also been noted that the repetition of the 2014 and 2015 water years, would have created the driest 4 year (and 6 year) sequence ever recorded. In reality we would have survived not only that simulated six year sequence, but also another exceptionally dry year not shown.



The chart should have looked like figure 2 which provides a line for Bay Area storage and shows storage levels at the end of the simulated drought.¹ The storage levels add up to 295 TAF, more than enough to survive another exceptionally dry year even if the 60 TAF of dead-pool had not yet been accounted for.

AGM Ritchie fully disclosed that the chart was developed using demand data at the time. For risk assessment he could have added that had the same simulated 2012-2017 drought occurred at current demand (without consideration of any rationing benefit), more than 100,000 acre feet of additional storage would have been available at the end of it. This is on top of the 295 TAF already available at the end of the simulated drought.



It would have been instructive for AGM Ritchie to discuss how the severity of this simulated drought compares to the severity of the design drought. Had he done this he might also have caught his mistake of thinking the Regional Water System wouldn't have survived yet another year of this simulated drought.

¹ Data for the chart in figure 3 was taken from public records request 26-6953. Simulated data for Bay Area storage for 2016 and 2017 was determined by taking the change in Bay Area storage levels in 2014 and 2015 and applying them to the ending 2015 Bay Area storage balance.

Example B: The supply impact of Calaveras dam reconstruction was not mentioned

Issue: Calaveras dam was rebuilt from 2011 to 2019, significantly reducing available storage from that reservoir. Had Calaveras reservoir been fully available and filled prior to the drought, an additional 50,000 acre feet or more would have been available at the end of the 2012-2015 drought. For a better risk assessment this factor should have been disclosed.

Example C: Stated that drought model comparison to other agencies isn't useful

Statement: “[A Drought Model] comparison with Valley Water, East Bay MUD and others is not meaningful.”

When stated: 32:39

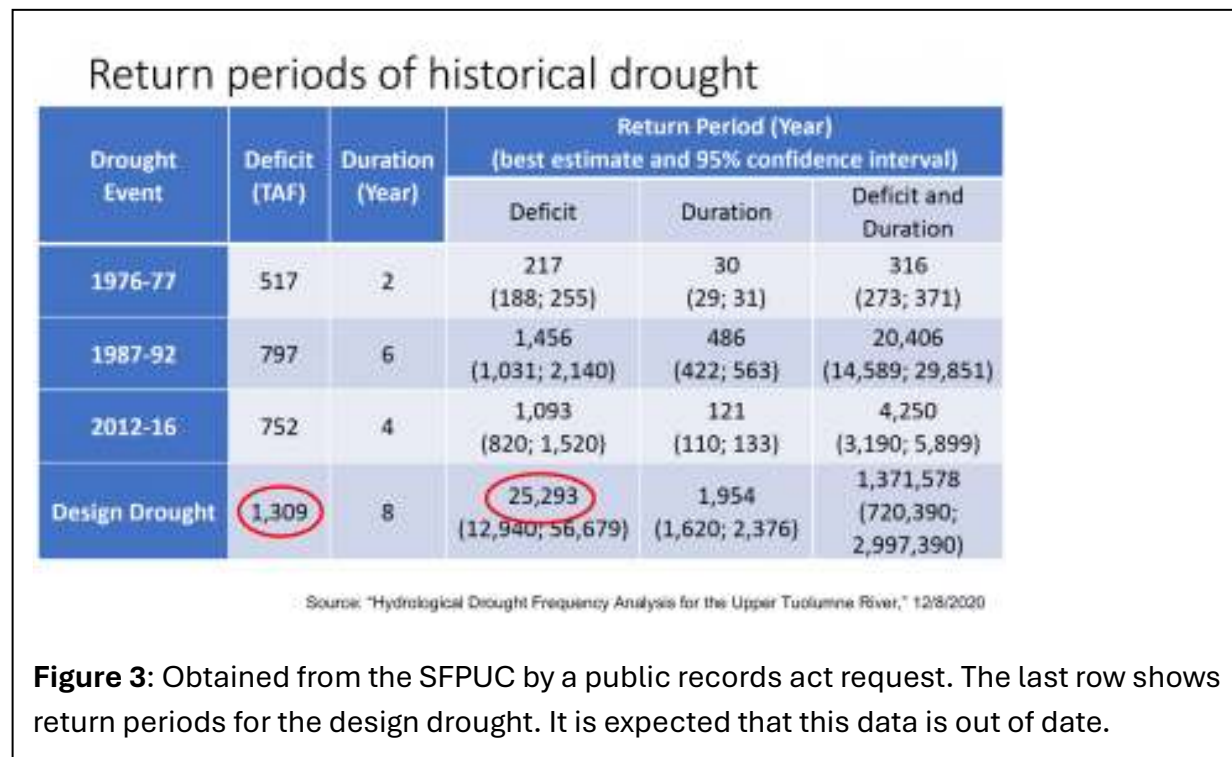
Issue: The agencies that AGM Ritchie mentions, along with most other California water agencies, face the same issue of balancing supply reliability risk with affordability. These other agencies also face similar climate change concerns. Comparing how these two agencies addressed the issue is instructive. For example, what analyses were done, what assumptions were made and how do they vary from what the SFPUC has done? Is the SFPUC an outlier or is it following industry best practices? Being able to say that the SFPUC is following industry best practices when it comes to drought planning would be a confidence builder for its constituents.

Example D: Stated that the SFPUC has not done a probability analysis on the design drought

Statement: In response to Director Stone's question, “have you done a probability analysis on the design drought, AGM Ritchie answered no.

When said: 58:55

Issue: AGM Ritchie’s response is incorrect. The SFPUC has done a probability analysis on the design drought as evidenced by figure 3.² There were also other slides³ related to design drought risk and climate change and comparing design drought severity to the droughts found in Tuolumne watershed tree ring data. It is concerning that AGM Ritchie didn’t



disclose any of this. Apparently the SFPUC stopped pursuing a return period for the design drought. It would be interesting to understand why.

Example E: Incorrectly implying LTVA⁴ data is solely based on history

Statement: In continuing to respond to Director Stone, AGM Ritchie states, “Warner stated that you’re flying in the face of all the [LTVA] data. Those aren’t data. Those aren’t even models that were run for a design drought purpose.... All probability analyses rely on

² Please note the data in figure 3 is out of date. The 2021 LTVA provided updated return periods for the three known droughts, but not the design drought.

³ These other slides were presented by Alexis Dufour at the Mayor’s water stakeholder meeting dated December 9, 2019.

⁴ The SFPUC sponsored 2021 Long Term Vulnerability Assessment, prepared by: Baptiste François, Alexa Bruce, Khanh Nguyen, Dong Kwan Park, and David Rheinheimer, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Umit Taner, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; and Deltares Sungwook Wi and Hassaan Khan, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Alexis Dufour and David Behar San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, David Yates and Caspar Ammann, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Marjolijn Haasnoot, Deltares, Casey Brown, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

history. They don't rely on any data in the future.... Assuming it is going to be like the past is not a good idea."

When said: 59:30

Issue: AGM Ritchie's implication that the LTVA doesn't incorporate any data related to the future is misleading at best. An early step in the development of the LTVA was a climate information workshop attended by 9 climate scientists⁵ who, along with global climate models, provided temperature and precipitation projections through 2040 and 2070 under different global carbon emission assumptions. This information was incorporated throughout the LTVA's work.

Example F: Stated that the LTVA produced "made up data"

Statement: In response to Director Stone's reference to the LTVA's 26,000 years of data AGM Ritchie stated, "made up data."

When said: 1:00:15

Issue: AGM Ritchie, appears to be going on record discrediting the LTVA, and doing so without substance. The LTVA was a scientifically robust research project engaging respected climate scientists, using the best information available at the time. The LTVA likely provided our best possible glimpse into the future for long term planning. Rather than discredit the LTVA, it seems like getting regular updates to the LTVA would provide BAWSCA's Board with its best long term view of the climate.

Example G: Lack of knowledge about recent wholesale rate increases

Statement: In response to Director Pierce's question of why rates are going up, AGM Ritchie stated, "...I don't even recall what the exact [wholesale] rate increase was this year. The rate increases for the wholesale customer are on a fairly steady increase which is the cost of living as much as anything else, maybe a little bit more because of the dams."

When said: 1:14:25

Issue: AGM Ritchie's comment that he doesn't know what this year's wholesale rate increase was, combined with his comment that the increase was principally related to cost of living, could be an indication that he's not paying close attention to affordability, at least

⁵ The 9 climate scientists participating in the workshop were: Joe Barsugli, **University of Colorado, Boulder**, Melissa Bukovsky, **National Center for Atmospheric Research**, Daniel R. Cayan, **Scripps Institution of Oceanography**, Benjamin I. Cook, **National Aeronautics and Space Administration**, Michael Dettinger, **US Geological Survey**, Ethan Gutmann, **National Center for Atmospheric Research**, Andy Jones, **Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory**, Karen A. McKinnon, **University of California, Los Angeles**, Michael F. Wehner, **Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory**

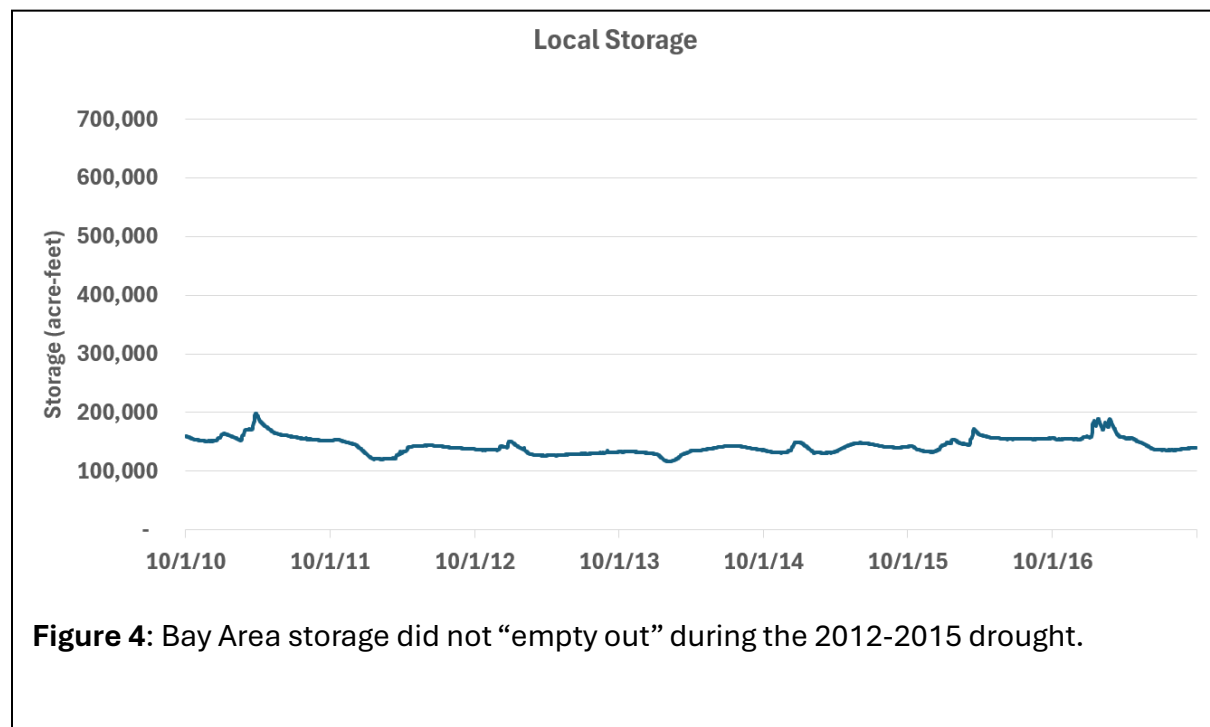
for wholesale customers. For reference, the wholesale rate increase for FY'27 was 7.4% and the inflation rate for the same period was 3.4%. For period from July 2021, to July 2027, wholesale rates increased 52% while inflation increased 22%.

Example H: Misrepresenting how local storage was used during the 2012-15 drought

Statement: In response to Director Nash's question about how local storage fits into his charts, AGM Ritchie responded: "The operating assumption is that [Bay Area] storage is going to empty out as fast if not faster than up country supply."

When said: 1:24:35

Issue. This is inaccurate. As shown in figure 4, Bay Area storage did not empty out during the drought. In fact, during the two driest years, 2014 and 2015, Bay Area storage increased slightly from 133 TAF to 141 TAF.



Example I: Denying that 100,000 acre feet of Bay Area storage was available

Statement: To Director Nash's follow-up question confirming that there was not local storage available, AGM Ritchie stated, "yes, we didn't have that extra 100,000 acre feet available. No that water was already going away as well."

When said: 1:26:05

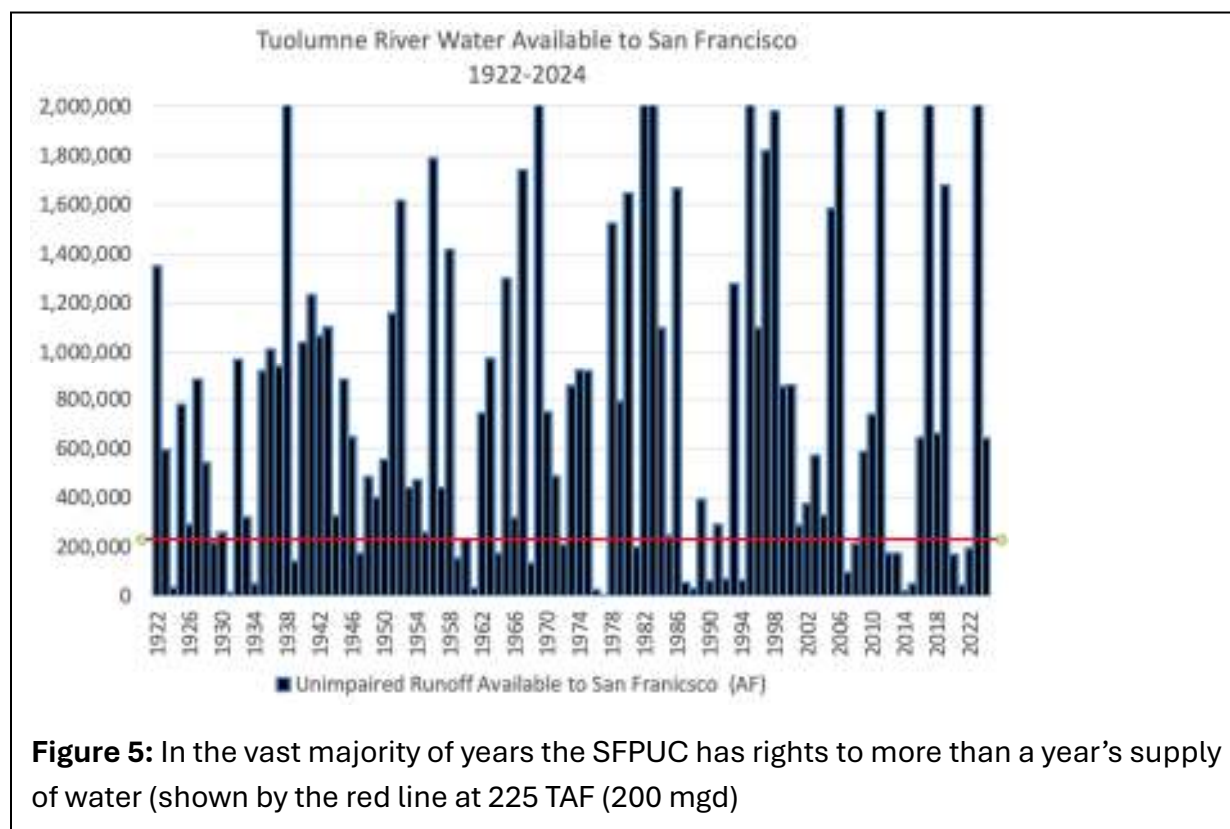
Issue: Statement in error. As shown in figure 5, there was more than 100,000 acre feet of Bay Area storage available during the entire 2012-2015 drought. Had AGM Ritchie included this storage in his chart (figure 2), it would have been clear that at the end of the 2012-2015 drought the SFPUC had supply sufficient for 3 additional exceptionally dry years rather than 2. During the 2020-2022 drought it looks like Bay Area storage stayed in the 165-170 TAF range with no significant declines.⁶

Example J: Inaccurately comparing drought risk compared to a coin flip

Statement: “When you talk about what year type [it’s] going to be, it’s just like a coin flip.”

When said: Multiple times including at 29:53

Issue: No basis in fact and alarmist. A coin flip implies that there’s a 50% chance that it is going to be another drought year that requires the use of additional storage. This is not the case. As shown in figure 5 below where the red line is SFPUC demand at 225 TAF (200 mgd), in 75%+ of the years the SFPUC has water rights to more than a year’s supply of water.



⁶ While I did not have access to daily storage balances during the 2020-22 drought, of the drought conditions reports I was able to check, 3/1/21, 11/9/2021, and 10/31/22, Bay Area storage totals were 166 TAF, 172 TAF, and 169 TAF respectively.

Later AGM Ritchie stated that you just don't know what the next year is going to be like. This statement was more reasonable.



August 31, 2026
Press Releases

Tuolumne River Partners launch next habitat restoration project

As part of a continued commitment to restoring and enhancing habitat for native fish, Tuolumne River Partners Modesto Irrigation District (MID), Turlock Irrigation District (TID) and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), have begun construction on the Powerhouse Riffles Restoration Project, a mainstem Tuolumne River restoration effort designed to improve spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and other native aquatic species.

The approximately \$4.7 million, self-funded project will restore spawning habitat impacted during high river flow events in 1997, 2011 and 2017 by reconstructing riffles and gravel bars and enhancing in-channel habitat complexity and diversity.

Riffles are shallow, fast-moving sections of a river where the water flows over a cobble or gravel bed, creating a choppy surface. Riffles are key habitats for salmon: the churning water traps air and raises oxygen levels in the river, rocks and gravel attract aquatic insects, and juvenile fish gather in riffles to eat the abundant insects and lay their eggs in the clean gravel.

The Powerhouse Riffles Restoration Project will add approximately 25,000 cubic yards of spawning gravel, creating 4.8 acres of new gravel features and restoring approximately 2,400 feet of the Lower Tuolumne River. Coarse sediment mixtures have been carefully selected to maintain channel complexity while allowing the river to naturally evolve.

In addition to new spawning habitat, crews will install approximately 50 large pieces of woody debris throughout the project area to promote channel complexity, improve sediment sorting and provide juvenile fish refuge from predators. Approximately 80 strategically placed boulders will also be added at the downstream ends of select riffles to create improved feeding areas for fish. This in-water work is expected to be completed in October 2026.

"We continue to invest in science-based solutions to improve habitat and support healthy fish populations in the Tuolumne River," said TID General Manager Brad Koehn. "We're building on the success of our previous restoration efforts, and this project is another important step in the investment and early implementation of our comprehensive habitat restoration program."

The Powerhouse Riffles Restoration Project is one of many restoration efforts planned as part of the Tuolumne partners' historic, self-funded \$80 million commitment to design and implement a collaborative, holistic habitat restoration program along the Lower Tuolumne River through the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program and a collaborative memorandum of understanding with USFWS.

River Partners, a renowned California riverway restoration organization, leads the Tuolumne River Partners' multidisciplinary team of biologists, ecologists and other technical experts, including Applied River Sciences, which designed and is leading implementation of the Powerhouse Riffles Restoration Project. Ford Construction is performing construction activities, which kicked off in July and are expected to be completed in October. Stantec is providing environmental monitoring services.

The Tuolumne River Partners are working with the Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of California and the Northern Valley Yokuts/Ohlone tribe to ensure that tribal monitors have an opportunity to inspect any ground disturbing work and to ensure that known or discovered sites of tribal significance are protected.

This same team of project partners were instrumental in the construction and completion of the Tuolumne River Partners' successful Old La Grange Bridge Habitat Restoration Project in 2024.

"Each restoration project contributes to a vibrant and healthier Tuolumne River," said SFPUC General Manager Dennis Herrera. "Through science, collaboration and long-term investments, we're creating better habitat for native fish and delivering lasting benefits for the river and the communities and wildlife that depend on it."

As part of the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program, MID, TID and the SFPUC have joined dozens of other California water agencies committed to collaborating with the State of California to advance agreements that will provide water supply reliability to our communities while enhancing river ecosystems.

"We're adding to what we've learned about the river and how fish respond to habitat improvements. This work reflects our longstanding commitment to responsible stewardship and science-based management of the Tuolumne River," said MID General Manager Jimi Netniss. "By restoring spawning and rearing habitat today, we're helping create a healthier river ecosystem that will support native fish populations well into the future."

By 2030, with the help of experts River Partners and Applied River Sciences, the Tuolumne River Partners aim to develop 77 acres of suitable salmon floodplain rearing habitat and add approximately 100,000 tons of gravel in specific reaches of the river for optimal salmon spawning and rearing.

To learn more about the Tuolumne River Partners' stewardship efforts, please visit tuolumneriverpartners.com.

#

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2026

SFPUC Contact:
communications@sfwater.org

New Six-Mile Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail Opens August 24

Local and regional leaders celebrate completion of latest segment of Bay Area Ridge Trail



SAN MATEO COUNTY, Calif. — Local and regional leaders gathered today to celebrate the completion of the [Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail](#), offering public access to a segment of one of the Bay Area's most scenic and carefully protected landscapes: the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's Peninsula Watershed.

The new six-mile trail, built by the SFPUC, will officially open to the public on Monday, August 24. It also gives visitors an opportunity to learn about the 23,000-acre Peninsula Watershed and its role in the Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System.

The Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail runs on SFPUC property parallel to Skyline Boulevard, extending six miles south from Highway 92. This new out-and-back segment provides a second opportunity for responsible recreation, along with the 10-mile Fifield-Cahill Ridge Trail on SFPUC property north of Highway 92. Free permits for the new, self-guided trail, which are required for entry, can be obtained through a simple online application.

The Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail is the newest addition to the Bay Area Ridge Trail, a 550-mile regional trail envisioned along the ridgelines surrounding San Francisco Bay. Built in coordination with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council, the new trail adds nearly six miles to the regional network, bringing

the total Bay Area Ridge Trail to 413 miles. It also creates new opportunities for hikers, runners, cyclists, and equestrians.

“The Peninsula Watershed is an ecological jewel, and it’s an honor to create a way for the public to experience this remarkable landscape while continuing to protect it for the future,” said SFPUC General Manager Dennis Herrera. “The SFPUC works hard to be a good neighbor. This is just the latest example of that. It’s about striking the right balance between public access, environmental stewardship, and protecting the water supply that 2.7 million Bay Area residents and thousands of businesses rely on every day.”

“The new Ridge Trail section is a delight – showcasing how carefully-designed and managed public access can be harmonious with protecting drinking water and conservation,” said Bay Area Ridge Trail Executive Director Janet McBride. “This exceptional trail represents a major milestone in connecting the Ridge Trail on the Peninsula, and we applaud the SFPUC for their leadership, commitment and success in transforming a vision into a sustainable trail for all to enjoy.”

“We are thrilled to see the Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail open and give residents a new way to experience this special part of San Mateo County,” said San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller. “The Peninsula Watershed provides drinking water to communities in northern San Mateo County, as well as San Francisco, and protects important natural habitat. I thank the SFPUC for its stewardship and for making this new recreational opportunity possible.”

Open-air Classroom

As the trail passes through grasslands, wetlands, coastal scrub, Douglas fir forests, and redwood groves, visitors can enjoy expansive views of the Pacific Ocean, San Francisco Bay, and Crystal Springs Reservoir. Ten interpretive panels along the Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail help visitors learn about the watershed’s plants, wildlife, and history, as well as its role in the Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System. Mile markers help visitors track their progress along the six-mile route. The trail’s six-foot-wide, all-weather surface includes level stretches and gentle grades for easier walking and cycling, along with steeper slopes, hills and curves for those seeking more of a challenge.

Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail Hours, Parking and Permits

The Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail will be open daily from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. beginning Monday, August 24. Annual permits are available at sfpuc.gov/trails.

The northern trailhead offers free parking for 22 standard vehicles, five trailers, and two accessible vehicles. Pit toilets are located near mile markers 2 and 5.

Watershed Discovery Trail (Fifield-Cahill Ridge Trail)

As part of the project, the SFPUC also created the Watershed Discovery Trail, a half-mile trail accessible to people with disabilities. It is adjacent to the Fifield-Cahill Ridge Trail north of Highway 92. Designed for visitors of all abilities, the discovery trail includes an accessible trail surface and interpretive panels with tactile three-dimensional models of watershed wildlife for visitors who are blind or have low vision. Visitors can explore the trail through guided outings led by trained docents.

About the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) is a department of the City and County of San Francisco. It delivers drinking water to 2.7 million people in the San Francisco Bay Area, collects and treats wastewater for the City and County of San Francisco, and meets 75% of the electricity demand in San Francisco with clean energy. The SFPUC's mission is to provide customers with high-quality, efficient and reliable water, power, and sewer services in a manner that values environmental and community interests, and sustains the resources entrusted to the agency's care. Learn more at sfpuc.gov.

About the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council

The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council is a nonprofit dedicated to completing, connecting, and sustaining a multi-use trail along the ridgelines encircling San Francisco Bay. Founded in 1987, the Ridge Trail links people, parks, and open spaces across nine Bay Area counties. Learn more at ridgetrail.org.

About the Peninsula Watershed

Located in San Mateo County 13 miles south of San Francisco, the 23,000-acre Peninsula Watershed protects four drinking water reservoirs and is home to some of the Bay Area's most sensitive and rare native species. The watershed is part of the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush, the original people of the San Francisco Peninsula.

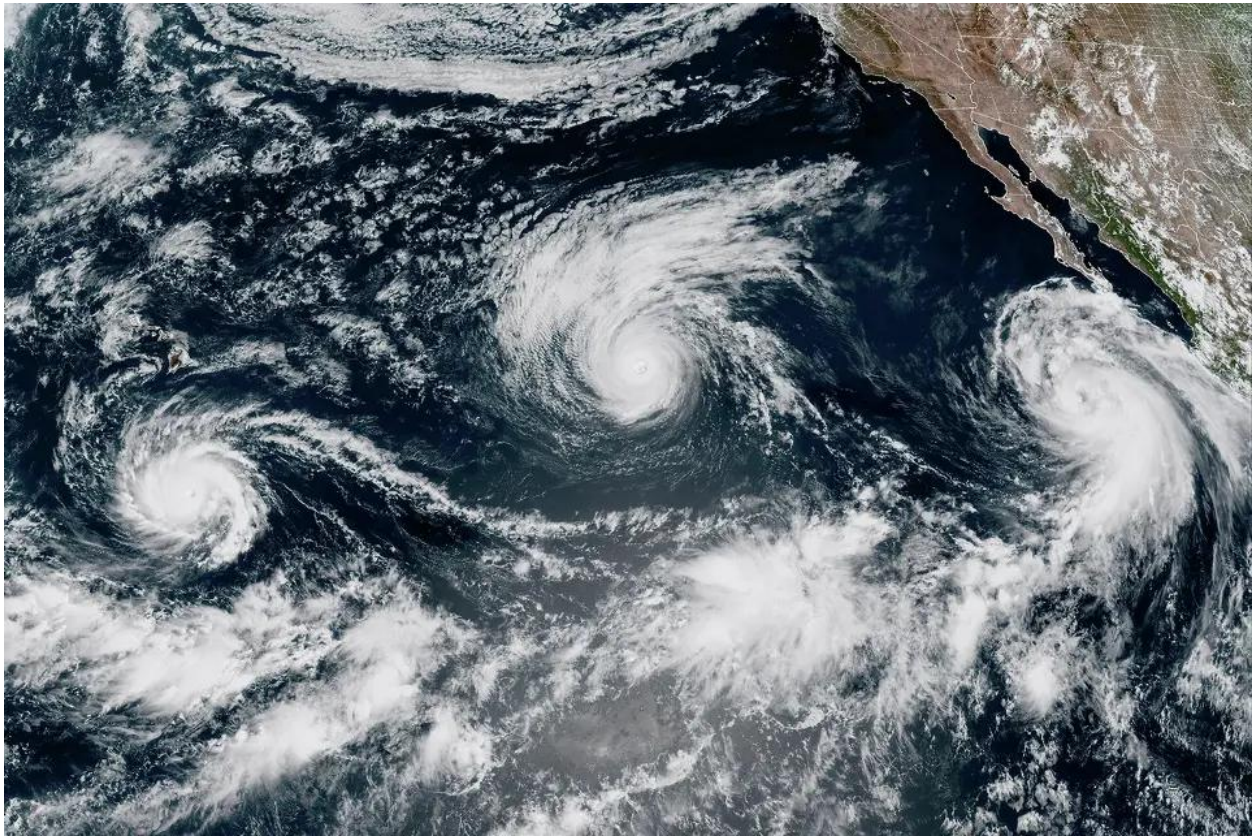
The Peninsula Watershed spans forested ridges, coastal scrub, and native grasslands that harbor over 165 species of birds, 800 species of plants and trees, 50 species of mammals, and 30 species of reptiles and amphibians. Managed by the SFPUC, the watershed is a designated State Fish and Game Refuge and a protected area within the UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve.

###

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[This year's unusual El Niño just got even stronger](#)

SF Gate | September 10, 2026 | Anna FitzGerald Guth



This satellite image shows Hurricane Lowell, Hurricane Karina and Tropical Storm Marie all spinning at once in the Pacific Ocean on Sept. 2, 2026. CIRA/NOAA/AP

Temperatures in the Pacific Ocean are still rising as this year's El Niño strengthens.

A monthly outlook published Thursday by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center gives a 75% chance that El Niño will become "historic" from October to December.

Even since August, forecasters have lifted the odds of El Niño exceeding the strength of all previous events on record since 1950.

"It's not the hottest yet, but it could become the hottest," Alexander Gershunov, a research meteorologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego, told SFGATE. "It hasn't matured yet completely. It's going to mature over the next few months as far as sea surface temperatures go."

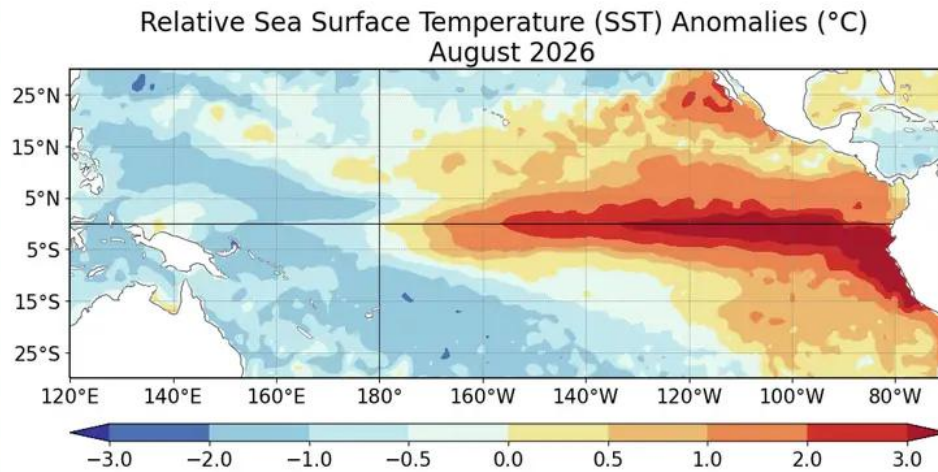


Figure 1. Average relative sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (°C) for August 2026. Anomalies are computed with respect to the 1991-2020 base period monthly means. Data: OISSTv2.1.
https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_update/Monthly_RelSSTA_map-hr.png

On Sept. 10, the Climate Prediction Center showed the average relative sea surface temperature anomalies for August 2026. Red depicts the heat. Courtesy of Climate Prediction Center

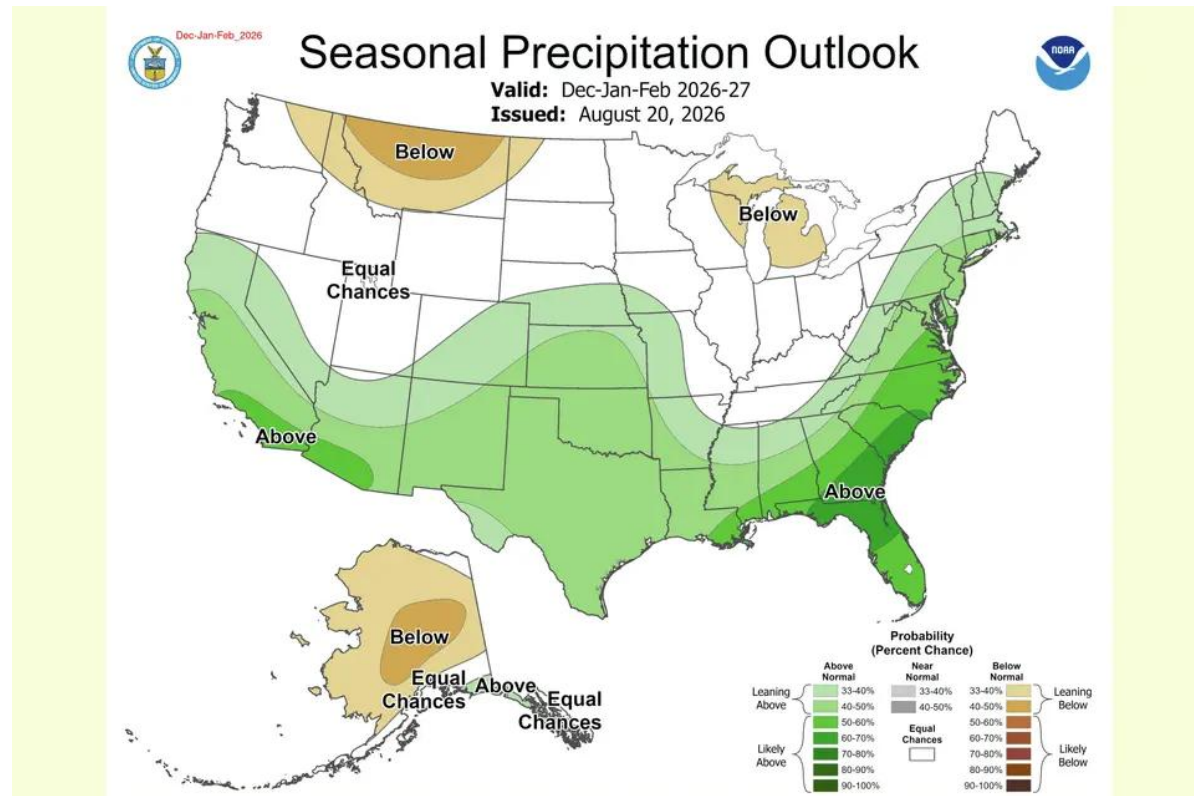
The spike in the Pacific's heat during El Niño years can drive winter weather in California and across the globe. Technically, El Niño is the warm phase of a natural pattern that emerges in the central and eastern tropical Pacific. During El Niño conditions, weak winds are associated with above-average ocean surface temperatures. Year to year, this seasonal phenomenon alternates with an opposite phase, La Niña, and with neutral conditions.

This El Niño emerged in June. By August, the Climate Prediction Center reported a greater than 90% chance that El Niño would rank as "very strong" during the upcoming fall and winter. Thursday's report was largely the same, but it raised the previous 69% chance that this El Niño will break strength records up to a 75% chance of that outcome.

Michelle L'Heureux, a physical scientist for the Climate Prediction Center, explained the relationship between the strength of the event and its impacts on the climate.

"Stronger El Niño events can only make certain outcomes more likely; they do not guarantee them," L'Heureux wrote to SFGATE. "Also stronger El Niño events do not necessarily make the impact more intense — for example, we cannot say that El Niño will lead to more intense rainfall over someone's house. But we can say that more rainfall, particularly weather events that repeat or recur over the course of a season, can be made more likely by El Niño."

El Niño's global effects vary widely depending on the region. In California, residents pay the most attention to the event's influence on winter rain and snow. Generally, El Niño causes the jet stream over the Pacific to shift southward, raising the odds of a wetter season in Southern California. The Climate Prediction Center's seasonal outlook does indeed show a lean toward above-average precipitation for Southern California from October to December. Those odds of rain and snow not only rise but also spread across all of California this winter.



NOAA's Climate Prediction Center released this seasonal outlook on Aug. 20, 2026, showing the likelihood of above-normal precipitation across California. NOAA

L'Heureux explained that the timing of this precipitation will likely trail behind El Niño's peak strength in the ocean. "The outlooks show that the strongest probabilities for increased precipitation in California are during December-March," L'Heureux wrote. "There is generally a slight lag between the Pacific [sea surface temperatures] and the impacts over the United States."

There are many other impacts on California that scientists expect to emerge in the coming months. El Niño has also already intensified the eastern Pacific hurricane season, devastating the Hawaiian Islands and pushing massive waves into Southern California. Biologists are bracing against the severe consequences anticipated for marine ecosystems, which have already been under strain from a persistent marine heat wave in California waters.

And oceanographers are also expecting El Niño to temporarily raise sea levels and bump up winter wave energy, threatening the coastline with erosion and flooding, especially during storms.

After El Niño first emerged earlier this year in the waters along the equator in the Pacific, experts now say they've likely found the first evidence that the event has started to affect the waters off California's coast, too. Daniel Rudnick, a physical oceanographer for Scripps, told SFGATE that unusual heat in deep water off the Southern California coast has appeared in recent weeks; it likely doesn't belong to the existing marine heat wave. He's tracking the trends closely with robotic underwater gliders.

"I'm actually starting to see one of the signs of El Niño arriving," Rudnick told SFGATE. "Up until recently, the heat anomaly has mainly been in the upper 100 meters. I'm starting to see it go deeper, and that is a sign of El Niño."

#

New digital tool shows exactly where California's water goes—and how climate change might disrupt it

Phys.org | September 7, 2026 | Kara Manke, University of California - Berkeley



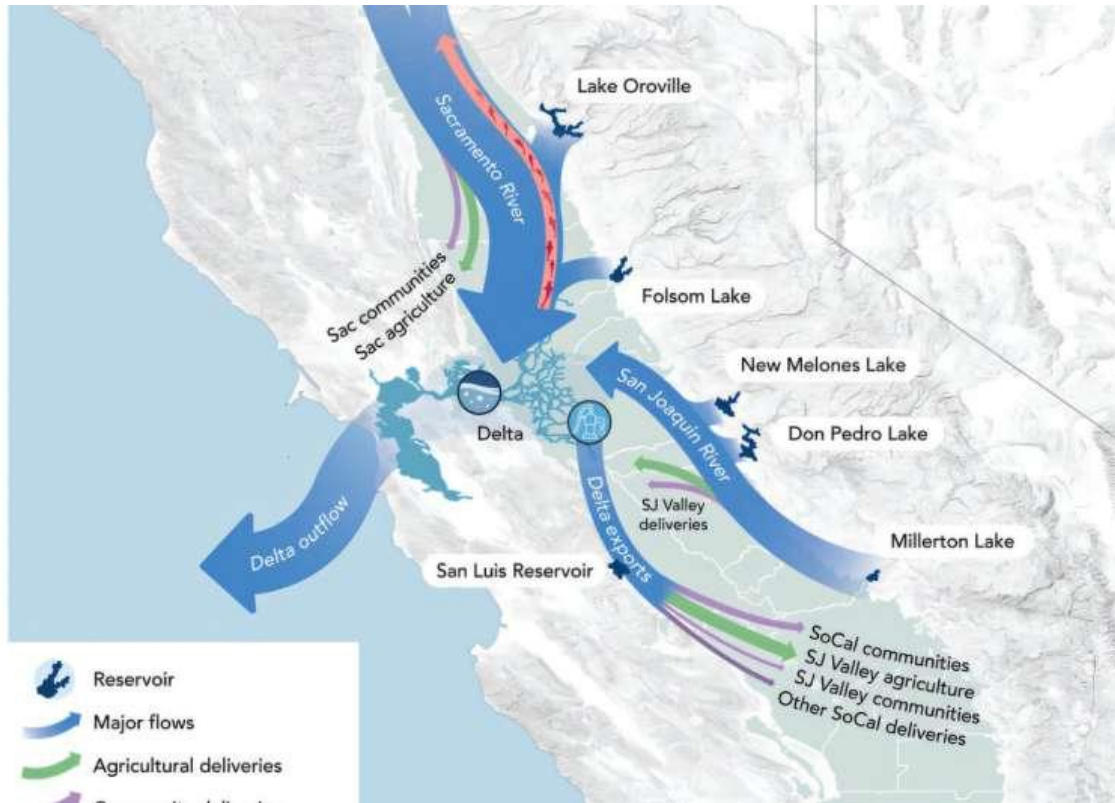
A drone view of the Tidal Habitat Restoration Project in Solano County, California, which supports the recovery of Delta-dependent fish and wildlife species. Credit: Andrew Nixon/California Department of Water Resources

Water has always been one of California's most contested resources. For more than a century, battles have raged over how much of the state's water should be diverted to farmland, pumped into cities or used to conserve aquatic ecosystems—and at times, these clashes have even led to violence. The state's water system consists of a dizzying array of reservoirs, rivers, dams and aqueducts, making it challenging even for experts to understand the trade-offs of different management decisions.

To top it off, climate change is intensifying California's already dramatic dry and wet cycles. After surviving more than a decade of severe drought, the state is now bracing for the impact of this year's super El Niño, which is likely to bring above-average rainfall this winter.

A UC Berkeley-led project aims to make it easier for all Californians to understand the state's complex water system and have a say in how this critical resource is used. The Collaboratory for Equity in Water Allocation (COEQWAL) team has spent the past three years working with stakeholders from around the state. They are creating tools that help illustrate where California's water is going, the impacts of different water priorities and how climate change will shift the water landscape.

At an event in Sacramento on Sept. 3, the collaboration unveiled the new COEQWAL website, which includes educational modules and reference guides explaining California's water system. It also visualizes the outcomes of more than 100 water management scenarios modeled using the California Department of Water Resources' CalSim 3 planning tool.



An illustration from the new COEQWAL online tool showing the inflows and outflows of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Credit: COEQWAL project

These scenarios give the public the ability to explore how specific water policy decisions—such as limiting groundwater pumping in the Central Valley or increasing river flows to protect salmon—might affect water users and ecosystems around the state.

"CalSim is a very complex model in part because it's a very complex system, but the way it was designed makes it almost impossible for anyone other than a highly specialized engineer to interact with the data," said project lead Ted Grantham, an associate professor of cooperative extension in Berkeley's Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management.

"A big part of what we wanted to do with this project is explore a much broader range of scenarios [than have been published by the Department of Water Resources] to help people understand not only how water is managed today, but what's possible in the future."

In designing the scenarios, the team partnered with nearly 100 organizations around the state, running workshops to understand their water priorities and interests. The scenarios explore a

variety of water management approaches, including increasing river flows to benefit fish and aquatic ecosystems; improving access to drinking water; examining the impacts of state regulations on sustainable groundwater use; and protecting the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

"It's really, really unique to be asked, 'What if we managed water for entirely different priorities than we do today?'" said Jonathan Rosenfield, science director at San Francisco Baykeeper, who participated in a number of the workshops.

"Usually, when you get access to the CalSim model, you're creating alternative management scenarios that really differ around the margins. It's not, 'What if we reoriented our water management to a different kind of future?' This is a real example of the university helping the public and decision-makers understand their options."

The findings are all available on the public COEQWAL website, where users can access, filter and investigate scenario outcomes and trade-offs with the help of advanced data visualization tools.

"Being able to have access to some of this modeling and understand the complex elements that currently interact and influence the Delta watershed is going to be very, very powerful for tiny organizations like ours," said Morgen Snyder, director of policy and programs at Restore the Delta.

"I am really impressed with the way the COEQWAL team has brought together a myriad of different stakeholders—water contractors, water districts, environmental justice groups and tribal organizations—and used science to find a common path forward."

Grantham hopes the tool will enable more informed discussions about the future of California's water and debunk some of the simplified arguments and misconceptions that people have about what could happen if priorities were to shift.

In fact, he was surprised to find that the system was often more resilient than might be expected, perhaps due to the deep interconnectedness of the state's many waterways.

"We found that a lot of these strategies don't have as big of an impact as you might expect," Grantham said. "It shows that we're not risking putting the entire system at collapse by sustainably managing groundwater, protecting the environment or ensuring that everyone has access to clean drinking water. We can actually do these things. They may come with trade-offs, but they are trade-offs that we can manage."

Moving forward, the COEQWAL project team aims to continue the work, now with a focus on tribal engagement and better modeling Indigenous relationships with water.

In hearing from Indigenous representatives at COEQWAL workshops, the team was struck by how models like CalSim—which break down complex systems into smaller, quantitative pieces—are unable to reflect how Indigenous nations experience water as part of interconnected ecological and cultural systems.

"We want to explore how we can better integrate or weave these values and relationships to water into how we represent them in these models," Grantham said. "We'd like to try to draw attention to the fact that these systems are much more than just a volume of acre-feet being delivered from point A to point B."

#

How local researchers are turning fog into water

Axios San Francisco | September 2, 2026 | Jasmyne Eastmond



A fog-shrouded Golden Gate Bridge last month in SF. Photo: Tayfun Coskun/Anadolu via Getty Images

Fog is as definitively SF as cable cars, sourdough and steep hills. And local researchers have spent the last few years [capturing water from the region's defining coastal mist](#) to test whether it can become a useful local water source.

Why it matters: As climate change puts more pressure on water supplies, Bay Area agencies are testing increasingly local ways to conserve water — including pulling it straight from the fog.

- [About 85% of San Francisco's drinking water](#) travels from Hetch Hetchy in Yosemite. Fog harvesting taps into a source closer to home.

How it works: Mesh nets capture tiny droplets suspended in the air.

- As fog blows through, the droplets collect, combine and drip into containers — or directly onto plants.

Zoom in: The North Coast County Water District began working with researchers back in 2021 to install collectors at several elevated water tank sites in Pacifica.

- Milagra Ridge proved the strongest site, capturing about 350 liters in June and July 2025.

- UC Santa Cruz researchers also placed 12 fog collectors at homes, schools and community gardens around Pacifica that same year.

Zoom out: Fog harvesting has been tested for decades in arid parts of Chile, where coastal communities have captured dense fog as a water source.

What they're saying: "Water conservation in such a unique way is very Pacifica," North Coast County Water District general manager Adrienne Carr told Axios.

- UC Santa Cruz environmental chemist Peter Weiss-Penzias said even a small amount of captured water can matter because it arrives during the dry season.
- "Even though it's a small water input, it comes at a time of year when we don't get any rain at all," Weiss-Penzias told Axios.

Caveat: Fog harvesting is highly location-dependent.

- Carr said some Pacifica participants collected so little fog that researchers removed their equipment, while one resident near Milagra Ridge gathered enough to water strawberries.

If you know SF microclimates, you get the problem.

- Weiss-Penzias has seen the same pattern across the Peninsula. Milagra Ridge is "one of the wettest, foggiest places we've ever observed," he said, while nearby San Bruno produced hardly any water.

Weiss-Penzias' warning for would-be fog harvesters: If a site isn't already extremely foggy — think moisture dripping from trees — houses, trees, valleys and other barriers may prevent enough fog from reaching a collector to produce meaningful water.

What's next: Fog water may first find a role in gardens and irrigation, where it can be used without the treatment required for drinking-water systems.

- Pacifica could eventually consider rebates for residents who install small collectors, Carr said.
- Weiss-Penzias has also launched Fog Catcher Solutions to supply collectors to people interested in harvesting fog.
- Meanwhile, Weiss-Penzias and his UC Santa Cruz team are studying the water quality of Pacific coastal fog as part of a five-year project that could help clarify other potential uses.

###

Opinion: Why California's next El Niño won't end the state's water challenges

'The real question isn't how much water weather systems like El Niño will bring to California; it's how much water we can capture before the next drought inevitably arrives.'

Mercury News | August 19, 2026 | Valerie Pryor



Eugene Louie — San Jose Mercury News Aftermath of an El Niño storm in San Jose in February 1998.
Author

Every time a major El Niño is forecast, Californians ask the same question: Will this finally end the drought?

After years of water restrictions and headlines about shrinking reservoirs, a winter full of storms sounds like good news for California. A wet winter can ease immediate water shortages, but it's often followed by years of dry conditions. Climate change is making weather whiplash even more dramatic, bringing fewer but more intense storms separated by longer stretches of dry weather.

The real question isn't how much water weather systems like El Niño will bring to California; it's how much water we can capture before the next drought inevitably arrives. That's why California's response matters. Last year, the state acted boldly by enacting Senate Bill 72, a law that establishes a statewide target of nine million acre-feet of additional water supply by 2040.

Now, California must deliver on that goal, and doing so will take sustained leadership, accountability, funding and collaboration across every level of government and with stakeholders to prepare for weather and climate changes.

For the East Bay and greater Bay Area, we need to be ready to capture the rainfall El Niño brings and store as much water as we safely can for dry periods that follow. That means capturing rainwater that would otherwise run off, recharging the Livermore Valley groundwater basin when extra water is available, and making sure we have the pipes, pumps and storage capacity needed to move and save that water before the storms arrive. But we can't do it alone. The state needs to support these efforts with larger, connected water projects and a long-term plan that prepares California for a future of more unpredictable weather.

Weather challenges keep getting more complicated. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says there's an 80% chance this El Niño develops into one of the strongest on record. For Southern California, that could mean significantly more rainfall and potential flooding. For Northern California, including the Bay Area, the picture is less predictable. El Niño doesn't always translate into above-average rainfall or a record Sierra snowpack here.

Zone 7, which serves the Tri-Valley communities of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton and parts of San Ramon, receives approximately 80% of its water through the State Water Project, a statewide system serving 27 million Californians that depends on rain and snow falling hundreds of miles away before flowing through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Missed opportunity

In the winter of 2022-23, nine atmospheric rivers delivered an estimated 31 trillion gallons of water to California in just three weeks — enough to dramatically improve drought conditions, but arriving so quickly that it also caused widespread flooding, landslides and 21 deaths. The Bay Area experienced its wettest three-week period in 161 years, with San Francisco and Oakland each receiving more than 17 inches of rain.

Some of that water was captured and used to recharge groundwater and fill reservoirs, but much more flowed through creeks and rivers and ultimately out to the Bay. During this winter season, Zone 7 saw more than 180,000 acre-feet (59,000 million gallons) leave the Tri-Valley area and was only able to capture and store about 5,000 acre-feet of this water.

With more robust infrastructure, we could have easily tripled this amount and still provided ample flows for environmental uses. Now imagine this multiplied by the entire Bay Area. And this doesn't even count State Water Project water that Zone 7 was not able to store.

The lesson is not simply that we need more storage in the Bay Area. We need a connected system — from local stormwater capture and groundwater recharge to regional and statewide conveyance and storage — capable of moving and saving more of that water when it arrives, so it can become a resource during the dry years that follow.

Preserve, protect

Those storms were a reminder that flood protection remains essential but also that the water rushing through our rivers during a storm presents an opportunity to strengthen our water supply for the dry years that inevitably follow, rather than letting it flow unused out to the river. For us, flood protection and water supply aren't competing priorities. They're two sides of the same challenge. For decades, California's default answer to drought has been to ask people to conserve, and Californians have responded by making changes to their property and lifestyle. Reliable water powers our economy, grows our food, supports our communities and protects our environment. It is the most critical infrastructure for our environment and well-being.

The challenge is to shift from delay and indecision to implementation. We know what will happen if we fail to implement a state water plan. Research from UC Davis and UC Merced estimates that failing to close that gap could cost California up to \$14.5 billion annually and more than 67,000 jobs.

Sites Reservoir is an example of California following through on its promise to residents to prepare for what comes next and deliver on the state's water supply target. Sites is designed to capture excess flows from the Sacramento River during future wet years, with the capability to hold up to 1.5 million acre-feet of water, enough to supply millions of homes for a year, and make that water available during droughts when Californians need it most. Currently, California does not have this level of infrastructure to capture events of this magnitude.

No single project will solve California's water challenges. California's water future depends on building a portfolio of projects that work together to capture water when it's abundant and make it available when it's not.

We can't control whether El Niño arrives or how strong it becomes, but we can decide whether we're ready. The next governor and Legislature must prioritize the state water plan, make necessary changes to expedite projects and encourage conservation, and provide the funding that will be required.

Over the next 100 days, Californians will hear from future leaders about their plans for the state. Let's make sure that implementing the state's water plan is part of the discussion and the commitment to have a water system that can adapt to El Niño and other challenges remains a high priority of the state.

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Valerie Pryor is the general manager of Zone 7 Water Agency (officially the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Zone 7), the wholesale water supplier and flood protection agency for the Tri-Valley region in eastern Alameda County.

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Planning for California's Water Future Starts Now

The Department of Water Resources submitted this guest column to share information about the 2028 California Water Plan and encourage member agency participation.

ACWA | August 21, 2026 | Cindy Messer

California has never had the luxury of taking water for granted. Every generation has faced its own water challenges and responded by building the infrastructure, partnerships and policies needed to keep our communities, economy, agriculture and environment thriving.

Now it's our turn.

California's water system is being tested in new ways. We're experiencing rapid swings between floods and droughts, sometimes within the same season. Warmer winter storms are bringing more rain instead of snow, reducing mountain snowpack that has long served as one of California's largest natural reservoirs while increasing the risk of devastating floods.

The infrastructure and planning frameworks that served California for decades were designed for a climate that no longer exists. Meeting today's challenges will require more than responding to the next drought or flood emergency. It requires a forward-looking, comprehensive statewide strategy built on sound science, comprehensive data, and a shared commitment to ongoing collaboration and implementation.

Recognizing this need, the California Legislature, through Senate Bill 72, directed the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in 2025 to fundamentally modernize the California Water Plan. The goal is ambitious but clear: transform the Water Plan into an action-oriented roadmap to meet a statewide water supply target that will help improve reliability and climate resilience for decades to come.

That transformation is already underway.

DWR is rebuilding the California Water Plan from the ground up using the best available science, rigorous analysis and meaningful collaboration with water agencies, Tribes, local governments, communities, nongovernmental organizations and partners across California. Together, we're identifying current and future water supply challenges, evaluating practical solutions to stem those gaps to help guide investments where they can deliver the greatest benefit. Starting this fall, DWR will host public, in-person forums across California to hear directly from local water managers and other community groups.

This robust planning process will produce three key outcomes: a shared statewide understanding of future water supplies and demands; strategies to help achieve California's goal of adding 9 million acre-feet of water supply by 2040; and an evaluation of the key actions needed to close future water supply gaps.

This work will unfold over multiple planning cycles. The 2028 California Water Plan will establish the qualitative foundation while planning, technical analysis and engagement continue. The 2033 Water Plan will build on that work by evaluating regional portfolios of projects, strengthening partnerships, and providing information federal, state and local agencies need to make informed investment decisions.

Like ACWA's Vision for Our Water Future, the modernized California Water Plan is an opportunity to bring Californians together around practical solutions that strengthen communities, support agriculture, protect the environment, and prepare our infrastructure for a changing climate. We look forward to partnering with ACWA as this work moves forward.

Whether you manage water, farm the land, steward California's ecosystems, represent a community, or simply care about the future of our state, your voice matters. We encourage you to visit CaliforniaWaterPlan.com, learn more about this effort, and join us as we build a more resilient water future for California.

#

Newsom's big water deal is in trouble

Politico | September 10, 2026 | Camille Von Kaenel



Gavin Newsom's signature water deal has problems. | Rich Pedroncelli/AP

THE DEAL IS SPRINGING A LEAK: Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature water deal is starting to unravel just months before he leaves office.

The governor's plan sought to direct billions of state, federal and water district dollars toward restoring the sensitive Bay-Delta ecosystem while providing farms and cities with more flexible access to the water. Now, two of its most important partners, the federal government and Westlands Water District, the largest irrigation district in the Central Valley, are threatening to walk away.

This development puts Newsom in a bind as he tries to cement a water legacy built around making California's water supply more reliable — an agenda that has occasionally put him on the same side as the Trump administration.

The governor has long pressed the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt the plan, which is based on a deal he struck with California water agencies in 2022. The basic bargain was simple: Water agencies would provide more money for fish and habitat restoration in the

Bay-Delta in exchange for a more collaborative alternative to the state's existing strict rules that limit how much water they can pull from the region for farms and cities.

But changes regulators made to the plan in August, including giving the state more oversight over water operations, have water agencies and their allies calling foul.

Central Valley GOP Reps. Vince Fong and David Valadao are calling the regulators' latest changes a "bait and switch," and the Trump administration said it won't participate in or fund the program if state regulators move ahead with the latest draft.

Bureau of Reclamation Principal Deputy Commissioner Aubrey Bettencourt said the new version of the plan "disregards federal law, undermines negotiated certainty, and threatens the viability" of federal water operations in a letter last week. Westlands Water District, one of the Central Valley's most powerful irrigation agencies, followed up by saying it will also end its participation unless the state reverses course.

Even the water agencies that have not yet explicitly threatened to pull out of the deal are warning that they're not happy.

Jennifer Pierre, general manager of the State Water Contractors, which represents the 27 agencies that get water from the state government, said the group has identified "very concerning components" and hopes they can be resolved before it is in a position to "enthusiastically support" the final plan. "This is different than what we proposed, so we're trying to get to a place where it's workable," she said in an interview.

Newsom's top water officials have acknowledged the conflict but are still projecting confidence. "Details matter, so I do think it will be important for the Water Board to consider these public comments," Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot said in an interview. But he was not "overly concerned," he said, because talks between the Newsom and Trump administrations had not yet completely broken down, and there had been "constructive" discussions on a possible resolution.

Crowfoot said he remained "laser-focused" on getting the plan approved by the Water Board by the end of Newsom's term.

"We have a strong plan moving forward, and we're staying the course," he said. "Having worked in California water for 20 years at this point, I'm convinced that this more comprehensive approach is better for water users and the environment."

Environmentalists have always opposed Newsom's plan out of concern it could harm sensitive ecosystems and generally prefer strict rules that determine how much water must flow down the rivers at key times to keep endangered species healthy.

Now, Barry Nelson, a policy adviser with the advocacy nonprofit Golden State Salmon Association, says the latest threats expose a deeper problem: that Newsom's deal won't work. The governor's original deal planned for about \$2.9 billion in funding over its first eight years, including roughly \$1.4 billion from the state. But the funding and overall success partly depends on participation from the agencies and governments that signed on.

"We're talking about the risk of the public providing billions of dollars for a program that is just a sham," Nelson said.

The Water Board is scheduled to vote on the plan Oct. 28 and 29. Spokesperson Jackie Carpenter said the Board could still propose additional changes to the plan after a Sept. 18 deadline for written comments or in response to oral comments at its October meeting.

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NO DEAL: Bay Delta Plan

Politico | September 8, 2026

The Central Valley's largest and most powerful irrigation district is pulling out of a deal with Newsom to direct more money towards habitat restoration in the Bay-Delta region.

Westlands Water District announced late Friday that it was calling off the agreement after the State Water Resources Control Board proposed changes to the plan that, among other things, would increase state oversight. Westlands General Manager Allison Febbo said in a statement that the changes upend "the balance the parties spent years working to achieve."

The announcement came shortly after the Trump administration also threatened to withdraw support and two Central Valley representatives called the Board's proposed changes a "bait and switch."

The escalation spells trouble for Newsom, who has cast the plan as a signature water policy and generally been aligned with the Trump administration on the need to send more water to the Central Valley.

The 2022 deal Newsom struck with major water agencies to overhaul the management of the Bay-Delta region was meant to give them an alternative to established rules that protect endangered fish species while also sending water to cities and farms. In exchange for the greater flexibility, the deal called for the agencies to provide more money for habitat restoration in the sensitive ecosystem.

Environmental groups fiercely oppose the plan, though for opposite reasons: They are concerned the plan will harm already declining populations of endangered species.

The Board is set to consider the plan at its meeting in late October.

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Fong, Valadao throw cold water on state plan to rework flows from delta

Bakersfield.com | September 4, 2026 | John Cox

Two locally elected congressmen jumped Thursday into one of the Central Valley's most contentious water issues, saying a proposal released by the state last month "moved the goalposts" set up four years ago in an agreement governing water flows south from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Reps. Vince Fong and David Valadao issued a news release accusing the State Water Resources Control Board of walking away from the agreement they said was based on science and struck in good faith.

"Central Valley families are the ones who will pay the price for this bait and switch," their joint statement read.

A spokeswoman for the agency said the board had not seen Thursday afternoon's statement and declined to comment. She noted the proposal at issue is undergoing public review and that the board expects to vote on it next month.

The controversy stems from longstanding complaints by valley farmers that state government is unnecessarily limiting their water flows from the delta in order to protect endangered fish.

The plan released Aug. 19 is the second phase of the Bay-Delta Plan, short for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary Water Quality Control Plan. It revises a 2006 plan for balancing the needs of the delta's ecosystem with the water demands of farmers and communities in the valley, including members of the Kern County Water Agency.

According to the board, changes now under consideration include a "voluntary agreement" option affecting flow and habitat commitments, as well as an alternative "regulatory pathway" also on the table that offers separate, non-voluntary water rights.

Water users that opt for a voluntary agreement would be enrolled in the state's Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program. It is an eight-year commitment that offers greater flows along with habitat restoration and water purchase programs to protect fish and wildlife.

The board said that, upon initial implementation, existing water rights-holders, such as KCWA, would see downward supply adjustments except in wetter conditions.

Water agencies without an approved, voluntary agreement would be subject to a certain flow requirement for the applicable watershed: 40% for the lower San Joaquin River, adjustable to between 30% and 50%, or 55% for the Sacramento/Delta, adaptable to between 45% and 65%, plus possible supply adjustments.

The news release from Fong, R-Bakersfield, and Valadao, R-Hanford, did not offer details but said last month's proposal would change how water contributions are counted while reducing credit that water users receive for commitments they have already made.

The release added that the board's plan "removes the limits on future demands — leaving more uncertainty than when negotiations began."

"An unelected board in Sacramento is once again telling farmers, workers and businesses that their water needs come last," the release stated. "Water districts and communities across California need certainty, not shifting rules that guarantee years of delay and litigation."

"Higher costs and more regulation are not the answer," it continued. "While the federal government is working to deliver more water to Californians, the State Water Board keeps finding new ways to take it away. The board must stop jeopardizing California's water supply and deliver a viable path forward."

#

JOINT STATEMENT: Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program could be the best path forward for California if key concerns are addressed



Maven's Notebook | August 20, 2026

Public water agencies urge the State Water Board to resolve any remaining outstanding issues for continued statewide support.

California's water future depends on our ability to move beyond decades of conflict and instead pursue collaborative, science-based solutions that balance environmental stewardship, and reliable and affordable water supplies needed to sustain local communities and agricultural productivity. The State Water Board is on the verge of a collaborative and science-based Bay-Delta solution, but it needs to resolve any remaining issues for public water agencies throughout California to continue our unified support and prepare to implement the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program (HRL Program).

In 2022, a diverse interest group, including public water agencies (PWAs) throughout California, executed the Memorandum of Understanding Advancing a Term Sheet for the Voluntary Agreements to Update and Implement the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan, and Other Related Actions. The HRL Program, as outlined in the 2022 MOU framework, represents Water Working for California—the best path forward for the Bay-Delta by acknowledging that balancing water supply reliability and lasting ecosystem improvements require both strategic flow management and meaningful habitat restoration.

The State Water Board's release of documents today is an important step forward in the Bay-Delta Plan update process. The PWAs will thoroughly review the update and provide comments to ensure the updated Bay-Delta Plan remains consistent with the HRL Program as proposed, supports adaptive management in the Bay-Delta, and ensures reasonable protection for all beneficial uses.

"The HRL Program as proposed in the 2022 MOU was thoughtfully and collaboratively developed and offers the science-based approach California needs," said Jennifer Pierre, General Manager of the State Water Contractors (SWC). "We are eager to review the details of the State Water Board's revisions to the HRL Program to assess how these changes affect our original proposal and how environmental and water supply co-benefits can be achieved."

"California has a rare opportunity to replace conflict with collaboration. The HRL Program represents a constructive path forward, but its success will ultimately depend on whether the final framework is grounded in sound science, operational flexibility, and a genuine commitment to protecting both California's natural resources and our water supply reliability. We can achieve both—but only if we get the details right," said Federico Barajas, Executive Director of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority.

“For California’s water users, the original promise of the HRL Program has been a preferred approach for managing historically competing interests. It is a tough needle to thread,” said Johnny Amaral, CEO of the Friant Water Authority. “But details, especially those that are intended to result in the reliability that cities and farms need, matter. We remain at the table and ready to work through the outstanding issues but ultimately cannot agree to a plan that doesn’t represent the real needs of California’s cities and farms.”

“The Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program offers a new way forward for California to manage our water resources in concert with our landscape. We encourage the State Water Board to provide a clear path for future adaptive management in the Bay-Delta that provides certainty to water suppliers and the environment throughout the state. With our mutual commitment to more strategic flows, accelerated habitat restoration on our landscapes, and accountability, we can work together to meet the needs of our environment and local communities throughout California,” said David Guy, President of the Northern California Water Association.

The State Water Contractors is a statewide, non-profit association of 27 public agencies from Northern, Central and Southern California that purchase water under contract from the California State Water Project. Collectively the State Water Contractors deliver water to more than 27 million residents throughout the state and more than 750,000 acres of agricultural land. For more information on the State Water Contractors, please visit www.swc.org.

The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority was established in January of 1992 and consists of 27 member agencies within the western San Joaquin, San Benito, and Santa Clara Valleys, that provide water service to approximately 1,200,000 acres of irrigated agriculture, 2.5 million people, including many living in economically disadvantaged communities, and 135,000 acres of managed wetlands of importance to the Pacific Flyway.

The Friant Division of the Central Valley Project delivers water to over one million acres of irrigable farmland on the eastside of the southern San Joaquin Valley from approximately Chowchilla on the north to the Tehachapi Mountains on the south. Friant Water Authority represents the majority of Friant Division water users and maintains and operates the Friant-Kern Canal, which supplies San Joaquin River water stored at Millerton Lake to more than 30 irrigation districts and cities, and to 15,000 family farms.

Northern California Water Association (NCWA) represents the water suppliers and local governments across the Sacramento Valley. NCWA works with many partners to advance healthy rivers, landscapes and communities through collaborative, science-based water management that supports reliable water supplies, thriving ecosystems, local economies and California’s agricultural heritage.

BAY-DELTA PLAN: State Water Board releases final draft plan to protect California's Bay-Delta, water and wildlife

Groundbreaking proposal combines science, habitat restoration, innovation and enforceable protections to safeguard the Sacramento River and Delta

State Water Board | August 20, 2026

California took a major step today to protect one of the state's most important and threatened ecosystems as the State Water Resources Control Board released its final draft plan to modernize water quality protections for the Sacramento River and San Francisco Bay-Delta.

The State Water Board will consider adopting the updated Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Watershed (Bay-Delta Plan) at a public hearing Oct. 28-29.

The Bay-Delta is the heart of California's water system. It supports some of the state's most iconic and threatened fish and wildlife, sustains tribes and other local communities, and provides water for nearly 30 million Californians and 4 million acres of farmland. These benefits are essential to the economy and environment.

But the Delta and its tributaries have long been under threat. Native fish populations have suffered, habitat has been lost, and the watershed faces increasing pressure from climate change and competing demands for water.

The board's proposal combines strong standards, new partnerships, major investments and rigorous accountability to protect the Bay-Delta, water supply and wildlife.

"This is California's opportunity to manage the Bay-Delta for the twenty-first century," said State Water Board Executive Director Eric Oppenheimer. "We can protect rivers, fish, wildlife and tribal cultural uses while building greater resilience and security for communities, farms and the state's economy. This proposal combines the best available science with adaptability, collaboration and accountability. We are creating a framework that can protect the Bay-Delta and adapt as conditions change."

If adopted, the updated plan would:

- **Establish enforceable protections** to ensure that water right holders meet a clear environmental standard, either through an approved voluntary pathway or regulatory pathway.
- **Harness creativity and collaboration** to allow water users, farmers, landowners, conservation organizations and government agencies to develop and implement projects that deliver environmental benefits.
- **Recognize "Tribal Tradition and Culture"** as a protected beneficial use of water for the first time, reflecting the deep cultural connections between tribes, rivers and native fish such as salmon.

- **Lessen periods of reduced water supply** for municipalities and water districts while maintaining protection for Delta flows in drier times.
- **Focus on the protection of fish and wildlife**, including increased river flows and restoration of more than 27,000 acres of aquatic habitat.
- **Facilitate \$2.9 billion** in restoration and related actions through the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program.
- **Use science to measure results**, with annual reporting, triennial board review and a dedicated science program to determine whether restoration efforts are improving ecological conditions.

At the center of the proposal is a new model for environmental protection that pairs commitments under the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (HRL) program with a strong regulatory backstop. Water users participating in the HRL program would have the opportunity to satisfy new requirements through a combination of flow and habitat. The program would have regulatory effect and be subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

For those who do not participate, or if the HRL program does not deliver the required results, the regulatory pathway provides an enforceable alternative. If the plan is adopted, the board will immediately begin developing a methodology to protect flows under both pathways.

The public comment period on the proposed amendments begins today. Written comments are due Sep. 18.

The board will consider the proposed amendments at its Oct. 28-29 public hearing.

More information is available on the board's website.

You can access the documents here:

[Final draft Bay-Delta Plan](#)

[Final Staff Report](#), including written responses to previously submitted comments

[Final Scientific Basis Report Supplement](#) in support of Voluntary Agreements (also referred to as the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes proposal)

The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.

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California's San Francisco Bay-Delta water protections set for modernization

Action News Now | August 19, 2026 | Will Anderson

SACRAMENTO, Calif. - On Wednesday, the California State Water Resources Control Board released its final draft plan to modernize water quality protections for the Sacramento River and the San Francisco Bay-Delta.

The State Water Resources Control Board will consider adopting the updated Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Watershed at a public hearing scheduled for October 28 and 29.

Officials say the San Francisco Bay-Delta supports some of the state's most iconic and threatened fish and wildlife, sustains tribes and other local communities and provides water for nearly 30 million Californians and 4 million acres of farmland.

However, the Delta and its tributaries have long been under threat, with native fish populations suffering, habitat being lost and the watershed facing increasing pressure from climate change and competing demands for water.

"This is California's opportunity to manage the Bay-Delta for the twenty-first century," said State Water Board Executive Director Eric Oppenheimer. "We can protect rivers, fish, wildlife and tribal cultural uses while building greater resilience and security for communities, farms and the state's economy. This proposal combines the best available science with adaptability, collaboration and accountability. We are creating a framework that can protect the Bay-Delta and adapt as conditions change."

The proposal combines strong standards, new partnerships, major investments and rigorous accountability to protect the Bay-Delta, water supply and wildlife.

According to the State Water Resources Control Board, if adopted, the updated plan would establish enforceable protections to ensure water right holders meet a clear environmental standard through either an approved voluntary pathway or regulatory pathway.

The plan would recognize "Tribal Tradition and Culture" as a protected beneficial use of water for the first time, reflecting the deep cultural connections between tribes, rivers and native fish such as salmon.

It would also lessen periods of reduced water supply for municipalities and water districts while maintaining protection for Delta flows in drier times.

The proposal focuses on the protection of fish and wildlife, including increased river flows and restoration of more than 27,000 acres of aquatic habitat.

In addition, the proposal would facilitate \$2.9 billion in restoration and related actions through the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program.

At the center of the proposal is a new model for environmental protection that pairs commitments under the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program with a strong regulatory backstop.

Water users participating in the program would have the opportunity to satisfy new requirements through a combination of flow and habitat.

The public comment period on the proposed amendments officially began on Wednesday, with all written comments regarding the proposal due by September 18.

Those looking for additional information can do so by visiting the State Water Resources Control Board's website.

#

Proposition 45 would overhaul parts of California's environmental review process

CBS News | September 8, 2026 | Darrielle Fair

California voters will decide in November whether to change how the state reviews the environmental impacts of certain major projects.

Proposition 45 would create new, expedited procedures under the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, for projects including housing, transportation, water, clean energy, health facilities, wildfire mitigation, education and broadband.

CEQA, enacted in 1970, requires state and local agencies to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of projects before they are approved.

Existing law prevents public agencies from approving projects that could have significant environmental impacts if feasible measures could be taken to reduce them.

Prop. 45 would impose tighter deadlines on government agencies reviewing eligible projects. For example, an agency would generally have 365 business days to complete an environmental impact report. If that deadline is missed, a project applicant could request a hearing and potentially take the matter to court.

"It still is going to require environmental review. It just has to be done on a much more condensed timeline," said Ryan Thomason, an environmental law attorney with Mitchell Chadwick.

Supporters of the measure argue CEQA's current review process is out of date and delays increase costs for Californians.

"The centerpiece of California's climate plan depends on converting our electric grid to clean energy," said Alex Jackson, executive director of the American Clean Power Association. "Over the next two decades, we've made a lot of progress on that front, but we have a whole lot more to do, and that's going to require a project approval process that is aligned with that speed."

The No on Prop 45 campaign argues the measure weakens the state's environmental review requirements and further exposes them to harmful developments.

"It weakens protections for clean air and clean water in California. It allows developers to fast-track polluting projects, including heavy industrial projects like data centers with less public oversight and accountability," said Gabriel Tolson, an environmental policy advocate with the Planning and Conservation League.

Much of the debate centers around whether the measure would create a loophole for data centers, but environmental law attorney Ryan Thomason says that's not the case.

"I've seen a lot of them that say data centers are going to fall within this. That's not the case if you look at the text," Thomason said.

Under the measure, eligibility would depend on whether a project falls within one of the categories specifically identified in Prop. 45. The Legislative Analyst's Office lists eligible categories including housing, water systems, clean energy, health facilities, fire and police stations, wildfire risk reduction, broadband, education and transportation projects.

The measure would also change how courts handle CEQA challenges involving eligible projects, including limiting the evidence courts can consider and the remedies they can impose.

CBS News Sacramento reached out to Sacramento County's Planning and Environmental Review Division to ask whether projects in the county could qualify for the expedited process, how the measure could affect the county's development approval process and whether county officials support Proposition 45.

A Sacramento County spokesperson said the county is still reviewing the measure.

"They are looking into how [Prop. 45] could impact the county and [their] applicants if passed," the spokesperson said.

The county added, "At this point, we're still working to understand the measure and its potential implications, so we don't have enough information to provide definitive answers to these questions."

Proposition 45 is on the Nov. 3, 2026, statewide ballot.

#

A new California law will ban watering decorative grass, even in non-drought years, starting Jan. 1

Schools, cities and counties will be affected first, then businesses and homeowners associations

Mercury News | September 4, 2026 | Paul Rogers



K & D Landscaping's Juan Ruiz and Martin Ibarra, from left, install native plants at the Villas of Almaden in San Jose, Calif., on Thursday, August 20, 2026. (Jane Tyska/Bay Area News Group)

Paul Rogers, environmental writer, San Jose Mercury News, for his Wordpress profile. (Michael Malone/Bay Area News Group)

It's been more than three years since California was in a drought. Reservoirs are above average levels. A strong El Niño is brewing in the Pacific that could bring soaking storms this winter.

But there's a new endangered species across the state: grass. A broad new water conservation law will soon take effect in phases, banning the watering of "ornamental turf" at corporate, industrial, government and homeowners association properties with drinking water across California as a way to preserve supplies.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the new state law in 2023 as California was emerging from a harsh three-year drought. Starting on Jan. 1, it will be illegal for local and regional government agencies across the state — including schools, cities, counties, courthouses, fire stations and

libraries — to irrigate decorative grass with potable water whether or not California is in a drought.

Enforcement is expected to be light at first. But scofflaws eventually could face fines of up to \$1,000 a day. On Jan. 1, 2028, the ban will expand to commercial businesses like office parks, car dealerships, supermarkets, strip malls and corporate campuses, along with colleges and universities. And on Jan. 1, 2029, it will apply to homeowners associations.

The rules do not apply to lawns at residential homes, apartment buildings, cemeteries or any “functional turf” with a recreational use, including sports fields, golf courses, playgrounds, pet exercise areas and picnic grounds, along with areas regularly used for community gatherings.

Supporters say the law, AB 1572, will save millions of gallons of water wasted every year by watering grass on road medians, the edges of parking lots and between buildings — landscape people don’t use or eat.

“Despite a few wet winters and the anticipation of another, water is a precious resource for Californians,” said Victoria Rome, state government affairs director at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental group in San Francisco that co-sponsored the law. “Local cities, towns and school districts should be evaluating their water usage now to ensure that every drop of potable water is used only on the most necessary of landscapes, like parks and ball fields.”

California has suffered through three severe droughts since 2007. As the climate continues to warm, more are inevitable, backers of the law say. Sources like the Colorado River and Sierra snowpack are becoming more precarious, so locking in savings of drinking water now preserves more for dry years ahead, they add.

“These are long-term investments to ensure we have sustainable supplies,” said Tracy Quinn, CEO of Heal the Bay, an environmental group based in Santa Monica that co-sponsored the bill. “This is not taking turf out of play yards or baseball fields. It’s where the grass is purely ornamental. It’s low-hanging fruit.”

Opponents call it overkill.

They argue that most local governments aren’t ready for the new rules, and haven’t budgeted money to replace grass with water-efficient landscaping.

“This was enacted three years ago under different circumstances than we have now,” said Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, a taxpayer rights group in Sacramento. “It’s an example of knee-jerk legislation, an immediate reaction to a problem. Legislation passed under those circumstances is not often well-thought through. I would hope that if this proves to be unworkable, they can go back and tweak it or repeal part of it.”

Coupal said the state would do better to build more reservoirs and provide voluntary incentives to encourage water conservation, like more rebates for property owners who choose to replace grass with low-water landscaping.

“The law is an example of legislating scarcity when there are ways you can legislate abundance and meet the needs people have,” he said.

It’s unclear how widely aware local government leaders are of the law.

A survey of landscape and property companies at the Central Coast Water Summit in June in Santa Cruz found that 80% said their clients “are still waiting for direction or avoiding the subject.”

When asked what message moves a property owner to replace their landscaping, half named lowering water bills. Almost none named environmental sustainability.

In recent months, more homeowners associations and commercial property owners have begun to learn about the law and ask about it, said Daniel Nemire, a manager for K&D Landscaping in Watsonville, which hosted the event.

“Our message is you don’t want to be stuck,” Nemire said. “If they do start enforcing and you have thousands of feet of turf, it’s a big thing for your budget. You want to spread it out. Do yourself a favor and break it up. There are dozens of plant types you can use. It doesn’t look like the desert. It can look really beautiful.”

Landscape and irrigation equipment upgrades can cut water use by up to half, he said.

Some cities have tried to get ahead of the rules.

Last year, Morgan Hill held a public contest to design new landscaping around its city hall to save water. Crews removed grass over 4,400 square feet, put down mulch and park benches and planted 173 species of native plants, such as deer grass, ceanothus, sticky monkey flower, red buckwheat and manzanita. They planted three new trees and moved five others from a parking lot where they had installed solar panels. The total cost was about \$32,000. With an \$8,000 rebate from the Santa Clara Valley Water District, that fell to \$24,000.

“We’re trying to be proactive. We want to lead by example,” said Shannon Rossow, an environmental programs coordinator with the Morgan Hill Environmental Services Division. “Then other property owners can see it’s possible.”

The law may run into controversy. It was modeled on a law that the Nevada state legislature passed in 2021, outlawing the use of Colorado River water on ornamental grass and commercial, government and homeowners association properties in places like Las Vegas.

This year, homeowners associations representing more than 10,000 property owners filed a class action lawsuit against the Southern Nevada Water Authority in an attempt to block it. They argue it will kill trees, place an unfair burden on property owners, and increase the urban “heat island” effect.

In California, the law will be enforced by retail water providers, including government water districts, private water companies and city water departments, according to the State Water Resources Control Board, which also has enforcement authority.

“Slowly, the news is getting spread among property owners about this,” said James Nachbaur, director of research, planning, and performance at the state water board. “Generally our approach is trying to get people into compliance with education as opposed to jumping immediately to enforcement.”

Local water agencies agreed.

The East Bay Municipal Utility District in Oakland is reminding large property owners that it offers rebates for landscape work, including providing landscape architects for free consultation. It likely will not fine violators unless the state enters a drought again, said Geneva Gondak, a water conservation supervisor for the district.

“We don’t want to see all of these green areas turn into dead patches, and we don’t want the trees to die,” she said. “We are helping people convert these landscapes to more sustainable areas.”

In San Jose, one homeowners association is trying to get ahead of the law. The Villas of Almaden is spending \$100,000 to replace turf around 180 homes with water-efficient landscaping and upgrading its irrigation system, which dates back to the 1980s, to a high-tech system with weather sensors. After a rebate from the Santa Clara Valley Water District, the project will cost \$80,000, said Fadi Cotran, president of the homeowners association board, and should cut water use by about 35%, paying for itself in 5 to 10 years.

“We have huge water bills. We are trying to find ways to conserve,” he said, adding that the board is trying to be proactive by also replacing aging roofs and improving fire protection. “And we wanted to get the rebates before the money runs out. The early bird gets the worm.”

###

Bay Area lawmakers push data center transparency, send bills to Newsom

California lawmakers passed seven bills aimed at increasing oversight of data centers, sending the measures to Gov. Gavin Newsom for consideration.

ABC News | September 2, 2026 | Tiffany Liou

SAN JOSE, Calif. (KGO) -- California lawmakers passed seven bills aimed at increasing oversight of data centers in the final days of the legislative session and sent the measures to Gov. Gavin Newsom for consideration.

Among the bills are proposals from Bay Area Assemblymembers Diane Papan and Rebecca Bauer-Kahan that would require greater disclosure of water and energy use by data center operators.

"You cannot manage what you cannot measure," Papan said.

Papan's legislation focuses on water use before and after a data center begins operating. One bill would require developers to disclose projected water use.

"It requires data centers to inform localities of how much water they're going to use prior to construction," Papan said.

A second measure would require operators to report water usage.

"Every year or two years, depending on the locality, when you renew the business license, you would identify how much water you have used," Papan said. "Water is a finite resource."

Bauer-Kahan's bill focuses on energy consumption and reporting requirements.

"The bill will give the state information about the energy demands of these data centers and how efficient they are. And it'll give local communities information about how it'll affect them, from noise to energy to everyday impacts," Bauer-Kahan said.

The lawmakers said the measures are intended to provide transparency about the resources data centers consume while allowing the industry to continue operating and growing in California.

The Data Center Coalition, an industry group representing data center owners, is opposing the legislation.

It argues data centers are being singled out and the bills could threaten development.

"We need data centers. We need it to make our phones work and our industries work, and for people to live the data-forward lives where they live today," Bauer-Kahan said. "But we also

need to make sure that everyday Californians are paying the price for these data centers and that they're not impacting our communities negatively."

The debate over data centers has extended beyond California.

On Monday, Vice President JD Vance addressed the issue, saying, "If you build a data center, you should be putting power back into the grid, not taking it out. And if that is happening, I don't think the data centers are that controversial. It's when the utility bills get so much higher that's when it's a real problem."

San Jose State University engineering professor and technology expert Ahmed Banafa said California is home to about 300 data centers, with more than half located in the Bay Area.

"AI may be digital, but it has actually a physical footprint. We can see it. We can feel it," Banafa said.

He said the legislation seeks to balance technological innovation with public concerns.

"This kind of regulation is trying to walk that thin line by saying, well, I'm not asking you to leave. We are not against you. We want you to be fair with us," Banafa said.

The bills come after Newsom vetoed similar measures last year. The governor now has until Sept. 30 to sign or veto the legislation.

"I'm optimistic the governor will sign it," Bauer-Kahan said.

Supporters say the goal is to give communities more information about the impact of data centers and allow them to coexist with growing technology infrastructure.

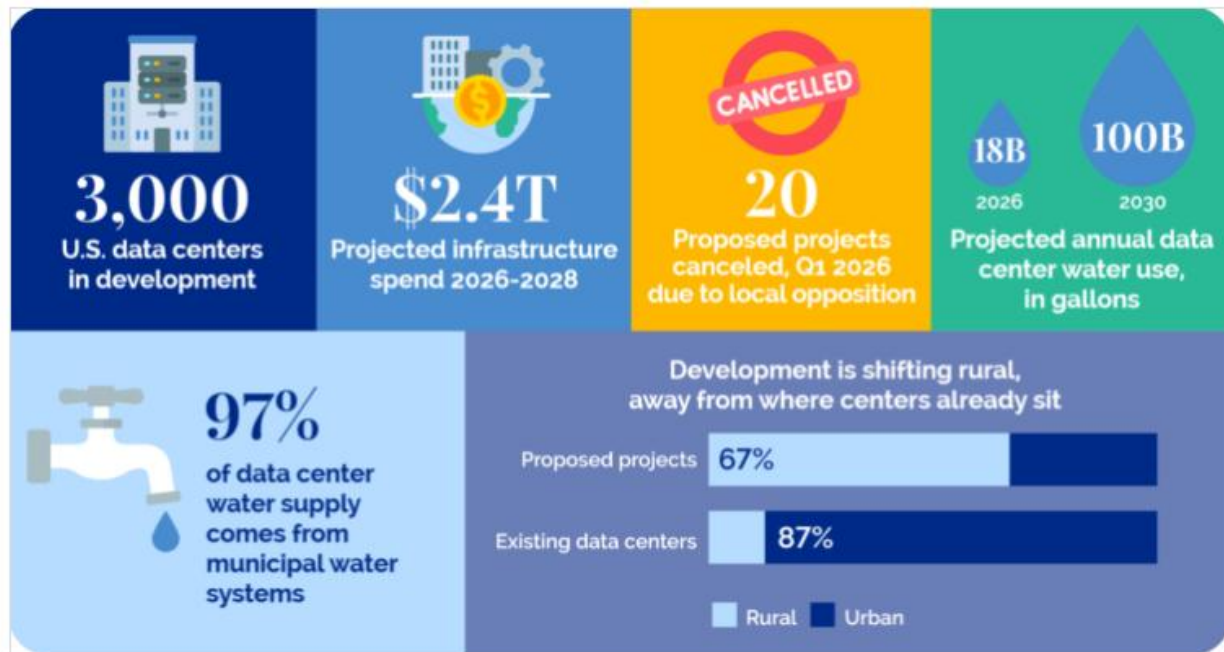
Responding to concerns raised by opponents, including the Data Center Coalition, Papan said transparency benefits both communities and developers.

"I say to them, help us help you. If you end up in a locality where they run out of water, how will you succeed?" she said.

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WATER FOUNDATION WHITE PAPER: Water and data centers

Maven | August 24, 2026 | Water Foundation



Data centers are a major topic in 2026, with near-daily news coverage. They are being built in the United States at an unprecedented pace and scale, with nearly 3,000 projects in development and an estimated \$700 billion in investment this year alone. But concerns about their impacts have fueled significant resistance, prompting some proposed projects to be canceled and cities and counties across the country to adopt construction moratoriums. Water use is often among the chief concerns.

A new white paper from the Water Foundation says those concerns are justified. Its white paper explains the water-related impacts of data centers and outlines how communities and funders can work together to protect watersheds, strengthen water infrastructure, and safeguard public health. It also recommends ways to improve data center water efficiency and reduce water use.

Data centers use water mainly to cool heat-generating servers, and the amount they consume depends largely on cooling system design. Direct water use is now estimated at 17 billion to 19 billion gallons a year and is projected to reach 60 billion to 110 billion gallons by 2030. Their indirect water footprint from electricity use may be even larger; one analysis estimated that data center power demand required 211 billion gallons of water in 2023. Actual impacts vary, however, depending on location, the types of water used and discharged, and the condition of the infrastructure supporting the facility.

Since 2022, two-thirds of new data center construction has occurred in areas already facing high water stress. Most data centers rely on municipal water systems, which may need expensive upgrades to meet new demand—costs that often fall on residential ratepayers rather than developers. Heavy water use can strain watersheds, while discharge from data centers can harm local waterways through heat pollution and contaminants.

The paper offers five recommendations for addressing and mitigating the water-related harms of data center development:

- Center communities in decision making. National organizations should provide technical assistance and capacity building so communities can assess proposed projects, oppose them if needed, or negotiate enforceable community benefits.
- Match siting and design to local conditions. Projects should reflect local water and energy realities, favoring mild climates, recycled-water access, appropriate cooling systems, and consideration of cumulative impacts.
- Require greater transparency. Companies should publicly report projected and actual water use, consumption, and peak demand so policymakers and communities can understand regional and seasonal impacts.
- Make developers pay the full cost. Developers should cover infrastructure upgrades, new system capacity, and broader watershed benefits tied to their facilities.
- Protect community self-determination. Development should not move faster than communities can evaluate impacts and adopt protections; moratoriums can provide that time.

The paper urges officials and community groups to evaluate data centers in context: to assess local and cumulative impacts, decide whether a project should be built, and, if it proceeds, determine what protections and community benefits to require.

The paper concludes, “The rapid expansion of data centers is a crucial challenge for the water movement. It is also an opportunity to create a new answer to the question of who bears the cost of industrial water use, and who gets a say in that decision. How advocates and practitioners respond now will shape not only local water outcomes but broader norms around corporate accountability and environmental justice for years to come.”

[Click here](#) for the full report. | [Click here](#) for a two-page summary.

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