



COMMENTS: *Proposed Principles for Developing a Water Bond*

July 17, 2013

NOTE: Assemblymember Anthony Rendon received the following comments from parties with an interest in a general obligation bond for water resources. Rendon staff summarized lengthy comments and then included some of each party's comments verbatim, which are shown in italics.

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Association of California Water Agencies (Cindy Tuck) supports increased accountability on bond funding, but focuses its comments on water storage, including groundwater quality, continuous appropriation for storage funding, and statewide decisions. On new water technology, ACWA emphasizes *implementation* rather than the *development*, to direct funds toward water conservation and reuse.

Storage (If.) – ACWA supports this principle which recommends expanding California water storage options, including surface storage. With drought and climate change, being able to store water during wet periods is critical so that water is available in dry times for all needs, including ecosystem protection.

ACWA agrees that funding for IRWMPs is very important, but some decisions need to be made on a statewide basis. Decisions on storage projects that provide broad public benefits for the state are a good example.

Bay Area Council (Jim Wunderman) believes that the bond principles provide a strong starting point but fail to recognize the importance of groundwater storage.

These principles represent a good step forward in developing a statewide bond initiative that voters can support and that will help meet California's long-term water needs. But while the principles rightly prioritize integrated water management and repurposing existing unspent bond revenues, they omit any reference to California's vast groundwater storage opportunities — a vital component to the state's future.

Elizabeth Betancourt (Forsgren Associates) supports the promotion of regional self-reliance, and wants to look at both Delta and infrastructure issues in the scope of self-reliance. Additionally, she wants to ensure that disadvantaged communities include rural and tribal communities, take a closer look at watershed protection, include language on fire protection and management, and see more policy alignment on water storage issues.

Regarding existing and new infrastructure, if we're going for regional self-sufficiency, I would advocate more investment in older infrastructure than building of new. In many cases, older infrastructure, if maintained and/or restored, can provide the benefits that new infrastructure might be meant to.

I'd see regional self-reliance as including Delta communities, which includes improving Delta county conditions.

California Waterfowl (Mark Hennelly) wants to more directly take into account off-stream environmental uses of water (such as wetlands), amending the watershed priority:

- d. *Restore the health of California's watersheds, to protect our important coastal and inland waterways and wetlands, especially for salmon and other aquatic and terrestrial wildlife that depend on both.*

California Water Foundation (Kate Williams) wants to include language on groundwater storage.

The Assembly Principles for Developing a Water Bond have identified critical statewide water policy priorities such as integrated regional water management and watershed health, but have missed an important opportunity to call for an expansion of groundwater storage which will be needed if California is going to achieve a sustainable water future.

Delta Stewardship Council (Phil Isenberg) emphasizes the importance of achieving the coequal goals and the preservation and restoration of the Delta.

The Delta Plan includes a number of specific recommendations very similar to those identified in your list of Principles. We organized them in five policy chapters including:

- *A more reliable water supply for California (including a focus on regional investments)*
- *Protect and restore the Delta Ecosystem*
- *Protect the Delta as an evolving place*
- *Improve water quality to protect human health and the environment, and,*
- *Reduce flood risk to people, property and state interests in the Delta.*

Dr. Thomas Harter proposes that several principles include language on groundwater supply and added an additional principle that emphasizes the importance of using objective scientific research to create and execute water projects.

- h. *Promote fair, objective, and science-based outreach, education and facilitation to and of stakeholders as an essential ingredient for effective and successful implementation of water projects.*

Natural Resources Defense Council (Kate Poole) supports the bond principles that protect watersheds to preserve local ecosystems, provide clean water for disadvantaged communities, assist in the cleanup of groundwater storage and promote regional self-reliance. They would like to see the inclusion of the strict criteria for the BDCP's use of public funding and oversight on funding for new storage projects.

We strongly support bond funding to leverage local investments in water use efficiency, stormwater capture, water recycling, and other local supply projects that reduce reliance on the Delta, other imported water supply sources, and stressed aquatic ecosystems.

Regional Economic Association Leaders (R.E.A.L.) Coalition emphasizes the co-equal goals of the Delta, the promotion of regional self-reliance, integrated water management, government oversight of bond funding and. protection of area-of-origin rights.

The R.E.A.L. Coalition believes that all potential solutions (such as, but not limited to, conservation, groundwater protection and recharge, desalination, recycling and re-use, rainwater capture, surface storage and transportation, etc.) to our water supply must be examined in terms of cost and benefits and feasibility, to help enhance regional self-sufficiency during drought periods.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy (Jim Branham) highlights watershed management as a critical issue in the bond:

Does bond funding support activities in the watersheds that are the source of the state's water? Does bond address issues of watershed restoration (forest and meadow), reduced sedimentation (which results in loss of reservoir storage capacity) and water quality improvement, such as mercury remediation?

Sonoma County Water Agency (Kristopher Tjernell) wants to explicitly add “groundwater protection” as an eligible use for bond funding to prevent contamination and clean up contaminated basins. It also supports the increased government oversight on bond funding:

We appreciate inclusion of accountability principles to ensure proper oversight and management of new state bond funds. When crafting bond language to address these principles, we urge you to also factor in the tremendous public benefits of funding programs that encourage and allow for flexibility, creativity, and unique partnerships at the local level.

Water Replenishment District of Southern California (Adeline M.L. Yoong) supports the emphasis on regional self-reliance through local storage. It believes that recycled water is critical for regional self-reliance, and would like to include language on groundwater storage.

As the regional groundwater management agency for over 10% of our state's population, WRD is doing all it can to ensure a reliable supply of water for the region. The District's Water Independence Now Program, or WIN, Program is a suite of water supply and reliability projects which can make replenishment of one of the most utilized urban groundwater basins in California independent of imported water supply from the fragile Bay-Delta area and the Colorado River. [...] The increased use of recycled water is an integral component of WIN and to Assemblymember Rendon's goal to increase regional self-reliance.