

NORTH STATE WATER ALLIANCE

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North State Coalition Urges Governor and Legislature to Act on Statewide Solution to California's Ongoing Water Crisis *Recommendations Released at Capitol Today*

SACRAMENTO, CA – Founders of the [North State Water Alliance](#) today joined Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, elected officials, business, labor, agriculture and environmental interests to unveil their criteria for a water bond that reflects a comprehensive solution to meet short-term and long-term water reliability needs for all of California.

During a press conference held at the State Capitol, North State Water Alliance leaders and supporters called upon the California Legislature and Gov. Jerry Brown to act quickly on a water bond that improves statewide water supply reliability for people and nature and that meets the following criteria:

- Maintain water rights - for stability and certainty in water operations.
- Advance new water storage and operational improvements – to increase flexibility in managing water during dry periods.
- Increase groundwater storage – recharge, storage and extraction projects for safe drinking water supplies.
- Improve urban water management – maximize statewide water savings through projects that support recycling, stormwater management and conservation.
- Protect and restore watersheds and ecosystems – prioritize migratory corridors needing immediate assistance including those for salmon and steelhead and water supplies along the Pacific Flyway.

As California struggles through a third year of drought, legislators from both parties are drafting proposals to spend billions of dollars on new water infrastructure. Several bills are pending in the Legislature that would use varying amounts of state bond funding to launch a new era of projects designed to increase the state's capacity to store water, enhance water conservation and improve water operations.

"Our current water system was a technological and engineering marvel of the 20th century and we can do the same in the 21st century," said Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson. "This issue demands that we find forward-thinking solutions and we're here today to show our commitment to working with Gov. Brown, legislators, our regional partners and statewide water interests to find a common-sense solution for all of California. This solution includes investing in infrastructure, protecting this region's water supply, economy and environmental assets and committing to responsible stewardship of our water resources so that we can continue to do more with less," said Johnson.

"The North State Water Alliance is forging a unified voice among our regional leaders to show legislators there's a pathway to a statewide water solution," said Bryce Lundberg, chair of the Northern California Water Association and vice president of Lundberg Family Farms. "The Alliance was established to shine the light on how proposed water policies impact this region and to help policymakers find solutions to meeting the water supply needs for Northern California and the entire state."

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Participating in the event were representatives from the labor industry who pointed out that state law requires identifiable water sources as a condition for obtaining building permits on major projects, which makes improving California's water system mandatory for growing the economy and creating new construction jobs.

"California's water storage and delivery system is more than a half-century old. This has to be the year that we make the major investments in water storage and delivery that will keep our state green and prospering, that will provide protection from future droughts, and will put thousands of Californians to work," said Cesar Diaz, legislative director for the State Building and Construction Trades Council.

Also attending the press conference were environmental organizations including The Nature Conservancy, which noted they are analyzing proposed bond measures through the lens of state water laws passed in 2009. Those reforms created "coequal goals" to guide state water policy, mandating for the first time that new water projects must both improve water supply reliability and restore ecosystems.

"The Nature Conservancy supports a water bond to increase flexibility in water management to better meet the water supply needs for people and nature," said Jay Ziegler, director of policy and external affairs for The Nature Conservancy. "We believe that a bond is necessary to address regional water supply improvements, expand water conservation efforts, and promote watershed and habitat restoration. This approach is necessary to achieve the co-equal goals of California's 2009 water reform legislation."

Representing California employers, Stan Van Vleck, owner and president of Van Vleck Ranch, partner and chairman of the region's largest law firm Downey Brand, and vice chair of the Sacramento Metro Chamber, highlighted the impact that water uncertainty is having on all businesses regardless of location.

"My own family's ranching business has felt firsthand the impacts of not having enough water and as a direct result of the ongoing drought, we've had to sell 90% of our cattle," said Van Vleck. "This is the first time in our 158 years of doing business in California that we have had to take such extreme action."

"We are not alone and no one is immune. Thousands of families involved in agriculture and connected with processing and production of the state's food supplies and exports need our policy leaders to act on a bond that funds actions to improve local and regional water self-reliance in areas most threatened by the drought and that builds resiliency and flexibility into our water supplies, including new storage, water efficiency measures, and expanded use of recycled water," said Van Vleck.

Concluded Lundberg: "We look forward to working with our regional partners, state legislators and Gov. Brown to come to agreement on a statewide solution for water reliability for our region and state and to come to it quickly."

Founded by the Northern California Water Association, Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association, Regional Water Authority and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, the North State Water Alliance is a growing coalition of cities, counties, water providers, business, agriculture and community groups. Its mission is to promote responsible statewide water solutions that protect the economy, environment and quality of life for the North State and for all Californians. To learn more about the North State Water Alliance and its water bond principles visit www.northstatewater.org.

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