

DESALINATION POLICY PRINCIPLES

We acknowledge that our water needs in California are shifting drastically. Even with excellent water management structures in place, there is a need for supplemental fresh water supply. In an effort to support and maintain a prosperous state including a healthy environment and population, we believe in the following principles:

- There is no “silver bullet” for addressing the state’s water and drought resilience needs. Improving water resilience in California requires a diversified portfolio approach to water supply development, which includes the implementation of water use efficiency measures and the availability of, and accessibility to, a broad suite of options that water suppliers may employ for adding resilience to the state’s water supply system.
- Given the availability of new and advanced technology, successful development of projects, and the drought-resilient nature of the supply source, desalination – both seawater and brackish – is an important component for improving California's water resilience going forward.
- Desalination in California can be undertaken and implemented through a wide range of technologies and innovations, and there should be a concerted effort by the state’s regulatory structure to provide pathways for a variety of technologies to be tested, permitted, utilized, and advanced at commercial scale.
- California desalination is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. A wide variety of technologies that includes conventional seawater desalination, offshore surface and deep seawater desalination, and surface and ground water brackish desalination should be supported by California’s policy, regulatory, and permitting structures.
- Given the near-term need to improve our state’s water and drought resilience profile, California’s regulatory and permitting structures related to desalination development should allow for expeditious advancement of projects in a manner that is socially responsible, protective of the environment, and cost-effective.
- The state’s regulatory and permitting structures should also acknowledge and consider all forms and manners of desalination through a lens that recognizes the environmental, equity, access, and environmental justice benefits of responsible desalination projects for improving water and drought resilience in communities throughout the state and for relieving pressure on natural water systems for species and habitat protection. The state should open dialogues

that spur collaboration and set guidelines that allow for innovation and new technologies rather than be prescriptive in nature.

- Climate adaptation demands careful planning for a long-term water supply portfolio that includes all forms and manners of desalination for California's future. As snowpack and precipitation become more variable and unpredictable, employment of desalination technologies throughout the state will become a more necessary component of a diverse water supply portfolio that can respond to resilience challenges affecting every community in California.

DESALINATION POLICY PRIORITIES

- Create pathways for new technologies and innovations in both onshore and offshore seawater desalination and surface and groundwater brackish desalination to be pilot-tested and deployed throughout the state.
- Work collaboratively with state regulators to streamline the permitting process such that it allows for a clear path to project development for all desalination technologies.
- Create opportunities and funding for continued studies and research for:
 - Advancing new desalination technology in all its forms and sizes.
 - Developing and executing tangible research opportunities related to seawater desalination/marine-ocean habitat interface.
 - Improving California's approach to properly addressing project mitigation requirements.
- Open spaces for dialogue amongst a range of stakeholders including government regulators, environmental organizations, tribal groups, academia, and community members to understand and acknowledge the importance of a comprehensive water supply strategy that includes desalination.
- Deploy desalination projects that help to secure long-term, sustainable, and adequate water supply for all Californians.