

Call for Abstracts

2027 CalDesal Annual Conference



Desalination in California's Water Future: Value, Evidence, and Action

February 16–17, 2027 | Sheraton Grand Hotel | Sacramento, California

CalDesal Working Group Meetings are planned for Monday, February 15, 2027, as a pre-conference event.

The Conversation We Need

Where does ocean and brackish water desalination create the greatest value for California—and what will it take to turn viable projects into reliable water supplies?

A central conference challenge: What would have to be true for a water agency, regulator, developer, and investor to move forward with a \$1 billion California desalination project? We invite submissions that examine the conditions for a responsible yes—or a well-supported no.

CalDesal invites abstracts that help water agencies, regulators, policymakers, researchers, project developers, and investors answer that question. The 2027 conference will bring policy, regulation, technology, and project experience into the same conversation, with an emphasis on credible evidence, practical lessons, and candid discussion.

We welcome perspectives that test assumptions, explain tradeoffs, and identify what both government and the desalination industry need to do differently. Our goal is to strengthen understanding, build relationships, and identify actions that improve water-supply decisions and environmental outcomes.

Priority Topics

1. Desalination's Value in the Water Portfolio

Where does desalination outperform other supply options, and where does it not? How should agencies assess reliability, drought resilience, affordability, and environmental performance? What changing water-policy and planning priorities mean for ocean and brackish projects.

2. From Project Concept to Operating Supply

Lessons from successful, stalled, and unsuccessful projects. What helped or hindered development, and what should others do differently? We welcome candid accounts of planning, design, construction, operations, and community engagement.

3. Permitting, Regulation, and Two-Way Learning

Where regulatory expectations and project development align—or disconnect. Opportunities for clearer criteria, coordinated reviews, timely decisions, and better dialogue. What agencies and developers need to understand about regulatory priorities, and what regulators need to understand about project realities.

4. Environmental Performance and Mitigation

Evidence on intake impacts, brine and concentrate management, marine protection, and mitigation outcomes. How monitoring, site-specific evaluation, and adaptive management can improve decisions and environmental results.

5. Technology, Energy, and Operating Performance

Innovations with demonstrated or clearly explained potential to improve treatment, energy use, renewable-energy integration, carbon emissions, maintenance, and operating reliability. Explain performance limits, costs, and conditions for practical application.

6. Economics, Financing, and the Investor Perspective

Why would an investor commit capital to a desalination project in California—and why would they choose not to? We invite investors and lenders to explain how permitting timelines, regulatory predictability, litigation risk, project costs, water-purchase commitments, and expected returns affect that decision. What would make California a more attractive place to invest, and how does it compare with other markets? Include practical lessons on financing, risk allocation, affordability, and the value of reliability.

7. Brackish Desalination and Inland Opportunities

Where can brackish groundwater desalination and salinity management provide practical, affordable supplies? Address resource availability, groundwater sustainability, treatment performance, concentrate disposal, permitting, and project economics. What lessons from operating facilities and emerging projects can guide California's next opportunities?

8. Regional Partnerships and Broader System Benefits

How desalination can work with storage, water exchanges, existing infrastructure, and regional partnerships to provide benefits beyond a single project. Emerging ocean and brackish opportunities, salinity management, and practical approaches to building partnerships.

Other timely topics that advance these discussions are welcome.

What Makes a Strong Abstract

Tell us the question your presentation will address, the evidence or experience you will bring, and what California should learn. Identify the decision or action that your findings could support, along with key limitations and practical implications. Lessons from projects outside California are welcome when their relevance to California is explained. For projects or technologies still in development, distinguish demonstrated results from projections.

Submissions should educate and support discussion rather than serve as product or company promotions. We encourage contributions from regulators, water agencies, researchers, environmental and community representatives, industry practitioners, and investors, including joint submissions that bring different perspectives together.

Submission Instructions

Submit abstracts for presentations or the poster session by **December 4, 2026**, through this link:

<https://airtable.com/appKgd9TfqJP5UICq/shrfBck3xRJIWGG0Z>.

Abstract narrative: maximum 300 words. Include the following with your submission:

- Presentation title and priority topic addressed
- Presenter name(s), affiliation(s), email address, and phone number
- Preferred format: presentation or poster
- The question addressed, supporting evidence or project experience, what California should learn, and the decision or action those findings could support
- One to three relevant images, with captions and permission for use

The Events Planning Committee will consider relevance to the conference priorities, strength of evidence, practical value, and contribution to a balanced program.