

## 9 Million Acre Feet Interim Water Supply Target – Q&A

*The 9 million acre-feet (MAF) target specified in SB 72 is an expression of legislative intent to acknowledge the scale of California's future water supply risk and focus statewide planning on solutions that help address the target.*

### 1. What is the 9 MAF target?

Senate Bill 72 directs the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to include in the California Water Plan (CWP or Plan) an interim statewide planning target of 9 MAF of additional water supply, water conservation, or water storage to be achieved by 2040. This is the first time California has established a quantified, statewide water supply target within the Plan. It is intended to define the scale of the challenge the state is facing, not to prescribe a single solution.

### 2. Where does the 9 MAF number come from?

The 9 MAF target is informed by an estimate of the projected reduction in future water supply loss by mid-century due to higher temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, regulatory requirements, and shifts in water use. SB 72 uses this figure as a planning approximation of the scale of the challenge the state should plan to address by 2040, rather than a precisely derived estimate of statewide water supply gap.

### 3. What does the 9 MAF represent and not represent?

The interim water supply target represents an approximation of potential future gap between water supply and demand. More broadly, it signals that California's existing systems are not sufficient and that coordinated, statewide action will be required.

The interim water supply target is not a regulatory requirement imposed on local agencies. It does not mandate specific projects or investments. It is not a guarantee of new water supply, and it is not a final or permanent number. It is a basis for planning.

### 4. Is the 9 MAF target fixed?

No. The statute establishes 9 MAF as an interim planning target for application to the CWP 2028 Update only. The 9 MAF target is a starting point that will be updated with each Water Plan update based on the latest science and assessments. The statute requires that water supply targets be quantified at a watershed level in future plans, starting in CWP Update 2033, by analyzing current and future water needs for all beneficial uses, recognizing the impacts of climate change on the state's water resources, ensuring safe drinking water for all Californians, and reflecting statewide, regional, and local planning efforts.

### 5. Does the 9 MAF get divided among regions or sectors?

No. SB 72 establishes 9 MAF as a statewide figure and does not allocate water needs by region or sector. The statute directs DWR to develop detailed, regional analyses to establish targets for the CWP Update 2033.

**6. What does the legislature intend this target to do?**

The Legislature's direction in SB 72 is explicit: quantify water supply gaps, set measurable targets, and identify actions to address them. The 9 MAF target serves to frame that process for the CWP Update 2028 only. It creates a common reference point for state, regional, and local discussions that helps ensure planning is grounded in the scale of the problem.

**7. Is the 9 MAF a requirement to “create new water”?**

No. SB 72 does not require the state to develop 9 MAF of new water supply. Instead, it requires DWR to identify adaptation strategies and actions that, taken together, could help address the level of projected water supply gap. This includes a combination of the development of new or expanded surface storage, groundwater storage, conveyance, stormwater capture, graywater, recycled water, desalination, conjunctive use, water transfers, water conservation, demand management or other water supplies/actions.

**8. How will the 9 MAF target be used in the 2028 and 2033 California Water Plans?**

In the 2028 plan, the 9 MAF target sets the scale of the challenge and guides engagement and the identification of adaptation strategies. For the 2033 Plan, the 9 MAF target will be replaced with quantified targets developed at watershed and statewide levels.

**9. Why set a number at all?**

Recent iterations of the California Water Plan have described conditions and strategies without clearly quantifying the scale of the challenge. SB 72 changes that. By establishing a measurable target, the state can better prioritize actions, evaluate progress, and align investments with long-term water reliability goals.

**10. How does DWR plan to approach achieving the interim water supply target in their planning process?**

DWR will compile an inventory of planned water supply projects and their estimated capabilities in CWP 2028. Specifically, projects will be characterized primarily in terms of capacity or peak operational capacity, and grouped by hydrologic region and project type to highlight how water supply opportunities vary across the state. This inventory will serve as a catalog of projects from which subsets of projects will be evaluated in the CWP Update 2033.