

## California Water Plan 2028 and California Water Plan 2033 Roadmap

This document introduces new statutory requirements for the California Water Plan (CWP) and outlines the approach for achieving these mandates in the CWP 2028 and CWP 2033.

### I. Legislative Requirements for California Water Plan 2028 and 2033

#### *Senate Bill 72 Requirements*

Developed every five years by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the California Water Plan (CWP) is the State's long-range framework for water management. Senate Bill 72 (SB 72) modernizes the CWP and requires DWR to establish actionable targets and strategies that will guide water resources decisions, support implementation, and help California prepare for a hotter, drier future.

- Under SB 72, the CWP is being modernized to establish water supply targets.
  - CWP 2028 will include an interim statewide goal to identify 9 million acre-feet (MAF) of additional water supply, water conservation, or water storage capacity by 2040.
  - For CWP 2033, DWR will update the statewide water supply target, considering future 2050 water needs at a watershed scale. Future water needs will take into account future urban, agricultural, recreational, tribal, and environmental water needs on a regional basis.
- The CWP will also identify and evaluate effective water management strategies to meet those needs, informed by economic considerations.
- SB 72 also requires that DWR conduct engagement across diverse interests in the development of the CWP.

#### *Senate Bill 659: Groundwater Recharge Opportunities*

Senate Bill 659 (SB 659), signed into law in October 2023, requires DWR, as part of the CWP 2028, to develop actionable recommendations to develop additional groundwater recharge opportunities that increase the state's groundwater supply. DWR must describe legal/regulatory requirements, financial/regulatory incentives, and best practices to advance groundwater recharge. DWR must also estimate the volume of recharge, benefits, and costs from implementing the groundwater recharge recommendations.

### II. Key Activities for California Water Plan for 2028 and 2033

#### *A Data-Driven Approach to Developing Watershed-Scale Water Supply Targets*

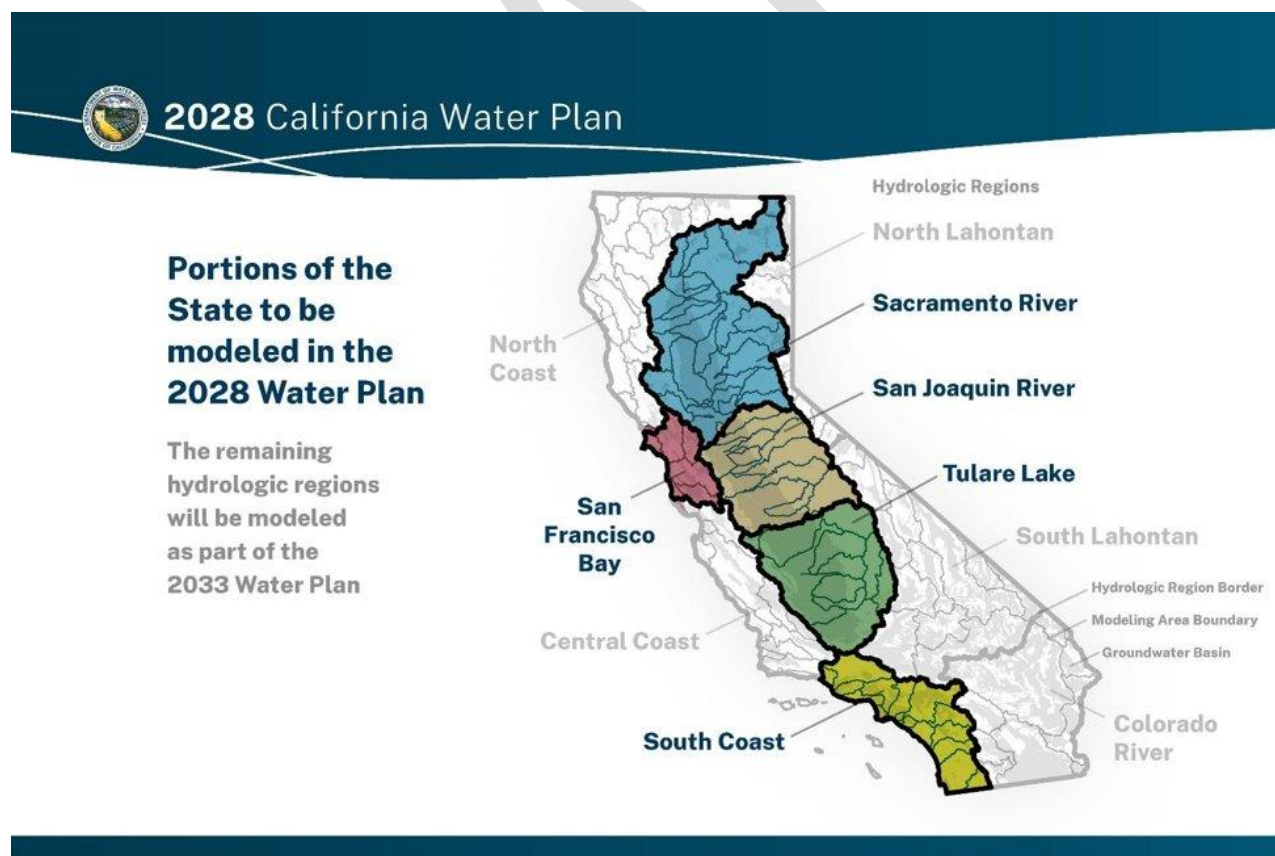
DWR is developing a statewide Water Evaluation and Adaptation Planning (WEAP) model to integrate data on water supply, demand, and future conditions to help California test planning scenarios, understand tradeoffs, and inform decisions as part of the CWP. The WEAP model will play a critical role in quantifying water supply targets at the watershed scale and evaluating performance of regional adaptation strategies/projects.

The WEAP model is a scenario-based, hydrologic and operations model that simulates how water moves through a system, from headwaters to farms, cities, and the environment. The WEAP model will give water managers a consistent, statewide framework to compare future conditions, test tradeoffs, and align local decisions with broader statewide planning.

One of the outputs of the WEAP model will be unmet agricultural, urban, and environmental demands<sup>1</sup> at a watershed scale. Quantification of unmet demands will be the basis for establishing water supply targets at the watershed scale.

For CWP 2028, the WEAP model will be used to quantify watershed-scale water supply targets in the Sacramento, San Joaquin, Tulare, San Francisco Bay, and South Coast hydrologic regions—the current extent of the model’s coverage (see Figure 1 below). Future baseline assumptions (Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) compliance, environmental regulatory framework, climate change, subsidence, future land uses, agricultural/urban/environmental demands, etc.) will be critical inputs to the WEAP model for CWP 2028.

DWR intends to continue to expand the WEAP model to provide statewide coverage. For CWP 2033, the expanded WEAP model will quantify watershed-scale water supply targets throughout the entire State.



<sup>1</sup> Analysis of recreational and Tribal demands are currently being explored

**FIGURE 1: CWP HYDROLOGIC REGIONS TO BE MODELED**

*Evaluating Regional Project Portfolios to Address Water Supply Targets*

A key SB 72 mandate is to identify and evaluate effective water management climate adaptation strategies to help meet the water supply targets.

For CWP 2028, DWR is developing an initial database of projects throughout the State. Projects will be characterized by their type, location, and capacity. DWR will collect projects from existing local plans, such as Groundwater Sustainability Plans, Urban Water Management Plans, and Agricultural Water Management Plans. DWR will conduct regional forums throughout the State to identify and confirm projects within each region. DWR will also develop project modeling criteria to help identify a prioritized subset of regional projects/actions to incorporate into the WEAP model.

For CWP 2033, input from the regional forums will be used to formulate regional project portfolios within each region. Regional project portfolios will include groups of projects/actions. The WEAP model will be used to evaluate the ability of those regional project portfolios to meet water supply targets throughout the entire State.

**How does DWR plan to approach achieving the 9 MAF 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.

*SB 659 Groundwater Recharge Activities*

To achieve the SB 659 mandates for CWP 2028, DWR will collect groundwater recharge data from existing groundwater data sets. DWR will then develop groundwater recharge-related recommendations, in collaboration with a Groundwater Recharge Design Team. **Qualitative analyses** will be conducted on the recharge amounts, benefits, and costs from implementing the groundwater recharge recommendations. These recommendations will also inform the broader policy recommendations in CWP 2028.

For CWP 2033, DWR will use updated groundwater datasets, revise groundwater recharge recommendations, and conduct **quantitative analyses** on the effects of these recommendations.

	<b>CWP 2028</b>	<b>CWP 2033</b>
<b>Water Supply Targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish future baseline assumptions</li> <li>• 9 MAF interim statewide water supply target</li> <li>• Watershed-scale water supply targets for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watershed-scale water supply targets for entire State</li> </ul>

	Sacramento, San Joaquin, Tulare, San Francisco Bay, and South Coast hydrologic regions	
<b>Strategies/ Projects/ Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of regional forums</li> <li>• Initial database of projects/actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of regional project portfolios throughout entire State</li> </ul>
<b>Groundwater Recharge Opportunities (SB 659)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundwater recharge data collection</li> <li>• Groundwater Recharge recommendations</li> <li>• Qualitative analyses on groundwater recharge recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated groundwater recharge datasets</li> <li>• Revised groundwater Recharge recommendations</li> <li>• Quantitative analyses on groundwater recharge recommendations</li> </ul>

*Policy Recommendations and Plan Development*

Planning, technical analysis and engagement activities will inform plan recommendations within the CWP related to potential investments, policy, and regulatory improvements. The Public Draft CWP 2028 will be released for public review by the end of 2027. The final CWP 2028 will be released by end of 2028. Planning and technical work to support CWP 2033 will continue during public review of CWP 2028.

**III. California Water Plan 2028 Engagement**

The CWP 2028 venues for engagement align with CWP legislative requirements and the planning, policy, and technical work being developed for the CWP in compliance with SB 72 and SB 659. To learn more about CWP engagement, please review the “California Water Plan 2028 Engagement Venues.”