

DROUGHT RESILIENCY

The years from 2012 to 2015 were the driest four consecutive years on record in California. The winter of 2015-16 brought welcome storms to Northern California, but the southern half of the state remains dry. Although the state's major northern reservoirs—Shasta, Oroville, and Folsom—have near or above average storage levels for this time of year, storage in southern state reservoirs continues to lag. These conditions serve as another reminder that it will take more than one wet year to erase the impacts of a multi-year drought.

The California Water Action Plan, a roadmap to sustainable water management, guides the state's emergency drought response and includes a long-term commitment to making conservation a way of life, improving groundwater sustainability, and managing and preparing for dry periods.

EMERGENCY DROUGHT RESPONSE

Continued drought conditions heighten the risk of catastrophic wildfires, reduced water quality and dry wells in rural communities, groundwater overdraft and land subsidence, and further deterioration of important ecosystems. The effect of the drought and epidemic bark beetle infestations on the state's forests pose increased public safety risks from falling trees that threaten homes, power lines, roads, and critical community infrastructure.

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The Budget includes \$254.7 million to address these immediate threats and continue the state’s emergency response to the drought. (See Figure DRT-01).

Figure DRT-01
Drought Response
(Dollars in Millions)

<i>Investment Category</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Protecting Water Supplies	Department of Water Resources	Local Assistance for Small Communities	\$10.0
	Water Board	Water Curtailment	\$5.4
	Water Board	Emergency Drinking Water Projects	\$16.0
Water Conservation & Economic Study	Department of Water Resources	Save Our Water Campaign	\$2.0
	Department of Food and Agriculture	Economic Impact of Drought on Agriculture	\$0.2
Emergency Response	Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	Enhanced Fire Protection	\$87.8
	Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	Tree Mortality and Local Fire Prevention Grants	\$21.0
	Department of Water Resources	Drought Management and Response	\$12.0
	Department of Fish and Wildlife	Protection of Fish and Wildlife	\$13.5
	Department of Fish and Wildlife	Delta Smelt Management Strategy	\$4.2
	Department of Social Services	Drought Food Assistance	\$18.4
	Office of Emergency Services	California Disaster Assistance Act	\$52.7
	Office of Emergency Services	State Operations Center	\$4.0
	Department of Community Services and Development	Farmworker Assistance	\$7.5
Total			\$254.7

Significant Adjustments:

- Enhanced Fire Protection—An increase of \$84.9 million General Fund and \$2.9 million State Responsibility Area Fund for the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to continue firefighter surge capacity, retain seasonal

firefighters beyond the budgeted fire season, and enhance aviation capabilities to suppress wildfires from summer through early winter 2016.

- Tree Mortality—An increase of \$51 million to address extensive tree mortality as follows:
 - CAL FIRE—\$11 million General Fund to assist in the removal and disposal of trees in high hazard areas.
 - CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grants—\$10 million State Responsibility Area Fund for local grants to address tree mortality and fire prevention activities.
 - Office of Emergency Services—\$30 million General Fund to provide assistance to counties through the California Disaster Assistance Act, which can be used to assist counties with tree mortality.
- Emergency Services—An increase of \$26.7 million General Fund for the Office of Emergency Services to provide local communities with technical guidance and disaster recovery support related to the drought, distribution of bottled water, and response and recovery training and credentialing for local agencies.
- Food Assistance—An increase of \$18.4 million General Fund for the Department of Social Services to continue the Drought Food Assistance Program, which since 2014 has delivered more than a million boxes of food to communities most impacted by the drought.
- Wildlife Impacts—An increase of \$15.7 million General Fund and \$2 million Hatchery and Inland Fisheries Fund for the Department of Fish and Wildlife to continue fish rescue and stressor monitoring, water efficiency projects on department lands, law enforcement activities, and to provide infrastructure to protect salmon. This funding includes \$4.2 million General Fund to accelerate habitat improvement and aggressively reduce stressors for the Delta smelt.
- Drought Operations—An increase of \$14 million General Fund for the Department of Water Resources to implement statewide actions, including continuation of the Save Our Water campaign, operation of the drought management operations center, water transfer support and water supply modeling.
- Local Assistance for Small Communities—\$10 million General Fund for the Department of Water Resources to provide emergency drinking water support for small communities, including addressing private wells.

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- Farmworker Assistance—An increase of \$7.5 million General Fund for the Department of Community Services and Development to provide emergency assistance to unemployed farmworkers, including housing, utility and job training assistance.
- Water Rights and Grants—An increase of \$5.4 million General Fund and \$16 million Cleanup and Abatement Account for the State Water Resources Control Board to continue enforcement of drought-related water rights and water curtailment actions and provide grants for emergency drinking water projects.

MANAGE AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE DROUGHTS

Both climate change and future population growth will place increasing pressure on the state's water supplies. While rainfall totals have risen in many parts of the state, drought conditions have exposed weaknesses in the state's water system and the laws that govern it. The state must develop a system that is capable of responding effectively to California's ever-changing hydrology and effectively manage supplies to withstand frequent and inevitable droughts.

Efficient water use requires rigorous efforts by state and local government. While the state must provide direction and thresholds for efficient and acceptable water use, local and regional water suppliers must plan, manage, and deliver water to all Californians. To endure future droughts, local suppliers must take the lead to develop substantive, reliable plans based on their local supplies and circumstances. The Budget recognizes these realities and provides funding to help make water conservation a way of life.

Significant Adjustments:

- Drought Preparedness and Resiliency for Urban Water Agencies—An increase of \$4.5 million General Fund for a coordinated effort by the Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board to review and update local water shortage contingency plans, develop recommendations for new water use efficiency targets, and establish a permanent urban water use efficiency data tracking system necessary to accomplish the directives of the Governor's May 9, 2016 Emergency Drought Executive Order.
- Groundwater Sustainability Agency Facilitation—An increase of \$1 million General Fund for the Department of Water Resources to support local public

agencies with facilitation services as they implement the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

- **Water Use Data Sets**—An increase of \$3.5 million General Fund for the Department of Water Resources to (1) support the use of remote sensing technology to establish statewide agricultural land use data that will inform the development of water budgets by groundwater agencies and (2) update data and fix safety hazards at 15 monitoring sites that are part of the National Hydrography Dataset, an important federal surface water mapping system.
- **Manage and Prepare for Dry Periods**—An increase of \$3 million General Fund for the Department of Water Resources to identify water delivery operational improvements in extreme conditions and evaluate long-term climate change impacts on statewide water supplies.

SAFE DRINKING WATER

Over 400 public water systems rely on sources of drinking water that fall short of state and federal safe drinking water standards. Many of these systems are located in low-income communities.

In 2015, legislation was enacted to authorize the State Water Resources Control Board to require consolidation of local water systems in disadvantaged communities when a system consistently fails to provide an adequate supply of safe drinking water to its customers. Currently, some water systems lack capacity to adequately serve their customers and others have run out of water completely. This legislation authorizes the Water Board to order adjacent water systems to consolidate with failing systems, only when technically and economically feasible.

The Budget builds on these existing efforts to improve access to safe drinking water in disadvantaged communities.

Significant Adjustments:

- **Drinking Water in Schools**—An increase of \$500,000 General Fund for the Water Board to contract with non-profit organizations to provide assistance to schools in disadvantaged communities applying for and implementing grants for drinking water improvement projects. The Budget also includes \$9.5 million Proposition 98

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General Fund for the Water Board to establish this grant program. For additional information, see the K-12 Education Chapter.

- Improved Monitoring and Reporting of Drinking Water—An increase of \$1.3 million Safe Drinking Water Account and eight positions for the Water Board to (1) prepare guidance documents and engage in outreach to schools to assist local efforts for water quality testing, and (2) support public water systems in improving compliance with federal reporting requirements.