

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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January 16, 2026

Sent via email

Subject: California Water Plan Update 2028 and Tribal Water Summit Planning Team

Dear Tribal Leaders, Council Members, and Delegated Representatives,

This letter serves as an invitation for consultation with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) on the California Water Plan (CWP) Update 2028 and an opportunity to participate in a virtual Tribal webinar, the CWP Public Advisory Committee (PAC), the Tribal Advisory Committee (Tribal AC), and/or the Tribal Water Summit (TWS) Planning Committee. DWR is committed to working with the California Native American Tribes under DWR's *Tribal Engagement Policy* and the California Natural Resources Agency's *Tribal Consultation Policy*.

DWR is hosting a virtual Tribal webinar on February 9, from 10:00 – 12:00pm, to provide information about the CWP Update 2028 (see *Attachment 1: CWP 2028 Update Tribal Webinar Save-The-Date Flyer*). This meeting is intended for Tribal leadership and delegated representatives to get an overview of the CWP 2028 scope and schedule, share opportunities for Tribes to participate, and engage with DWR leadership. After the meeting, DWR will provide a copy of the presentation with meeting notes when they become available to those who registered.

To register for the Tribal webinar, refer to *Attachment 1* or follow the [Zoom Registration Link](#).

California Water Plan Background

The CWP is updated every five years and is the State's strategic plan for sustainably and equitably managing, developing, and stewarding water resources. As required by Water Code section 10005, the plan presents the status and trends of water-dependent natural resources, water supplies, and water demands for a range of plausible future scenarios. The CWP provides a way for elected officials, government agencies, Tribes, water and resource managers, businesses, academics, and the public to collaborate on findings and recommendations to make informed decisions regarding California's water future.

Senate Bill (SB) 72 passed October 1, 2025 and directs DWR to do the following, among other things (see *Attachment 2: Implementing SB 72*):

- expand the membership of the advisory committee to include Tribes, labor, and environmental justice interests to assist and provide input to DWR in the updating of the CWP
- consider the identified and future urban, agricultural, recreational, Tribal and environmental water needs , and ensure safe drinking water for all Californians

- conduct public workshops to give interested parties an opportunity to comment on the plan.

For more information, visit the California Water Plan website:

<https://water.ca.gov/Programs/California-Water-Plan>

CWP 2028 Public Advisory Committee

As a result of SB 72, DWR is seeking Tribal nominees to fill one Tribal seat to serve on the PAC with 1-2 alternates who are also able to participate in the Tribal AC and represent statewide Tribal priorities, values, and interests. ***To submit a Tribal nominee for consideration on the CWP Update 2028 PAC, please submit a letter via email with the individual and their contact information by February 13, 2026, to DWR's Point of Contact (see Attachment 3: Sample Letter).***

CWP 2028 Tribal Advisory Committee

The Tribal AC is a forum where California Tribes and Tribal organizations can participate in development of materials for the CWP Update 2028 to ensure inclusion of Tribal perspectives on land, water, and culture. The Tribal AC will support development, early review, and opportunities for comment on draft documents to inform CWP Update 2028. The Tribal AC is not a consulting body and is not intended to replace government-to-government consultation with individual Tribal governments.

The Tribal AC is open to the following:

- Tribal Leadership and Tribally-delegated representatives to represent the Tribal government
- Tribal non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Tribal supported NGOs and their members.

Ideally, the designee would be in a Tribal leadership position, but this is not required. The role of the Tribal designee and alternate will be to support information sharing between the Tribe and Tribal AC including updates, comments, and recommendations on behalf of the Tribe. They will not be asked to make any decisions on behalf of the Tribe. Tribal AC members will participate in hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings convened 2-3 times per year with occasional briefing, update, and plenary meetings as needed. ***To join the Tribal AC, please submit a letter via email designating an individual and alternate with contact information to DWR's Point of Contact below (see Attachment 3: Sample Letter).***

2028 Tribal Water Summit Planning Committee

DWR will develop a planning committee for the Spring 2028 statewide TWS to provide recommendations that support development of the CWP. The TWS is convened every five years with California Native American Tribal, State, and federal government leaders in Sacramento, California.

The first TWS was held November 4 and 5, 2009, and developed over 50 recommendations with the proceedings included in CWP Update 2009. The second TWS was held April 24 and 25, 2013, and resulted in support from Tribes and State agencies on the Guiding Principles and Statement of Goals for Implementation and the Implementation Goals and Actions. The third TWS was held April 4 and 5, 2018, with

nearly 300 attendees and sessions covering a range of topics including Indigenous water rights, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, capacity building and co-management of resources. The fourth TWS was held April 11-13, 2023, to continue discussions, introduce various workshops including Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Tribal cultural resources, launched the Tribal Water film festival and introduced a Tribal Youth Water Protector certificate training program in coordination with California Tribal College.

TWS proceedings are available online at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/California-Water-Plan/Water-Plan-Participation/Tribal-Water-Summit>

The Planning Committee is open to California Native American Tribal members or staff and Tribal non-governmental organizations. The role of the TWS Planning Committee is to identify topics, develop materials, and conduct outreach for the TWS. Planning Committee members will participate as individual volunteers and be expected to attend 2- to 4-hour-long monthly meetings held virtually, with additional meetings as needed.

DWR Point of Contact

To submit a Tribal nominee for the CWP 2028 PAC, join the Tribal AC and/or TWS Planning Committee, or if the Tribe has any questions, please contact:

Emily Alejandrino, CWP Tribal Liaison
Emily.Alejandrino@water.ca.gov
(279) 231-0754

To request government-to-government consultation under DWR's *Tribal Engagement Policy* and the California Natural Resources Agency's *Tribal Consultation Policy* contact:

Anecita Agustinez, Executive Manager
DWR Office of Tribal Affairs
TribalPolicyAdvisor@water.ca.gov
(916) 216-8637

We look forward to your participation at the virtual Tribal webinar on February 9, 2026, and your nominations for a Tribal delegate to the CWP 2028 PAC and Tribal AC.

The prior successes of the TWS are a testament to the past support of California's Tribal governments and Tribal organizations, and we look forward to your continued partnership over the next two years to achieve these goals.

Respectfully,



Joel Metzger
Deputy Director
DWR Statewide Water Resources Planning
& Enterprise Project Management



Anecita Agustinez
Executive Manager
DWR Office of Tribal Affairs

Attachment 1. CWP 2028 Update Tribal Webinar Save-The-Date Flyer
Attachment 2. Implementing SB 72: Modernizing California's Water Plan
Attachment 3. Sample Letter

California Water Plan 2028 Update

Tribal Informational Meeting

Hosted by Department of Water Resources

February 9, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

SAVE THE DATE

This meeting is intended for
Tribal leadership and delegated
representatives



Overview of the **California
Water Plan update 2028**
scope and schedule



Opportunities for
Tribes to participate



Engage with
DWR leadership

This meeting will be held virtually through Zoom.



Please register through the
Zoom Registration link

or

[https://ca-water-gov.zoom.us/meeting/
register/qRVehR7PRwStRS2U43_fXA](https://ca-water-gov.zoom.us/meeting/register/qRVehR7PRwStRS2U43_fXA)

Videoconference and call-in information will be
provided via email confirmation upon registration.

For more information, please contact:

Anecita Agustinez,

DWR Office of Tribal Affairs Executive Manager



TribalPolicyAdvisor@water.ca.gov



[916-216-8637](tel:916-216-8637)

California Department of Water Resources





IMPLEMENTING SB 72: MODERNIZING CALIFORNIA'S WATER PLAN

Key Updates Ahead of 2026 Rollout

California's Changing Water Reality

In 2022, Governor Newsom released California's Water Supply Strategy, outlining how the state must adapt to a hotter, drier future. As temperatures rise, more precipitation will be absorbed by dry soils, consumed by plants, or evaporate—meaning less water reaches streams, rivers, and reservoirs, placing new strain on the state's water supply.

In October 2025, the Governor and Legislature gave the Department of Water Resources (DWR) an important opportunity to address this challenge: **Senate Bill 72 (SB 72)**.

What SB 72 Does

SB 72 directs DWR to **modernize the California Water Plan by building a data-driven playbook** for the state's water future. It requires DWR to:

1. Quantify statewide and watershed-level water-supply gaps
2. Identify effective water management actions with economic analyses
3. Set measurable statewide and watershed-level targets, including an interim statewide goal of 9 million acre-feet by 2040*.

Together, these elements create a **consistent, data-driven foundation** for statewide water resilience.

How SB 72 Builds on Watershed-Scale Planning

The 2023 California Water Plan prioritized **watershed-scale resilience** as the basis for long-term planning. DWR has advanced this approach through **Integrated Regional Water Management pilots** and the **San Joaquin Basin Watershed Studies** which evaluate climate-driven supply, groundwater, flood, and ecosystem conditions. **SB 72 expands this approach statewide**, ensuring watershed-level insights inform statewide targets and strategies.

San Joaquin Basin Watershed Studies: A Model for Statewide Planning

The upcoming San Joaquin Basin Watershed Studies integrate climate, hydrologic, groundwater, and ecological information to identify multi-benefit project opportunities. These studies preview the type of regional analysis that will support SB 72 statewide.

**The 9 million acre-feet target reflects the amount of water California is projected to lose by 2040 due to a hotter, drier climate; SB 72 helps identify adaptation strategies to offset these impacts.*

Note: While SB 72 does not provide new funding, DWR is working closely with the Administration and the Department of Finance on options to fund this work.

WHAT'S AHEAD: KEY ELEMENTS OF SB 72 IMPLEMENTATION

Where are we now: DWR is preparing public materials and coordinating with the California Water Commission to align SB 72 with California Water Plan Update 2028 engagement, setting the foundation for broader public participation processes. DWR will:

1. Public Engagement and Transparency (Early 2026)

- Post comprehensive information on SB 72 on the California Water Plan webpage
- Brief the California Water Commission; Commission meetings will serve as public venues for updates throughout implementation
- Form the California Water Plan Update 2028 Update Advisory Committee

2. Advisory Committees and Caucuses (Early 2026)

These groups will help shape watershed-level information, statewide targets, and adaptation strategies.

- A **Public Advisory Committee (PAC)** and **sector-based caucuses** (agricultural, environmental, urban, Tribal, etc.) to support transparency and community perspectives.
- A **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** to provide scientific and technical input on data, modeling, and analytical approaches.

3. Watershed and Regional Engagement (Spring 2026 and Beyond):

DWR will share updated information and host regional forums across Hydrologic Regions. This work will continue into 2027 as new data and modeling become available.

4. Local Project Tracker (Launching in 2026):

DWR will launch a local project tracker to organize and display water projects across the state. This tool will help connect community-level actions to watershed strategies and statewide targets developed under SB 72.

5. Technical Foundations (2026–2027): DWR's technical work will focus on three core areas:

- A. Water Use & Supply Balances:** Developing consistent statewide datasets and transitioning to watershed-based analysis.
- B. Long-Term Water Supply Targets:** Establishing watershed and statewide targets for urban, agricultural, and environmental uses.
- C. Adaptation Strategies & Actions:** Identifying effective strategies and actions to close supply gaps.

Together, these workstreams form the backbone of a modernized, climate-ready California Water Plan.

How to Stay Involved

- Visit the SB 72 section of the California Water Plan webpage
- Join advisory committee/caucus meetings and regional engagement opportunities
- Follow California Water Commission updates
- Connect through ACWA, CMUA, and other statewide events



Sample Letter

Send letter to Emily.Alejandrino@water.ca.gov

Representative to DWR California Water Plan Update 2028 Public Advisory Committee and Tribal Advisory Committee

Dear Ms. Alejandrino,

As [Tribal Chairperson, Council Member, Administrator] with delegated authority,

I, _____, hereby identify

_____ as our liaison/member and

_____ as an alternate for the California Water Plan Update 2028 [Public Advisory Committee / Tribal Advisory Committee].

_____ and _____ are solely identified as the Tribe's representative member and alternate for the [Public Advisory Committee / Tribal Advisory Committee] to support information sharing and coordination. Any decisions or support of recommendations on behalf of the Tribe will require additional authorization.

Respectfully,

[Tribal Chairperson, Council Member, Administrator]