



PPIC WATER POLICY CENTER

The PPIC Water Policy Center spurs innovative water management solutions that support a healthy economy, environment, and society—now and for future generations.

The center takes a bold, future-oriented approach, working to put California's water management on a sound and sustainable path.



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

25 YEARS



THE REALITIES OF CALIFORNIA WATER

California’s volatile climate makes water management a complex balancing act marked by ongoing dilemmas and the occasional urgent crisis. Key problems—such as flood risk, drought preparedness, and groundwater sustainability—are being targeted by new policies at the federal, state, and local levels. But much more work lies ahead. With significant changes expected in the state’s population, economy, and climate—and pressures from aging infrastructure and a deteriorating natural environment—California needs to develop meaningful, lasting, forward-looking water policies.

To be successful, new approaches must be practical, evidence-based, and scientifically sound. Public agencies, elected officials, and stakeholder groups increasingly recognize the need to transcend traditional divides and find fresh and innovative ways to manage one of the state’s most precious resources—for economic prosperity and environmental sustainability.

A CREDIBLE, INDEPENDENT, AND TRUSTED BROKER

The PPIC Water Policy Center strategically connects nonpartisan, objective research to real-world water management debates. It bridges the gap between rigorous scientific understanding and complex policy problems. It offers clear explanations of trade-offs and outlines potential pathways forward. And it brings stakeholders to the table, providing a safe, neutral space for productive conversations.



Managing water is one of the toughest—and most important—challenges facing California. PPIC’s objective, timely work has helped transform debates, bring stakeholders together, and advance innovative but realistic approaches to help us move forward.

GEORGE P. SHULTZ

THE CENTER FOCUSES ON THREE CRITICAL, INTERRELATED WATER MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES FACING CALIFORNIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY



ENSURING CLEAN AND RELIABLE WATER SUPPLIES

Investigating and encouraging comprehensive, integrated approaches to water quality and quantity



BUILDING HEALTHY AND RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS

Promoting the development of healthy and sustainable ecosystems using practical approaches to watershed management



PREPARING FOR DROUGHTS AND FLOODS

Helping California to adapt to an increasingly variable climate

A STRONG TRACK RECORD ON KEY WATER CHALLENGES

The PPIC Water Policy Center—directed by senior fellow Ellen Hanak—builds on the successful model of strategic research and engagement that defines all of PPIC’s work. The center’s targeted and sustained strategy includes:

TAPPING A WIDE-RANGING RESEARCH NETWORK

A dynamic group of top researchers—from around the state and beyond—approach California’s water challenges from a range of disciplines, including biology, economics, engineering, geology, and law.

ENGAGING POLICY AUDIENCES

Employing innovative communication strategies, the center delivers timely, credible, and actionable information—inspiring and energizing our audiences around opportunities to affect water policy.

The center’s nimble, responsive approach to research and engagement is fostering a deeper understanding of key water issues among decision makers and other stakeholders, spurring greater momentum for better policy choices and more effective outcomes for California.



SUPPORT THE PPIC WATER POLICY CENTER

Our supporters appreciate our role as a trusted broker in California’s water policy debates. They also play an important role in expanding awareness of our work throughout the state and beyond. Committed funding partners are essential to support the need for timely information and to build momentum for effective solutions.

YOUR SUPPORT ALLOWS US TO PURSUE A WIDE RANGE OF CRITICAL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING:

- Original, path-breaking research on major water challenges, such as aquatic ecosystem health, climate change adaptation, access to safe drinking water, and water stress in the Central Valley.
- Events around the state that bring stakeholders from different perspectives together to explore challenges and solutions.
- The *California’s Water* briefing kit, a unique and essential resource of key facts.
- A major annual water policy conference on managing water for cities, farms, rural communities, and ecosystems.
- Named research fellowships and internship programs.

A full list of the center’s supporters is available on our website. For more information, please contact Lisa Cole, PPIC Director of Development, at cole@ppic.org or 415.291.4495.

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INSPIRING CHANGE IN WATER POLICY

A Challenging Year in California Water

California’s water management systems were pushed to the breaking point last year by extreme events, including heavy rains that flooded towns and farmland, damaged infrastructure, and caused landslides. Multiple heatwaves and massive wildfires destroyed water systems and polluted supplies. How do these events affect California’s water systems? The PPIC Water Policy Center is finding out. We are also fostering discussions about actions needed now to prepare the state for an even more volatile climate in the future.

The PPIC Water Policy Center has benefitted greatly from the generous support and partnership of engaged individuals and organizations. Key impacts of our work in the past year include:

Finding a way forward for the Delta

Our expertise was called on by the governor, state agencies, and other stakeholders to help inform ongoing efforts to improve management of the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta. We provided input on infrastructure issues and environmental water management and broadened discussions on major Delta decisions. Governor Gavin Newsom has signaled that he is in favor of our recommendation for a single Delta tunnel rather than the twin tunnels proposed under California WaterFix.

Envisioning transitions for a water-stressed San Joaquin Valley

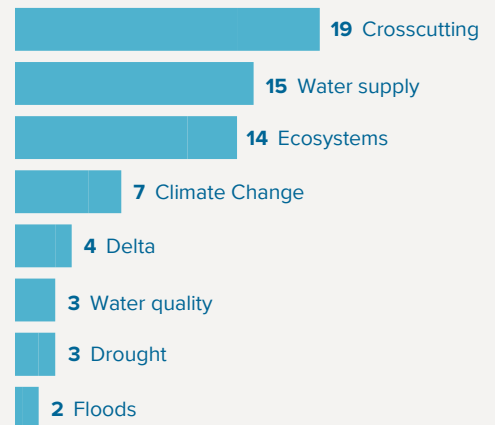
Our extensive review of water and land management stresses in the San Joaquin Valley—and our proposals to reduce the pain they cause—have helped build momentum for cooperative, multi-benefit approaches to tackling groundwater overdraft. Top state officials are taking note: Wade Crowfoot, secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency, called our 2019 report “a roadmap for the state,” and it is fast becoming a key resource in supporting local efforts to replenish groundwater basins in this highly productive farm region.

Planning for a changing climate

The latest drought—the hottest in the state’s recorded history and one of the driest—offered a window into the future under a warming climate. We summarized key lessons from that experience and identified essential reforms to help the state prepare for and respond to future droughts—including improving drought planning in smaller, rural communities and upgrading aspects of the state’s water grid. We testified in Washington, DC on these issues at a House committee on infrastructure and provided guidance to the state on how to effectively implement new policies on water conservation and recycled water.



CENTER PRODUCTS COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF WATER ISSUES



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