



Media Release

State Water Board to Host Inaugural 'Water Data Dive' to Expand Public Access to Data, Foster Innovative Tools

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will conduct its inaugural Water Data Dive – a multiagency effort to increase public access to available data and encourage development of new tools that improve understanding and stewardship of California’s water resources.

The Water Data Dive is a series of data-centered events from March 18 to April 22, focused on fostering transparency, innovation and collaboration among the Water Boards, state and local agencies, and the public.

“Just like the water itself, the data we collect belongs to everyone,” said Greg Gearheart, deputy director of the State Water Board’s Office of Information Management and Analysis. “Our hope is that by making key sets of data more accessible we can empower our stakeholders to help us do our jobs better. Water is life and life is complex. Just like your own health, it takes more than a simple thermometer to protect the health of our waters. The exciting thing is that everyone can help us now.”

One of the events to be held during the Data Dive is the [Data Innovation Challenge](#) -- a competition to create apps, visualizations and other tools that can help harness the Water Boards' and publicly available water data. The goal is to draw on the creativity and talent of water stakeholders, visualization experts, academic researchers, software developers and designers to develop innovative tools and find synergies between the Water Boards’ datasets and other datasets. The Data Innovation Challenge focuses on challenges related to climate change adaptation, regulatory oversight and water quality.

To kick off the Data Innovation Challenge, a one-day [Data Fair](#) will be held on March 18 at the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) building in Sacramento. The fair will feature discussions about publicly available data, including Water Board databases; access to dataset managers; and thought-provoking presentations. The Data Fair will provide an opportunity for diverse interests to collaborate and explore the potential for integrating datasets and conducting synthesis and analyses. Register for the Data Fair via [Eventbrite](#). The Data Fair will also be available via webcast.





Entries for the Data Innovation Challenge are due by 5 p.m., April 19, and the challenge will culminate on Earth Day (April 22) with an event at the CalEPA headquarters. Participants will present their entries, and a panel of judges, composed of data science experts and water policy leaders, will award prizes to the teams with the most innovative and insightful products.

The State Water Board's Office of Information Management and Analysis is leading the Water Data Dive efforts. For more information, visit the State Water Board Data and Databases [website](#), the [open data portal](#) being used in this project, or the direct link to the competition's website: <http://findanewway.ca.gov>. And follow us on Twitter and Facebook using the hashtag [#CAWaterDataDive](#).

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