

# NORTH STATE WATER ALLIANCE



COMMITTED TO STATEWIDE WATER SOLUTIONS THAT PROTECT THE ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT, AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

April 25, 2012

Charlie Hoppin, Chair  
Members of the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman and Members of the Board:

The North State Water *Alliance* (*Alliance*) urges the State Water Resources Control Board (Board), during its process to develop Bay-Delta flow objectives, to recognize the important and diverse beneficial uses of water in Northern California upstream of the Bay-Delta. The *Alliance* provides these comments to the Board's January 24, 2012 Supplemental Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Update and Implementation of the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan).

More than 150 cities, counties, water suppliers, businesses, and community groups in Northern California have recently united to form the *Alliance* around our common interests in assuring sustainable water resources. The *Alliance* is an urban-rural partnership committed to statewide water solutions that protect the economy, environment and quality of life in Northern California.

Many of the North State's beneficial uses of water are described in "Water in California's North State," which is enclosed for your review. Water from local rivers, streams and groundwater in Northern California grows food for the world; serves our homes and businesses; supports birds along the Pacific Flyway; provides recreational opportunities enjoyed by visitors from around the world, supplies clean, renewable hydropower; and sustains our forests and prime habitat for fish and wildlife.

## PARTNERS



metrochamber



[northstatewater.org](http://northstatewater.org)

Many *Alliance* participants will be providing more specific comments under separate cover that we encourage you to review in more detail.

If you have any questions, please call us or visit our website at [www.northstatewater.org](http://www.northstatewater.org).

Sincerely yours,



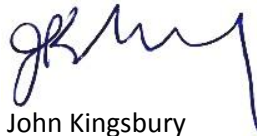
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WATER IN

# California's North State



## **NORTH STATE WATER ALLIANCE**

COMMITTED TO STATEWIDE WATER SOLUTIONS THAT PROTECT THE ECONOMY,  
ENVIRONMENT, AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.



## THE NORTH STATE REGION

California's modern history began with the gold rush on North State streams and agriculture in the Sacramento Valley. Today, the North State is an exceptional place to raise a family, build a successful business, and enjoy the recreational opportunities and natural environment.

Although most of the nearly four million residents of the North State live and work in urban job centers, the region spans an extraordinary mosaic of cities and rural communities, farmlands and forests, refuges and wetlands.

Supporting these diverse landscapes are our water resources, including alpine lakes and streams and the state's largest rivers and reservoirs, many of which are operated, maintained and protected by local public water agencies. North State

watersheds and ecosystems provide natural storage, filtration, and conveyance of high-quality water. The water sustains the environment, population, and economy of the North State, as well as much of the rest of California. Water from local streams and groundwater basins grows the world's food, serves our homes and businesses, supports birds along the Pacific Flyway, provides recreational opportunities enjoyed by visitors from around the world, supplies clean, renewable hydropower, and sustains our forests and prime habitat for fish and wildlife.

Water is critical to the environment, economy, and our way of life in the North State. Ongoing water management and economic development efforts will leave a lasting legacy for future generations that ensures a vibrant economy and healthy quality of life that is inextricably linked with this special landscape.





## INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT

North State water resources managers are working with elected officials, governmental agencies, businesses, farmers and conservationists on innovative programs for watershed management, water use efficiency, conservation, reuse and recycling. The North State is actively balancing the water supplies that support both a vibrant economy and a healthy environment and we are continually improving the management of surface and groundwater sources to sustain this important balance.

Examples of our innovative water management programs that are recognized statewide and nationally include:

- Aggressive efforts to screen major water supply diversions—protecting endangered salmon and other fish, while assuring reliable deliveries of water to cities, farms and wildlife refuges. At the same time, the North State is restoring fish habitat and removing barriers to aid migration.
- Water management improvements deliver reliable water supplies to state and National Wildlife Refuges, and the ricelands that provide essential habitat for migrating waterfowl and raptors utilizing the Pacific Flyway, as well as wintering shorebirds and resident wildlife.
- Groundbreaking agreements to implement the co-equal goals of water supply and environmental stewardship on North State rivers. The Yuba Accord and the American River Water Forum Agreement exemplify the commitment to ensuring water for healthy fisheries and safe and reliable water supplies for the region's economy. Aggressive water efficiency programs, including landscape replacement, substituting recycled water for a variety of uses, and state-of-the-art automated metering, and irrigation using weather station data and soil moisture monitoring to maximize the value of our water supplies.
- Reducing the water quality impacts and threat to water supply and infrastructure posed by wildfires by reducing fuels, controlling erosion and restoring landscapes.

## SACOG'S RURAL-URBAN CONNECTIONS STRATEGY

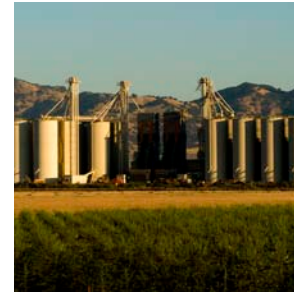
For over a decade, we have taken a regional approach to planning our future. The Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS) has brought together water resources, land use and agricultural stakeholders and planners in the region to look at ways to balance the economic and environmental needs of rural and urban communities. A key RUCS outcome is a toolkit to help the region plan for infrastructure investments, model impacts

to agriculture based on changes in conditions such as water supply and many other factors, as well as implement innovative ideas for agriculture and land use that improve water efficiency and the viability of agriculture.

Learn about RUCS at [sacog.org/rucs](https://sacog.org/rucs)

## WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Water is an essential element of the economic and environmental well-being of the North State. Changes in the allocation of water could have *devastating impacts* to the North State.



### AGRICULTURE

With several million acres of irrigated lands and over \$5 billion in agricultural products, the North State produces nearly every agricultural product imaginable, and feeds the state and the world. Irrigation is what keeps these products moving to market, and with a multiplier effect of \$2 for every \$1 in agricultural values, the region generates \$10 billion in economic activity.



### RECREATION

North State water draws more than 50 million people to hike, ski, fish, raft and boat in our region. From the Sierra to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, lakes and rivers among forests, farms and cities create an experience like no other.



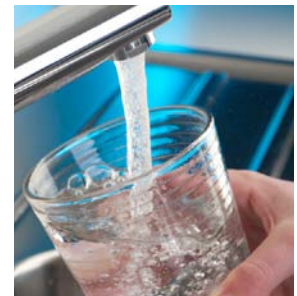
### ENVIRONMENT

Fish, wildlife and native plants, including some that are threatened and endangered, depend on water to thrive. The snow and rain that falls in our region serves a delicate ecological system—much of which is supported through actively managed conservation work.



### HYDROPOWER

The reservoirs of the North State produce enough hydroelectricity to power 14 million homes in the western United States. Water supply and timely releases are key factors in proper operation of this critical infrastructure.



### URBAN

Nearly four million people live in the North State region and use water for everything from high-tech manufacturing to residential life. Water is the cornerstone to maintaining our quality of life and future prosperity.



The North State region provides more than  
**22 MILLION**  
acre-feet of water to meet the state's  
environmental, agricultural, and urban needs.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

Water rights priorities and area-of-origin assurances must be recognized and protected to ensure reliable supplies for all water uses and environmental needs in our region.

Stakeholders in the North State must be given the opportunity to be fully included in and consulted on all aspects of development of a Delta solution and other state and federal water policies that affect the region.

A Delta solution and other state or federal actions must honor and not reduce or preempt the authority and responsibilities of cities, counties, and other local agencies to take actions that further the interests of the jurisdiction and its citizens.

The North State region will continue to invest in and implement water supply, water efficiency, recycling and re-use, storage, and other water management projects and programs that are cost effective and improve our regional self-sufficiency.

We will support a Delta solution that:

- is based on sound science to ensure it is effective and implemented in an equitable manner;
- requires the beneficiaries of any actions associated with a Delta solution to fully fund the costs of such actions; and
- avoids or fully mitigates negative economic, environmental, or societal impacts to areas in our region.

**CONTACT US AND LEARN MORE**  
**NORTHSTATEWATER.ORG**

## NORTH STATE WATER ALLIANCE

The North State Water Alliance is a growing partnership of cities, counties, water providers, business, and community groups in northern California.

Our common geography and interests have brought us together to work closely on water issues.

## FOUNDING PARTNERS



### metrechamber

California's second-largest chamber of commerce, representing nearly 2,200 businesses in the greater Sacramento region



Representing water interests in all or a portion of 15 California counties in the Sierra Nevada and foothills



Representing more than sixty water suppliers and local governments that provide water for farms, wildlife refuges, rural communities and fisheries throughout the Sacramento Valley



Representing the water suppliers that serve two million customers in the greater Sacramento Metropolitan Area



Representing 22 cities and six counties in northern California

THE COMPLETE AND GROWING LIST OF NORTH STATE WATER ALLIANCE PARTNERS IS AVAILABLE AT NORTHSTATEWATER.ORG