

California State Board of Food and Agriculture

Water Committee

Statement of Shared Principles

Purpose:

To provide Board Members guidance in participation in public meetings representing the California State Board of Food and Agriculture in regards to the Water Storage and Investment Program (Prop 1).

Shared Principles in relation to the Water Storage and Investment Program:

- Agriculture is an essential part of California – Farming and ranching are the primary economic activity in most of rural California and is critical to the economy of the Central Valley where over 6 million California’s live. California produces half of the nation’s fruits, nuts, and vegetables and is also the leading agricultural producer in the nation with more than \$54 billion in production from 76,400 farms and ranches in the state.
- Farming and ranching provide public benefits, including producing food, to our state and rural communities – through environmental conservation practices, the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and other stewardship and sustainability initiatives.
- The California Water Action Plan and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act provide the foundation for a collaborative and inclusive process to achieve sustainable statewide water management.
- The public benefits provided by the diversity of water storage options are of great value to all of California. Our economy, environment and overall quality of life are all enhanced through a well-funded water storage system that advances a safe and reliable supply of water.
- Proposition 1: the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 is an investment within the state’s water management system that advances a safe and reliable supply of water to support the state’s economy, environment and quality of life.
- The Water Storage and Investment Program allows California to invest \$2.7 billion in public benefits associated with water storage projects that improve the operation of the state water system, are cost effective and provide measurable improvements to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta or the tributaries to the Delta.
- Surface storage, groundwater storage, conjunctive use/reservoir reoperation projects and local and regional surface storage projects are recognized as having public benefits considered eligible as a qualified water storage project under the Water Storage and Investment Program.

- Public benefits are defined in Proposition 1 as ecosystem improvements, water quality improvements, flood control benefits, emergency response, and recreational purposes.
- In funding public benefit projects associated with water storage, the Committee believes:
 - That the metrics used to evaluate public benefits be transparent, measurable, as well as differentiate between direct and indirect benefits to the Delta.
 - Metrics should encompass an agricultural component, recognizing the public benefits that water storage projects can have to local communities and the state through the protection of prime agricultural land, on-farm environmental practices and the benefit of farming to rural economies.
 - Water storage projects that provide regional and/or statewide benefits should have equal consideration under the Water Storage and Investment Program.
 - The number of eligible water storage projects will most likely exceed funding availability and the California Water Commission should strive to maximize the beneficial use of public funds.
 - The California Water Commission should adhere to the timeline established in the statute.