

California Water Plan Update 2003

Excerpts from remarks of Thomas Hannigan, DWR Director before the Advisory Committee for the California Water Plan on January 23, 2002

Thank you ...for your continued efforts as members of the Advisory Committee for Update 2003 of the California Water Plan. And Happy First Anniversary!

...Your contributions are helping make the next California Water Plan Update a more useful guide for how the state should invest its dollars to keep up with its growing water demands and to sustain its natural resources and economic growth. You are quite literally helping to shape the bright future for California...

A year ago, DWR initiated a new approach for preparing Update 2003 to ensure that we: (1) meet the requirements in the Water Code, (2) maximize our stakeholder input, and (3) [finish]...with a Water Plan Update that is a useful resource to water managers, planners and decision makers. Our new approach is based on a collaborative, open, and facilitated strategic planning process, and it is aimed at achieving maximum consensus...on what California needs to do next... .

...There is growing awareness that this new approach is working... . In fact, the Resources Agency now considers this collaborative process as a framework that other departments should emulate. Your input and insights are invaluable, and you have already changed the essence of Update 2003. The Water Portfolio, Flow Diagram, and your recommendation to use actual data have fundamentally changed the way we will describe existing water supplies, uses and management decisions. The Study Plan Building Blocks...are becoming a new alphabet and vocabulary for water planning... .

Exactly what [the] future will bring is difficult to know with any certainty. Shifting economic trends, continued population growth, new policy and regulatory decisions, the possibility of global climate change, national security – these are but a few of the factors external to this group's discussions which could well impact future water availability and use in California. So how do we plan for so many possible versions of the future? The short but true answer is to plan carefully, seriously, and frequently, and to diversify - that is, we need to place our eggs in many baskets. State and regional efforts have already placed eggs in a few baskets, such as the CALFED ROD actions, the Colorado 4.4 Plan, and other local initiatives.

...Some of your most challenging work is still ahead. We have but 15 short months to prepare to distribute the statutorily required public review draft of Update 2003. In light of both this short time frame and the inherent uncertainty of the future, I urge you to focus on the big pieces of the puzzle. As part of those big pieces, it would be good for you to consider several plausible future water conditions that might cover a range of water demands for each region of the state. And for each condition and region, it would be prudent to plan a number of

management responses that could be implemented sequentially with local or state funds.

Considering the many viewpoints represented..., consensus may be difficult and perhaps not possible on all issues. But I would suggest, however, that to the extent that you can reach consensus on appropriate management responses for various conditions, they will be reflected in Update 2003.

Water is more than a resource; it is the foundation of life. It is essential then that the first Water Plan Update of this century lay the foundation, both in process and in content, for California's water future. Help us make this plan a document that is as relevant and alive as the people, plants and animals that the water of California must serve.

Thank you again for your commitment to serving on this Advisory Committee.

Thomas Hannigan

Director

January 23, 2002