

Planning Framework for Water Plan Update

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State Water Code directs the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to prepare periodic California Water Plan Updates. The 2005 update departs from previous efforts by incorporating a new planning framework. Working with an active 65-member advisory committee and an almost 400-member Extended Review Forum, DWR sought to increase the *Update's* relevance, utility and usefulness.

The advisory committee is composed of representatives from agriculture, urban water districts, businesses, environmentalists, Native Americans, environmental justice advocates, cities, counties, federal and State agencies, the California Bay Delta Authority, academia, and different regions of the State. Both DWR and the advisory committee find the new framework to be one of the significant accomplishments of this water plan update. With built in initial support, the approach serves as a cornerstone for future updates.

The new framework will be easier for decision makers at all levels of government to adopt because it considerably expands public involvement and access to the State's water planning process. This approach provides more robust, collaborative recommendations and greater longevity; provides more utility and options for resource managers; and, results in a strategic plan. It also serves as a living document with stated goals, objectives, and implementation plan, including progress tracking, indicators and reports. The approach consists of:

- Phased planning
- Collaborative planning process
- Comprehensive way for describing current and future water supplies, uses and management (Water Portfolios with over 80 categories) using actual data (not trend-based) for recent yet different water year types, namely 1998 (wet), 2000 (average), and 2001 (drier)
- Detailed reports on each of the regions of the State
- Multiple scenarios for plausible futures (not a single "likely" future) to identify and minimize future uncertainties and risks
- Many diverse resource management strategies to meet future water demands while sustaining our resource base and economy

Phased Planning

In this Update, DWR achieves Water Code requirements through a phased work plan that also develops analytical tools and acquires data for the next California Water Plan Update. (See Box 1-2 Legal Requirements for California Water Plan and Volume 4 Reference Guide article "Work Plan for Meeting Legal Requirements for the California Water Plan.") New information will help regional and local agencies in integrated water resource management. The plan phases follow:

- Phase 1: Distribute the Public Review Draft of *California Water Plan Update 2005*, a five-volume publication. This water plan update is based on the best available data and information and input

from an active and diverse advisory committee. *Update 2005* recommends policy and priorities, documents gaps in data and analytical tools, and describes an approach for future quantitative analysis. (Phase 1 is complete.)

- **Phase 2:** Started in 2004 this phase provides a final *California Water Plan Update 2005* with revised policy recommendations based on broad public input and numerous public hearings. Phase 2 also documents the data, analytical tools, methods, and assumptions DWR will use in Phase 3. (Phase 2 is complete with publication of this document.)
- **Phase 3:** Phase 3 begins in 2006 when DWR initiates the process for the next California Water Plan Update with participation of a broad public advisory committee. DWR will begin to quantify and evaluate 3 future scenarios and alternative management responses using the data and tools identified in Phase 2. A water flow diagram will present evaluation results for wet and dry year conditions, and a California Department of Food and Agriculture food forecast will be used to estimate future irrigated crop water use. As part of an ongoing strategic planning process, DWR will present Phase 3 evaluations to the public as they become available. The *California Water Plan Update 2005* strategic plan findings, recommendations, and the implementation plan will be reviewed and revised periodically.
- **Other:** Although DWR will continuously refresh and add plan data and information, five additional point-in-time, five- year water plan updates will be produced during the twenty-five year (2030) planning horizon.

Collaborative Planning

This update recognizes the vital importance of working with key stakeholders to define issues, identify potential approaches, and evaluate planning steps. Since January 2001 DWR and an advisory committee representing critical sectors with an interest in water management have worked to shape the new planning framework and strategic planning process. Using large group meetings held roughly every six weeks for three years, more frequent smaller work groups and workshops, and many public briefings, DWR sought a broadly informed and consensus-seeking process. Advisory committee members provided the Department with substantial suggestions and recommendations on all aspects of the *California Water Plan Update 2005*.

Collaboration Statistics*

Type of Meeting	Meetings	Person hours
Advisory committee	43	12,681
Extended review forum & organizational briefings	43	1,558
Workshops	43	3,161
2005 Public comment workshops	15	1,512
Work groups	62	4,271
Tribal outreach	7	69
Totals	197	23,252

*Tables figures are valid through September 2005.

Created by statute and composed with diverse perspectives, the advisory committee represented the interests of all Californians and the natural environment. The group provided DWR with suggestions and

conclusions on every aspect of the water plan update, including developing goals and strategies for water management in California.

Outreach and Decision Process

To create a fair, open and transparent process, the California State University Sacramento, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) provided impartial third party facilitation and mediation design, implementation, and refinement for the consensus-seeking process. The Center ensured advisory committee members' interests, views, and opinions were thoughtfully considered and the advisory committee activities were governed by its own operating guidelines.

The advisory committee strove to reach consensus on the purpose, content, and process of the water plan update. While DWR sought advisory committee full agreement and support on every issue, time did not permit resolution of all fundamental concerns. The CCP facilitation teams captured the range of support and opposition to proposals. DWR then considered the range of perspectives and made final decisions. Those suggestions approaching consensus received the highest possible consideration for incorporation into the update.

As part of their membership obligations, advisory committee members periodically briefed their constituencies on key developments. Members relayed comments received during these briefings to DWR. The briefing process helped ensure two-way communication between members and their organizations. In addition, briefings formally expanded the dialogue beyond the precincts of the advisory committee meeting room into a wider audience of potential users of *California Water Plan Update 2005*.

With coordination from the Center, the advisory committee produced the *Advisory Committee View*, a four-page newsletter-like document that summarized areas of agreement, disagreement, and uncertainty that had been raised during the four-and-a-half year advisory committee process. This document, carefully negotiated and approved by the different interest caucuses of the advisory committee, helped to inform the public and DWR on key issues during the comment period of the Public Review Draft of the *California Water Plan Update 2005*. The *Advisory Committee Review* can be found in the Background section of Volume 4: Reference Guide.

In addition to the formal advisory body, an Extended Review Forum, composed of individuals with a high interest in the process attended periodic briefings and received invitations to advisory committee and work group meetings as well as updates on key developments. With nearly 400 members, this group represents an even broader range of interests than the advisory committee. DWR also used other forums to engage other State, federal, and local government representatives, local water interests, the public, and media. DWR periodically briefed the Governor's Office, Legislature, and the Resources Agency on the process.

The Internet provided another principal venue for advisory committee work. In its efforts to create an open and transparent public process, DWR used e-government technology to set up web pages and electronic surveys, and used email correspondence and teleconferencing whenever possible. DWR posted meeting agendas, materials, and highlights, including draft copies of *California Water Plan Update 2005*, for all to see. DWR also posted numerical data for the water portfolios and documentation on the web site for use by advisory committee members and other interested parties.

Continuous Improvement

In tandem with the strategic planning process, DWR conducted surveys with California Water Plan customers, the people who use the plan for various purposes. The intention was to make *Update 2005* widely understood and useful. The survey expanded the traditional water plan audience of government, private, and nonprofit entities to include land use planners, natural resources planners, environmental and social advocacy groups, business sectors (for example, agricultural, real estate, financing), professional associations, academic institutions, water planners, wholesalers and retailers, and similar individuals and groups.

The survey indicates the planning horizon for most users is 2010. The issues of interests for evaluation parallel the advisory committee's, including water quality, cost, reliability, and environmental impacts. Major issues of concern are water quality, reliability, and land use planning.

In addition to the customer survey, the CCP conducted several stakeholder assessments with advisory committee members throughout the process. These served as feedback mechanisms for identifying issues for DWR to consider in *California Water Plan Update 2005*, assessing staff progress for the work at hand, modifying meeting methods, and improving communication between DWR and the advisory committee itself.

The Public Review Draft formal comment period lasted from April 14, 2005 to July 22, 2005 to allow substantial time for public review. During June and July 2005, DWR held 13 public input workshops in 12 cities throughout different regions of the state. In addition to 11 daytime workshops, DWR also offered 2 evening workshops and 2 evening toll-free teleconference briefings out of consideration to members of the public who might not be able to attend during normal business hours. 250 members of the public attended these workshops. The public comment process was generally well received. The workshop format encouraged interactive education and discussion, as well as formal statements. Most participants appreciated the workshop format and contributed their comments in table discussion. A hearing period was reserved at the end of each workshop for individuals to give formal oral statements.

Members of the California Water Plan Update 2005 advisory committee played a critical role at the public comment workshops, providing credibility, sharing insights, and urging the public to attend and to participate. The *Advisory Committee View* document handout provided common talking points across meetings and informed the discussion with an articulated and balanced range of perspectives.

In addition to feedback received at the 13 public input workshops, DWR received 139 written comments via postal mail, fax, e-mail, and an online comment form on its website during the public comment period. All written comments, as well as meeting summaries for all public comment workshops, were posted on the Water Plan website for public view.

The construction of a systematic approach for collaborative water planning is an investment. With the foundation now in place, future water plan updates will be able to have an accelerated start in setting up advisory committees, establishing protocols and initiating planning approaches.

