



Improved Management of California's Headwaters: Overview and Next Steps

Department of Water Resources
Mountain Counties Regional Forum

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What I Will Cover

- Definition and Background
- The Challenge
- The Opportunity
- Purpose of the Policy Principles
- Principles: Categories and Examples
- Next Steps

What are “headwaters?”

For ACWA’s policy documents, “*headwaters*” is defined as:

those upper portions of a watershed which contribute to or influence the surface and subsurface waters that give rise to or contribute to a river or other waters flowing to the lower reaches of the watershed.



Background

- Role of headwaters in California water policy
- ACWA 2012-13 Strategic and Business Plan
- Working Group Process



The Challenge

Risk factors affecting the state's headwaters:

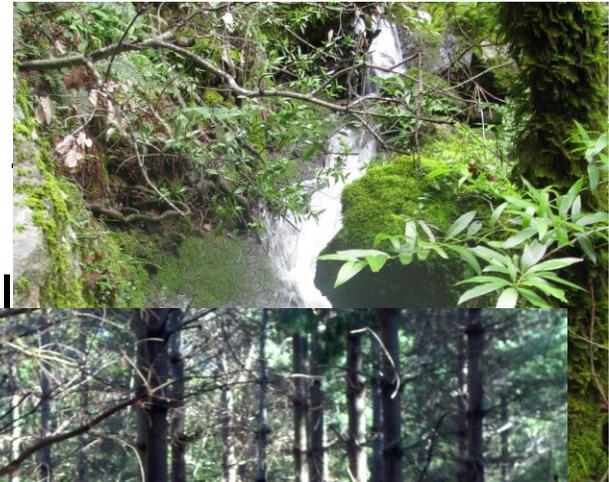
- Water quality
- Wildfires
- Land use issues
- Climate change



The Opportunity

Potential benefits from better management of California's headwaters:

- Improved water quality
- Reduced risk and impacts
- Increased and more reliable water supply
- Enhanced natural resources and recreation in headwaters



Purpose of the Policy Principles

- To enhance the resiliency, adaptability and sustainability of headwaters through collaboration and proactive management strategies.



Principles – Examples

- Provide nineteen recommendations in four areas:
 - Improved Planning, Coordination and Implementation
 - Managing Headwaters' Resources
 - Research
 - Financing Headwaters Improvements



Principles – Examples

1. Improved Planning, Coordination and Implementation

State and federal land and resource management agencies, in consultation with stakeholders, should increase coordination and integration as they plan and implement efforts to improve stewardship of California's headwaters.



Principles – Examples

2. Managing Headwaters' Resources

To maintain the integrity and improve the resiliency of the headwaters, public and private landowners and resource managers should implement actions that reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire which also may reduce the adverse effects of such fires, including deleterious impacts on water supply and water quality.



Principles – Examples

3. Research

State and federal resource and land management agencies, in cooperation with academic institutions, water agencies/districts, the private sector and non-government organizations, should develop a prioritized applied research and monitoring program to gather data and design models to improve headwaters management and enhance resource services, particularly those related to water supply and quality.



Principles – Examples

4. Financing Headwaters Improvements

Private landowners should receive assistance in terms of education and information, technical expertise and incentives (e.g. tax credits, conservation easements, development agreements, etc.) to encourage their commitment to long-term protection and enhancement of headwaters on their property.



Next Steps

- Development of Headwaters Framework
- July working group meeting
- Outreach
- Preliminary Framework expected by Dec. 2013





Questions?
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