



California Water Plan 2028: SAWPA's Role at the Table

TWG Workshop 1 Debrief | August 13–14, 2026

Erika Beyer

September 1, 2026



Why This Matters to SAWPA

DWR is developing a new statewide planning framework that will shape how California assesses water supply and demand gaps — SAWPA is participating early to bring the Santa Ana watershed perspective into that work.

- **Senate Bill 72, signed October 1, 2025, directs DWR to modernize statewide water planning**
- **CWP 2028 begins development of a more consistent statewide understanding of water supply and demand gaps**
- **CWP 2033 will build on the 2028 analytical foundation**
- **SAWPA is participating in the Technical Working Group to bring the Santa Ana watershed perspective into development of the statewide analytical framework at an early stage**

What Is the TWG?

DWR convened a Technical Working Group of subject-matter experts to provide technical review and advice on the analytical foundation of CWP 2028 and CWP 2033 — SAWPA is participating as a regional watershed authority representing the Santa Ana watershed perspective.



TWG Role

Technical Working Group

- Provide technical review and advice on approaches, data, and methods
- Review proposed methodologies and underlying assumptions
- Identify data gaps that may affect statewide analysis
- Offer recommendations to DWR — the TWG advises; it does not make policy decisions



SAWPA's Role

Santa Ana Watershed Perspective

- Represent the region's complex imported-supply dependencies
- Highlight groundwater complexity and basin adjudications
- Surface the institutional frameworks already in place — OWOW, IRWM, UWMPs, and GSPs
- Share how existing local planning investments can inform statewide analysis

TWG Review Sequence



- Workshop 1 | Aug. 13–14, 2026:** DWR presented proposed approaches and identified key gaps; TWG provided preliminary input and identified additional information needs.
- Workshop 2 | Oct. 8–9, 2026:** DWR will provide follow-up information; TWG is expected to provide formal recommendations.
- Workshop 3 | July/August 2027:** DWR is expected to present selected approaches; TWG will provide review, validation, and feedback.

Regional & Public Engagement

The Technical Working Group is one part of a broader DWR engagement process for CWP 2028.



Technical Working Group

2026–ongoing. Data, modeling, analytical methods, and technical review. Workshop 2 scheduled for October 8–9, 2026.



Regional Forums

DWR currently anticipates several Regional Forums in the South Coast and four other initial CWP 2028 hydrologic regions. Open to the public and organized geographically, they are intended to provide local input on projects and adaptation strategies.



Broader Statewide Engagement

CWP Advisory Committee met Aug. 25–26, 2026. Tribal Water Summit: anticipated April 2028. Statewide Plenary: anticipated in 2028.



Current DWR Planning Schedule

DWR currently anticipates multiple Regional Forums for the South Coast beginning in late 2026 and continuing through 2027. Topics are expected to evolve from regional considerations, baseline information, and the initial project database toward refinement of projects/actions and evaluation of adaptation strategies. Specific dates and agendas remain subject to change.



For the Santa Ana Watershed

SAWPA can use its member agency and OWOW coordination processes to keep regional partners informed and help prepare regional projects, data, and technical considerations for DWR's South Coast Regional Forums.



Forum Design Still Evolving

Advisory Committee feedback to DWR: a mix of in-person and online meetings, more than one forum in most hydrologic regions, clear meeting purposes, and coordination with organizations familiar with local audiences.

What DWR Is Building

CWP 2028 is a set of interconnected technical tools and analyses, each with implications for how the Santa Ana watershed is represented.

1



Watershed Hub

Interactive statewide platform for watershed conditions, project/action tracking, and progress toward SB 72 planning objectives

2



WEAP-FS

California-specific integrated hydrologic and water-operations scenario modeling framework

3



Economic Analysis

Economic and socioeconomic analysis to evaluate water-management strategies, costs, benefits, and regional impacts

4



Performance & Vulnerability Assessment

Quantification of water supply gaps and climate change analysis under future conditions

5



CWP 2033

Will build on 2028 work to set measurable watershed-level and statewide targets

What Goes Into WEAP - FS?

WEAP-FS brings major parts of the water system into a common scenario-planning framework.



Climate & Hydrology

Precipitation, temperature, runoff and snow processes, and future climate conditions



Surface Water

Rivers and diversions, reservoir storage, and imported and regional supplies



Groundwater

Groundwater supply and storage, recharge and pumping, and groundwater/surface-water interactions at the planning scale



Infrastructure & Operations

Reservoirs, conveyance, and operating constraints and allocation rules



Water Demands

Urban, agricultural, and environmental demands



Future Scenarios & Strategies

Climate and demographic change, conservation, storage and recharge, and other broad adaptation strategies

Supporting Models, Data & Local Information

WEAP-FS draws on statewide and regional information on water use, climate, hydrology, groundwater, system operations, land use, and environmental conditions, along with available local agency information. DWR also uses information and outputs from specialized planning and technical models to inform the broader WEAP-FS screening framework.

WEAP-FS is intended to augment, not replace, California's existing modeling environment.

Understanding WEAP - FS: What It Is and What It Is Not

WEAP-FS is a scenario-screening framework for statewide and regional analysis — it is not intended to substitute for local agency models or agency-level planning.

✓ WEAP-FS IS

- An integrated regional and statewide scenario-screening framework
- Designed to evaluate system behavior under different future conditions
- Useful for identifying where vulnerabilities may emerge and for comparing broad categories of adaptation strategies

Example: “Under common statewide assumptions, where might vulnerabilities emerge and how do broad strategies compare?”

✗ WEAP-FS IS NOT

- A replacement for local agency models or a site-specific project feasibility or engineering model
- A source of precise localized forecasts
- A substitute for detailed operational, groundwater, CEQA, or project-specific analysis

DWR describes WEAP-FS as a screening framework. It can screen broad strategies and portfolios, but more detailed analysis is needed to determine site-specific project feasibility, engineering, operations, or environmental effects. (WEAP-FS Overview — Draft, Subject to Change)

Why the Santa Ana Watershed Requires Special Attention

The Santa Ana watershed combines hydrologic, legal, institutional, and operational systems that do not always align neatly with statewide planning boundaries.



Imported - Water Dependencies

The watershed relies heavily on water delivered from outside its hydrologic boundaries



Adjudicated Basins

Multiple adjudicated groundwater basins with established legal frameworks



Conjunctive Use

Infrastructure that manages surface water and groundwater in tandem



Boundaries That Differ

Agency service areas, adjudication boundaries, and basin boundaries all differ from hydrologic boundaries



Existing Local Planning

UWMPs, GSPs, adjudication agreements, and IRWM/OWOW plans provide local context for statewide analysis

DWR's WEAP-FS framework is intended to represent both surface-water and groundwater systems and their regional connections at a statewide planning scale. SAWPA's focus is whether that representation appropriately reflects Santa Ana watershed conditions at the scale at which results will be interpreted.

SAWPA's Technical Priorities for CWP 2028

Priorities SAWPA brings to DWR's technical review process as the CWP 2028 analytical framework develops.



Regional Fidelity

Statewide consistency should be balanced with representation of meaningful regional conditions



Appropriate Scale

Model outputs should be interpreted at the geographic, temporal, and analytical scale the model is designed to support



Institutional & Legal Context

Water rights, adjudications, operating agreements, and institutional arrangements can affect how physical water supplies are managed



Cross-Basin Connections

Imported supplies and other interregional dependencies are important to the Santa Ana watershed



Existing Regional Planning

UWMPs, groundwater planning, adjudications, OWOW, and other established regional planning efforts provide important local context



Transparency & Uncertainty

Assumptions, uncertainty, model limitations, and intended uses should remain visible when analytical results are communicated. These are SAWPA's technical priorities, not DWR findings.

The Critical Distinction: Screening vs. Local Decision - Making

Statewide screening and local decision-making serve different purposes and should be used together at the appropriate scale.

✓ Appropriate Uses Statewide Screening Results

- Identify regional vulnerability patterns
- Compare broad adaptation strategies and potential portfolios
- Screen where additional analysis may be warranted
- Support statewide and regional scenario discussions

✗ Not Intended to Replace Local and Project -Level Analysis

- Agency-specific supply planning
- Site-specific project feasibility and engineering
- CEQA or permitting analyses
- Detailed operating models
- Locally calibrated groundwater or water-supply models where greater resolution is required

⚠ *This distinction matters when statewide screening results are interpreted alongside local planning, operational, and project-level analyses.*

Where CWP 2028 Is Headed

DWR’s current approach for CWP 2028 develops a more consistent picture of water supply and demand gaps in five hydrologic regions, with CWP 2033 expanding and refining the statewide analysis.



The 9 MAF target is a statewide interim planning target. CWP 2028 will develop preliminary supply-gap and watershed-scale analysis in the five initial hydrologic regions; CWP 2033 is expected to refine and expand long-term watershed-scale targets statewide.

What Comes Next for SAWPA and OWOW

SAWPA's participation in the TWG is ongoing — the Commission's direction will shape how SAWPA engages in the work ahead.

1

Continue TWG Participation

Remain engaged in DWR's technical review process and provide technical input as CWP 2028 develops.



2

Review Regional Representation

Track how Santa Ana watershed supplies, groundwater systems, imported-water dependencies, and institutional arrangements are represented.



3

Engage Member Agencies and OWOW

Keep member agencies and the OWOW Steering Committee informed and prepare regional partners for DWR's South Coast Regional Forums and other engagement opportunities.



4

Review Regional Projects & Data

Work with member agencies and OWOW to identify gaps in the Watershed Hub project inventory and relevant regional datasets before and during the South Coast Regional Forum process.

 i

Staff will continue reporting back as DWR releases additional public materials, Regional Forum details, and Workshop 2 information.

Recommendation

Receive and file this update on the California Water Plan 2028 Technical Working Group and SAWPA's continued technical participation.

Staff will report back as DWR releases additional public materials, Regional Forum schedules, and Workshop 2 information.

No Commission action beyond receive and file is requested at this time.

Sources

California Department of Water Resources: California Water Plan 2028 Fact Sheet; California Water Plan 2028 and 2033 Roadmap; WEAP-FS Overview (Draft, Subject to Change); California Water Plan 2028 Engagement Venues (Draft); Spring 2026 Outreach and Engagement Summary. California Water Plan Update 2023 public supporting documentation, where applicable.

Questions?

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Santa Ana River Watershed CARP Updates

Haley Gohari

September 1, 2026

SAWPA Commission

Watershed Resilience Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Updates

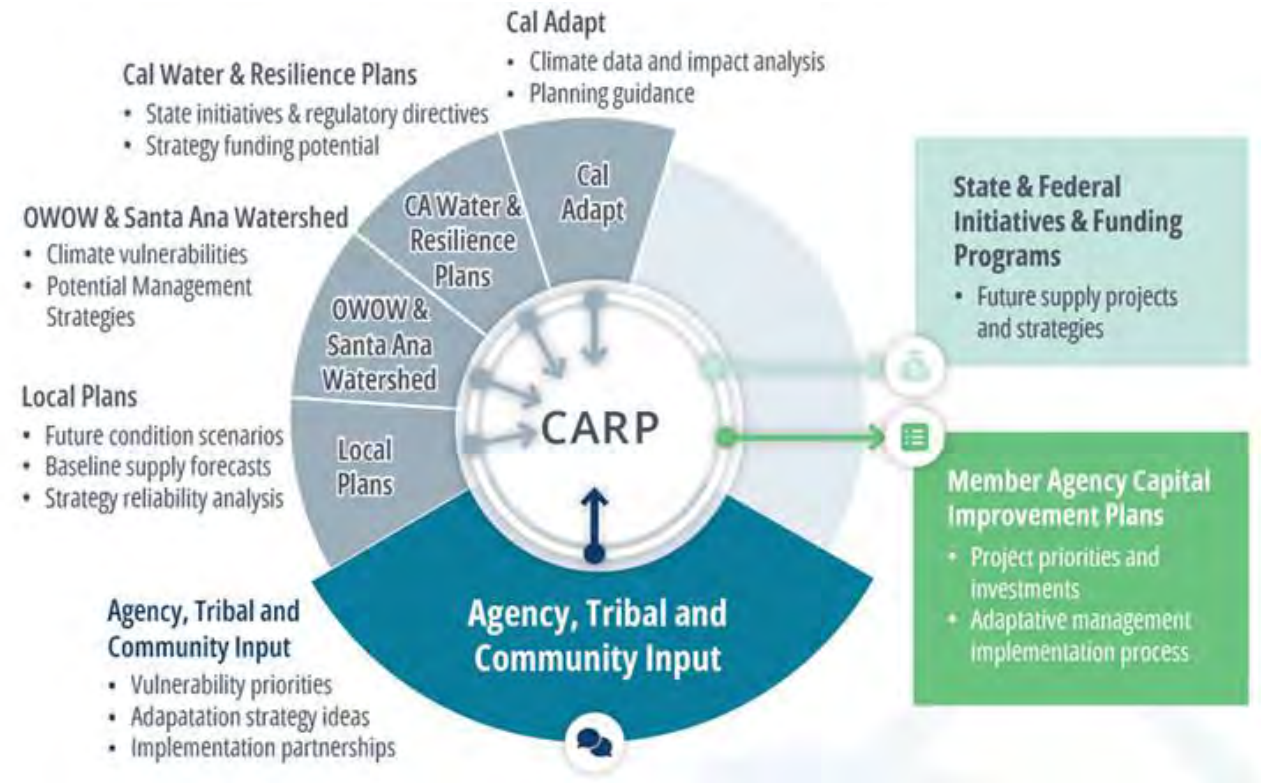
SAWPA	The Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians	ISC3/UCR
OCWD	EMWD	WMWD
IEUA	SBVMWD	RCFCWCD
OC Watersheds	SBCFCD	Connecting Wildlands and Communities
CalTrans	MWDSC	RWQCB

- Provided Comments and Feedback on Climate Hazards TM
 - Almost Finalized
- Will be reviewing the draft Climate Risk and Vulnerabilities TM through September 18, 2026
- Next Topic the TAC will work on will be the High-Level Criteria TM

Next Meeting: September 9, 2026

Annotated Summary

- 106 watershed plans/references reviewed
- **Primary focus:**
 - Summary Document
 - Factors identified previously and in other planning processes
- **Goal:** Aggregate and summarize previously identified climate-related hazards & vulnerabilities in existing planning documents



The Technical Work

Climate Hazards TM

- Climate Impacts and where they are felt across the watershed
- 6 Hazards Identified: Extreme Heat, Extreme Precipitation, Drought, Wildfire, Coastal Flooding, and Landslides/Liquefaction.

Climate Risks and Vulnerabilities TM

- Evaluates how identified climate hazards may affect assets, operations and communities

High-Level Criteria TM

- Identify and determine criteria for prioritizing projects

Watershed Resilience Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Updates



SAWPA

**The Soboba Band of
Luiseño Indians**

ISC3/UCR

The Sierra Club

TreePeople

**California Rural
Water Association**

**Rivers & Lands
Conservancy**

**Orange County
Coastkeeper**

**Inland Empire
Waterkeeper**

Grid Alternatives

**Center for
Community Action
and Environmental
Justice**

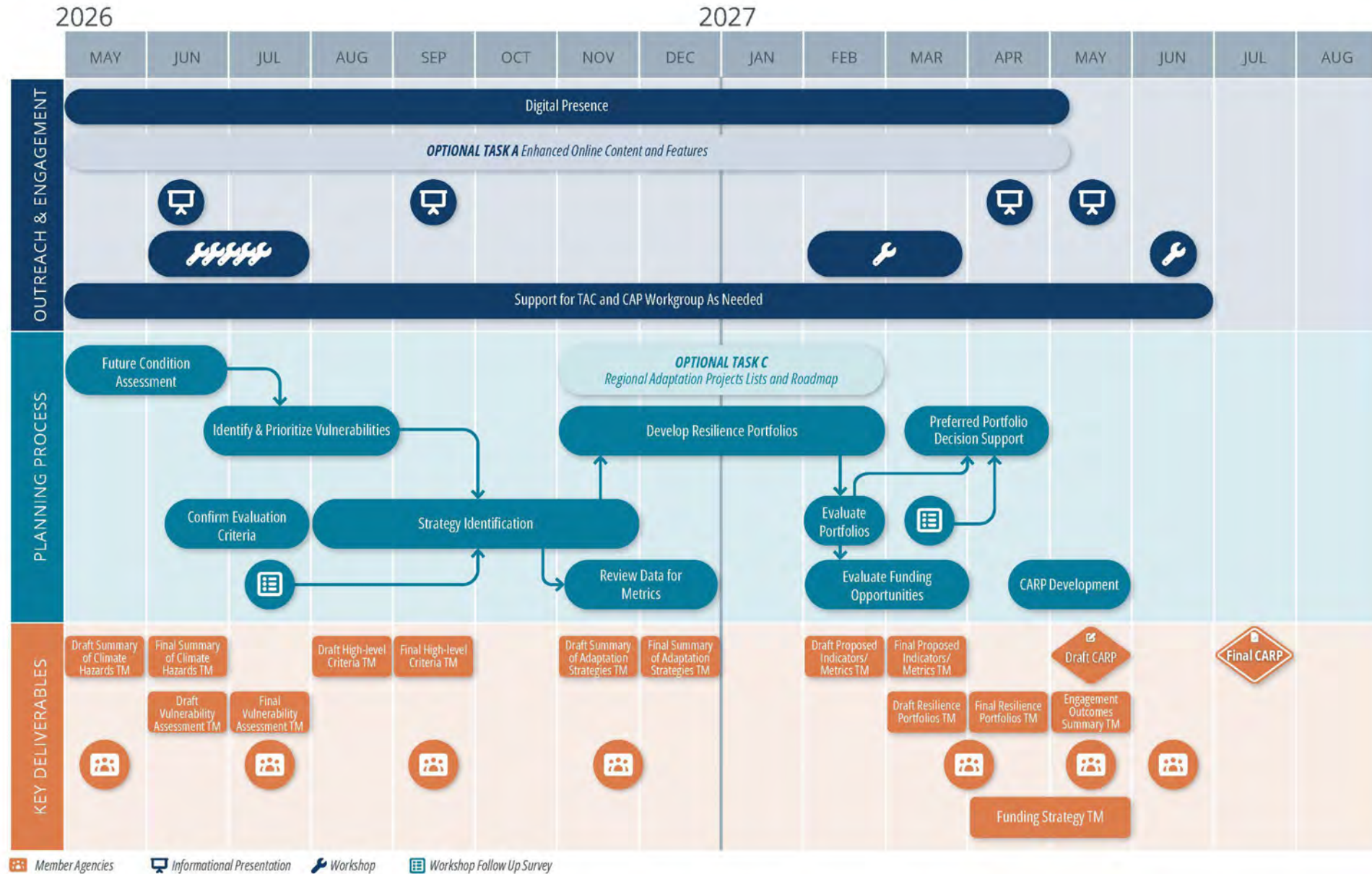
- Community Engagement will end before October
- Data will be synthesized and analyzed
 - 1000 responses to survey

Next CAP Meeting: September 2026

Remaining meetings will be to review the technical analysis and to identify partners for future grant opportunities.

Next Steps

- Working Occurring Currently –
 - TAC is reviewing the draft Climate Risk and Vulnerabilities TM
- Upcoming Work:
 - TM: High-Level Criteria
 - Presentation to Commission in October on Climate Hazards and Climate Risks and Vulnerabilities TMs
 - Preparing for Public Agency Engagement Workshops



Questions?

Haley Gohari

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Proposition 4 Updates

Haley Gohari

September 1, 2026

Themes in Prop 4 Guidelines and Grant Programs

Multi-benefit, multi-partnered (collaborative groups) applications

Regional project focused

Advance climate resilience

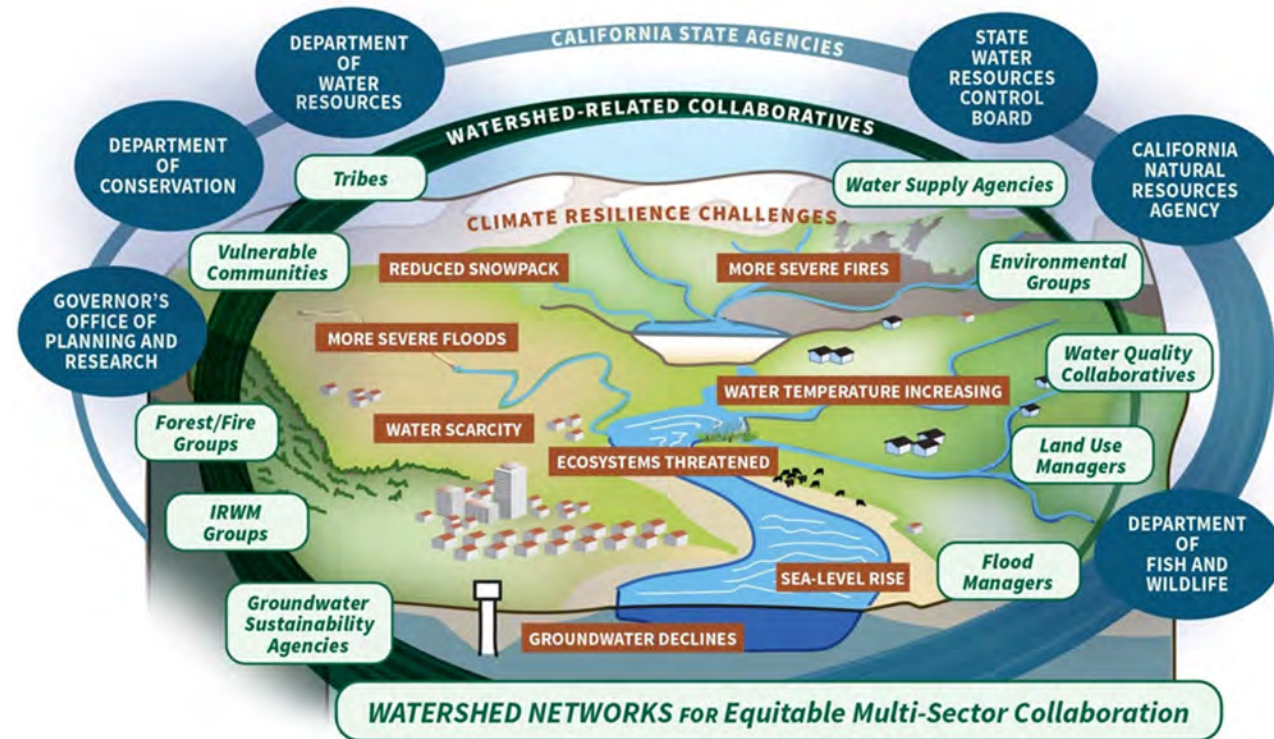
Benefits to disadvantaged, severely disadvantaged and vulnerable populations

Priorities for projects with:

- Leverage funding
- Community & Tribal input
- DAC, SDAC and VP benefits
- California Conservation Corps

Watershed Resilience Program – Conservation Implementation

- Anticipates release of draft Guidelines in September
- Conservation Implementation (~\$60 million for projects) –
 - Capital projects with a water conservation benefit.
 - Projects don't need to be listed in a Watershed Resilience Plan, but must be selected by a "collaborative group" (definition forthcoming in the Guidelines).
 - Concept proposals early 2026, full applications spring 2026.
- Overview Workshop: Register on WR Webpage
 - October 22, 2026 (1 p.m. – 3 p.m.)



Watershed Resilience Program – Planning+

- Approximately ~\$92 million
 - Grantees will Develop a Watershed Resilience Plan and
 - Implement the top-priority project(s) identified by that plan.
 - Draft Guidelines/PSP expected this winter;
 - Concept proposals late 2027, followed by full Apps
- Overview Workshop: Register on WR Webpage
 - October 22, 2026 (1 p.m. – 3 p.m.)



SGMA Funding Program

- Small GSA & URCTA Support –
 - Draft Guidelines released (available on webpage) and comments due Sept. 30, 2026
 - General Public Comment Workshops: Sept 1 (11am -12pm) and Sept 22 (10am-11am)

Full Draft Guidelines Comment Period:

- Anticipated early fall 2026

General Public Comment Workshops:

- September 1, 2026 11am-12pm
- September 22, 2026 10am-11am
- Register on Webpage

Proposition 4 Funding Opportunities Under Evaluation

Program	Administering Agency	Funding Available	Due Date	Potential SAWPA Concept
Wildlife Conservation Board	CNRA	\$330 Million Statewide	Rolling Applications	Block Grant for climate resilience, nature-based solutions and public access to nature.
Santa Ana River Conservancy Program	Coastal Conservancy	\$25 Million Statewide (\$4.6 Million – Currently Available)	Rolling Applications	Trails, wildlife habitat, agricultural land protection, water quality protection, educational use, and public access.
Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program	Department of Conservation	\$185 Million Statewide	Awaiting Guidelines	Forest restoration benefits, watershed resilience, decision support tools

Opportunities Being Tracked

Program	Potential Regional Relevance	Status
Watershed Resilience Program	Regional watershed planning and implementation	Monitoring – Awaiting Guidelines
SGMA Implementation	Groundwater sustainability and recharge projects	Monitoring – Awaiting Guidelines
CIMIS Expansion	Agricultural water management and ET data	Active discussion
Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program	Block Grant for Wildfire and Forest Related Projects	Evaluating – Awaiting Guidelines
Invasive Species	Golden algae, golden mussel preparedness Arundo donax	High interest – Awaiting Guidelines
Urban Streams Restoration	Habitat, flood management, community benefits	Monitoring
Water Desalination Program	Regional water supply projects	Monitoring
Santa Ana River Conservancy Program	Trails, wildlife habitat, agricultural land protection, water quality protection, educational use, and public access.	Monitoring
Wildlife Conservation Board	Block Grant for climate resilience, nature-based solutions and public access to nature.	Monitoring

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