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Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program Advances Before the State Water Board

*Public water agencies reinforce support for an innovative approach to managing
California's water supplies and our landscape.*

Sacramento, CA — Public water agencies across California are joining Governor Gavin Newsom and statewide leaders to applaud the forward progress by the State Water Board for advancing an innovative approach to create *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes* throughout the Central Valley.

Today, the State Water Board released another draft update to its Bay-Delta Water Quality Plan that includes two regulatory pathways: 1) a comprehensive *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (HRL) Program*; and 2) a flow-only approach for parties not participating in the *HRL Program*.

Advancing the *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program* will immediately connect new flows in our rivers and through the Delta with important habitat across our landscape to improve conditions for fish and wildlife, while also working in harmony with our economic needs for water for thirty-two million people and sustaining some of the most vibrant farms and ranches in the world.

The *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program* will meet state regulatory requirements while improving conditions for the environment, farms, homes, and businesses. A comprehensive science program will utilize the best available science to inform real-time decision-making and includes plans for monitoring and reporting, all under the umbrella of a collaborative governance program. A science-based Bay-Delta Plan means water for families, farms, fish, and fowl; while supporting our collective vision of a prosperous future, as described in a [whiteboard video](#).

“A large coalition of public water agencies and businesses are coming together from Redding to the Mexican border to work with state and federal agencies to advance the *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program* as a new and transformational approach to managing California's water,” **said Jennifer Pierre, General Manager of the State Water Contractors**. “The collaboration demonstrates broad commitment by these agencies to manage the delta watershed in a way that is inclusive, science-based, and responsive to our weather whiplash.”

“The *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program* offers a new way forward for California to manage our water resources in concert with our landscape. With our mutual commitment to more strategic flows, accelerated habitat restoration on our landscapes, and accountability, we can work together to meet the needs of our environment and local communities throughout California,” **said David Guy, President of the Northern California Water Association.**

“We look forward to continued collaboration with the State Water Board, the public, natural resources experts, and other stakeholders in implementing the *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program*. This program can improve resilience for fish in the Delta and its tributaries while balancing water supply needs for communities,” **said Alice Towey, Director of Water and Natural Resources for the East Bay Municipal Utility District.**

“The Water Authority has long advocated that the most impactful approach to balancing fisheries needs and water supply reliability is to address all stressors impacting the species. The *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program* has the potential to do just that,” **said Federico Barajas, Executive Director of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority.** “Maintaining the status quo is not a viable option for our farms, communities, or fisheries, so we’ve been working closely with state, federal and local leaders to develop a program that will improve environmental conditions more quickly and holistically than traditional regulatory approaches that simply redirect water from human use to river flow without pairing that flow with the habitat needed to support species recovery. We look forward to ongoing collaboration with our partners and the public to advance this important work.”

The *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program* offers an innovative approach to improve ecological outcomes for the Bay-Delta by leveraging increased flows, new habitat, science, and collaborative decision-making, while still providing more certainty to communities, farms, and businesses throughout California. There is strong and broad support for this approach throughout California from public water agencies in California, local governments and elected officials, the business community, agriculture, and energy producers.

The following water agencies are MOU signatories and actively participating in the *Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program*:

