

# INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT AWARD

2024

## Kevin O'Brien, Esq.

The recipient of the 2024 Innovative Water Management Award is Kevin O'Brien.

As one of the leading water counsel in California and a senior partner at Downey Brand, Kevin has represented many Sacramento Valley water districts and companies, with a strong reputation for solving problems and supporting innovative and creative water management. He has a calm, respectful approach to water issues and he has a keen sense of when to fight and when to fix, playing a large role shaping the "fix it" culture that permeates the Sacramento Valley.



In this role, he advocates principled positions that reflect the law and are intended to achieve a durable solution for his clients and other parties. Kevin has been a trusted advisor and a strong and reasoned voice in the California water debates for many decades. Kevin has also served as a mentor to many attorneys, Board members, managers, and consultants in the water arena, where he always offers sound guidance, wisdom, and practical skills.

Kevin has played a lead role in inspiring, developing, negotiating, and helping parties implement interest-based, collaborative processes that have resolved complex and long-standing water resource disputes by encouraging and facilitating innovative and creative water management. This includes the negotiation and implementation of the Sacramento River Settlement Contracts; the Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements); the previous Sacramento Valley Water Management Agreement (Phase 8 settlement); various Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs); and numerous water transfers.

The Northern California Water Association is pleased to honor Kevin O'Brien with the 2024 Innovative Water Management Award.



THE INNOVATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT AWARD  
is given by the NCWA President to an individual (or organization) who has demonstrated  
innovation and creativity in advancing water management in the Sacramento Valley.

## PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS



**2023**  
Marc Van Camp



**2021**  
Curt Aikens



**2020**  
Butte Creek  
Water Users



**2019**  
River Garden Farms



**2018**  
Grant Davids



**2017**  
Paul Bartkiewicz



**2016**  
Sacramento River  
Settlement  
Contractors



**2015**  
Max Sakato



**2014**  
Walter Cotter



**2013**  
Fran Borcalli



**2012**  
Joe Scalmanini



NCWA