

MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
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WATER SUPPLY RESILIENCY

ISSUE: A Southern California water supply crisis continues to fluctuate due to extreme weather swings that are becoming the norm. Aging water infrastructure across the western United States is ill-equipped to capture, store, and distribute water efficiently, making it critical to modernize the system to safeguard the region's economic and environmental future.

ACTION: The Monday Morning Group urges Congress to make water supply a top priority and to continue making significant investments to modernize the water infrastructure and effectively capture, store, and move water, which will create resiliency regardless of less predictable and more extreme weather conditions.

BACKGROUND: The Colorado River is over-allocated, and the Colorado River basin states and Mexico need to cut water demands significantly on the river. The other primary source of water for Southern California, the State Water Project, only has two years of resiliency to it. After only a two-year drought, portions of Southern California were under mandatory outdoor water restrictions for two years, which was only saved because of a historically wet year following.

As states and local municipalities continue to build water resiliency projects, it is not enough to withstand the unpredictability and extreme weather swings scientists predict. Less snowpack, shorter but heavier storms, and increasing temperatures make water management across the western United States more challenging than ever. For many naturally arid regions, moving water from naturally more precipitous to drier places has been critical. When water is abundant, especially to the point of flooding, the system is overwhelmed and cannot capture it, thus resulting in millions of acre-feet lost to the ocean. Significant investment is needed to upgrade the water supply system to meet the present and future needs of more than sixty million people.

Under the guidance of several water partners significant investments are needed in the following categories to promote effective water management that will provide a reliable water supply for future generations:

- **Conveyance:** Water managers need to have the ability to move water where needed, especially during significant rainfall events, and include inter-state, statewide, regional, and local conveyance projects. The California Delta Conveyance Project is a key water supply solution, and Congress must ensure that neither legislation nor regulation impedes the progress of this critical project.
- **Storage:** Water managers need to be able to store water, both above and below ground, which can then be relied on during extended dry periods.
- **Local and regional water infrastructure:** Recycled water, ocean and brackish desalination, stormwater capture, and local storage projects are all important projects that could assist in managing water more effectively, depending on local conditions. By helping invest in local systems, the federal government can help ensure both resiliency and affordability when adapting to this unpredictable climate.
- **Demand management:** Investments must be made to help states and local municipalities reduce demand on the Colorado River and other strained water supplies.

Water is critical to all aspects of life, so this quality-of-life issue must continue to be prioritized. Should water supplies continue to decrease without effective water management strategies, there will be catastrophic effects on the environment, economy, housing development, and quality of life for all people in the western United States, including those most disadvantaged.