



**To:** RCRC Board of Directors  
**From:** Nick Konovaloff  
Legislative Analyst  
**Date:** December 2, 2014  
**Re:** California Water Plan Update 2013  
**Informational Item**

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### **Summary**

This memo provides an overview of the California Water Plan and key themes from the California Water Plan Update 2013. The California Department of Water Resources released the publication of the California Water Plan Update 2013 (2013 Plan) on October 30, 2014.

### **Background**

The California Water Plan, also known as Bulletin 160, is intended to serve as the strategic plan for developing and managing the state's water resources and be a resource for elected officials, planners and resource managers among others to guide decision-making and establishing priorities of the water resources. Published since 1957, the California Water Plan is updated every five years as required by Assembly Bill 799 (Cortese), 1991, Chapter 620. The California Water Plan has changed over the 50 plus years from providing statistical summaries of water supply and demand to addressing water resource management, flood safety strategy, water conservation and climate change adaptation among other related issues. The California Water Plan Update 2013 is the 11<sup>th</sup> in a series of such plans.

### **Issue**

The 2013 Plan consists of the following five volumes:

- Volume 1- Strategic Plan
- Volume 2 - Regional Reports (12 Regional Reports which include the 10 hydrologic regions as well as the Mountain Counties and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta overlay areas)
- Volume 3 - Resource Management Strategies (Over 30 Resource Management Strategies such as forest management, agricultural land stewardship and land use planning and management among others that are intended to help meet water resource management needs)
- Volume 4 - Reference Guide
- Volume 5 - Technical Guide

The 2013 Plan also includes a Highlights Booklet that provides a high level overview of the 2013 Plan. The 2013 Plan and Highlights may be accessed at:  
<http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/cwpu2013/final/index.cfm>

The 2013 Plan was developed over the last five years through a multi-member state agency Steering Committee and a Public Advisory Committee consisting of interested stakeholders of which RCRC was an active member. RCRC also actively engaged, through oral and written comments, in a number of the caucuses within the Public Advisory Committee that focused on specific policy issues including groundwater, finance and land use that would be of primary importance to RCRC member counties (*Please see attached comment letter*).

The 2013 Plan which looks out to 2050 has three major themes:

- Significantly increased efforts in the area of integrated water management which allow water managers to combine flood management, environmental stewardship, and surface water and groundwater supply actions to deliver multiple benefits across a region;
- All level of governments to better align their efforts in the management of data, planning, policy making and regulation and;
- The need for stable effective funding sources to allow for a much greater investment in innovation and infrastructure of our water resources systems

The 2013 Plan is the first California Water Plan to incorporate a finance planning framework which addresses past expenditures, future need, funding mechanisms and obstacles such as on-going funding for operations and maintenance, competition for limited public resources and resistance to increased assessments as evidenced by Proposition 218. The finance planning framework also cites tremendous need including over \$44 billion to fix aging drinking water systems over the next two decades and over \$50 billion in flood management projects and that nearly \$600 billion in structures are at risk in the 500 year floodplain.

While the 2013 Plan has just been released, the planning for the California Water Plan Update 2018 has already begun. In all likelihood, the voter approved water bond, the Governor's Water Action Plan, the recently enacted groundwater management legislative package, the on-going drought and the Bay Delta Conservation Plan will all have a place in the formation of the Water Plan Update 2018.

### **Recommendation**

RCRC staff will engage providing oral and written comments throughout the process and development of the California Water Plan Update 2018 as they did during the 2013 Plan to help ensure the issues affecting RCRC member counties such as area-of-origin, water rights and land use among others are addressed in a manner that is consistent with RCRC policy principles.

### **Attachment**

- 2013 Draft Water Plan Update Comment Letter