

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PROPOSITION ONE

Can we afford it?

California's public water agencies, local water districts, cities and counties currently spend \$26 Billion a year to supply water and treat wastewater. Proposition One will help to protect that investment by making much-needed repairs to our aging water infrastructure, encouraging innovation in water recycling, desalination and other emerging technologies, restoring habitat and improving water management practices to deal with climate change and California's changing water needs in the twenty-first century.

According to the non-partisan Legislative Analyst, repayment of the water bonds will cost approximately \$360 million a year for the next 40 years. That amounts to an additional cost of only one-third of one percent of the state's current General Fund Budget. The overall cost to taxpayers may be much less, however, because the Legislative Analyst estimates that Proposition One will save local agencies approximately \$200 million a year.

How can we be sure the money will be well spent for what's been promised?

Proposition One imposes strict restraints on the expenditure of funds and guarantees transparent regulatory oversight of the bond management.. No project can spend more than 5 percent on administration or 10 percent on planning. Priority will be given to projects that leverage private, federal, or local funding or produce the greatest public benefit. In fact, \$5.7 billion of the \$7.5 billion provided by this bond issue requires local matching funds, usually amounting to 50 percent, for water supply and water quality projects.

Decisions by state and local water agencies are required to use the best available science and the bond act provides that special consideration will be given to projects that employ new or innovative technology or that support the integration of multiple jurisdictions. And no funds may be used to acquire land via eminent domain or for new conveyance facilities in the Delta.

How were the priorities for funding chosen?

Earlier water bond proposals that the legislature had under consideration were criticized for including too many disparate elements that had little to do with California's water needs. That is why Governor Brown insisted on a much smaller bond issue that focused specifically on the most pressing problems with the water system. The projects included in Proposition One represent the needs and priorities of the hundreds of local public water agencies, which are responsible for distributing water supplies to farms and cities



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throughout the state. Their recommendations were augmented by advice from California's major regional conservancies that are charged with protecting many of the state's most precious natural resources, as well the wide range of regulatory officials, engineers, economists and environmental experts who have been advising the state on the formulation of its Comprehensive Water Action Plan.

Will the interests of rural and Northern California communities be protected?

Proposition One specifically provides that nothing in this act will diminish, impair, or otherwise affect in any manner whatsoever any area of origin, watershed of origin, county of origin, or any other water rights protections. It ensures that California's working agricultural and forested landscapes will be preserved wherever possible. And for the first time, it assigns a high priority to funding projects that will benefit small, rural and otherwise disadvantaged communities that cannot afford to upgrade their water supply and wastewater treatment systems on their own. This is a fundamental issue of public health and simple fairness.

How does the Delta benefit from Proposition One?

Proposition One specifically assigns a total of \$432.5 million to support projects in the Delta -- \$50 million for watershed protection by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy, \$87.5 million for Delta Restoration, and \$295 million for improvements to the Delta levees that safeguard water supplies for the rest of the state. In addition, Proposition One provides \$68 million to improve reliability in the Sacramento and San Joaquin regions, which could benefit the Delta. Proposition One also gives priority for funding projects in other parts of California that are designed to reduce future dependency on water supplies pumped through the Delta. Proposition One has been endorsed by the Delta Counties Coalition.

What will Proposition One do to help California prepare for climate change?

With climate change, many experts predict that more frequent droughts and warmer winters will require additional storage facilities. Rising sea levels will impact the levees in the Delta, which could threaten the water supplies for two thirds of the state as they are pumped through the Delta. Proposition One provides \$2.7 Billion for additional storage and \$295 million for Delta levees. But it would also help California prepare for climate change in other ways as well.

Proposition One provides \$100 million for urban water conservation and agricultural water use efficiency projects and it requires that the recipients of other funding, both urban and rural, must adopt water conservation plans that will help California



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adapt to global climate change. It also provides \$725 million for recycling and desalination projects for seawater and groundwater, and end-user retrofit projects to allow increased use of recycled water. This funding will also help to encourage projects that improve reliability, decrease reliance on Delta supplies, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve energy efficiency. Proposition One also provides \$900 million for groundwater sustainability projects that will encourage groundwater recharge and conjunctive uses to increase regional self sufficiency and adapt to climate change.

Which new dams will be built if Proposition One passes?

Proposition One does not designate any particular project for funding. The proposals for Sites Reservoir in Colusa County and the Temperance Flat Dam near Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park would both be eligible. But so too would be plans for raising Shasta Dam or additional groundwater storage. The California Water Commission will decide which projects get funding in an open competition that will rank the proposals according to the expected return for public investment as measured by the magnitude of the public benefits each project would provide. No project may be funded unless it provides measurable improvements to the Delta ecosystem or Delta tributaries.

Why does Proposition One provide funding for controversial projects like the San Joaquin River Restoration and the Salton Sea?

The funding for the San Joaquin River and Salton Sea restoration projects will go to fulfill commitments the state has already made under settlement agreements that were negotiated in the past. Funding will also go to meet the state's obligations under similar agreements involving Lake Tahoe, the Colorado River and federal requirements for the support of wildlife refuge and habitat areas.

Are the opponents correct that Proposition One will reduce funding for our public schools?

The water bonds have nothing whatever to do with school finance.



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