California wouldn’t be the same without the State Water Project (SWP), a foundational network woven into the fabric of our communities from the Bay Area to San Diego.

California’s State Water Project
A Robust Water Grid Driving California’s Economic Growth and Quality of Life

California depends on the SWP
27 State Water Contractors Provide
27 Million Californians—Two-Thirds of the State—with Affordable, Fresh Water and Irrigate

750,000 Acres of Farmland in the San Joaquin Valley—Providing 12% of California’s Total Agricultural Production.
Backbone of California’s Economy & Ecosystem

Since its construction in the 1960s, the SWP has remained an iconic engineering feat that enabled the substantial economic growth and innovation that has become the hallmark of California’s success. The SWP provides California with recreational, environmental, power supply and water quality benefits. Today, the system remains a valuable investment in one of California’s most important assets: the largest state-built water and power generator and delivery infrastructure in the nation.

The SWP provides the original source of water public water agencies need to invest in more local and regional water supply projects. Thanks to the SWP, the 27 State Water Contractors are able to deploy a host of innovative water management techniques that increase our ability to move and store water throughout the state, helping us manage water supply more efficiently, especially in times of drought.

AN IRREPLACEABLE SOURCE OF HIGH-QUALITY WATER

Without the SWP, California would need to replace 4.2 million acre-feet of high-quality water annually to meet state demand. That is enough water to fill Lake Arrowhead 87 times over.

The SWP is California’s most critical infrastructure and must be maintained for future generations. But, despite the system’s significance, it has become easy to take for granted the momentous work being done behind the scenes every day to keep California’s taps on. Just as we should not take for granted our interstate highway, railway, or telecommunication systems, we must not underestimate the important management and operation efforts in place to make the SWP possible for California.

THE SWP SYSTEM

A Critical Source of Supplies for the State

Climate change is creating a new normal in California—prolonged periods of drought, reduced snowpack, flashier and more unpredictable rainfall and sea level rise—but the SWP was built to last. Two-thirds of California’s water is delivered through the SWP. While some may rely on it more heavily than others, all depend on the SWP as the foundation for developing alternative water supplies. Without the consistent water supplies delivered through the SWP, it would be more difficult for our public water agencies to invest in additional and more local sources of water supplies for when we need it most.

SWP: THERE WHEN WE NEED IT MOST

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WATER BANKING

RECYCLED WATER

GROUNDWATER STORAGE AND RECHARGE

LOCAL SURFACE WATER STORAGE

@SWC_CAWater State Water Contractors swc.org/the-state-water-project