

# UNCERTAIN WATERS

## Navigating California's Water Priorities

Most people agree that water is the life-blood of California, but that's about as far as the agreement reaches about how we manage this essential, natural resource for the highest good. Our problems with water are many: there's not enough or at other times there's too much; it's too polluted or too salty or too far away or it's owned by someone else; it's not flowing enough to support some natural fish species or it's supporting the spread of invasive species. What's worse, several recent studies have found what the Delta Vision Task Force reported in November 2007: "that the current governance structure of water and the Delta has failed."

### Approach One: "Just Add Water"

Focus: California needs a stable water supply; large projects are needed now to balance decades of neglect; public funding is needed to support water needs of our economy

Topics for Consideration and Action:

- Increase water storage capacity by building more dams
- Increase water transport capacity, and build the Peripheral Canal
- Make agricultural and business water use our highest priority for any added water

Leadership Needed: Effective bi-partisan state leadership, even if it takes a full reorganization of state government through a citizens' constitutional convention

### Approach Two: "Good to the Last Drop"

Focus: California needs a culture of water conservation; some communities can become water self-sufficient; state policy is needed so local conservation guarantees local savings

Topics for Consideration and Action

- Mandate dramatic water conservation everywhere...no exceptions
- Create more efficient waste water treatment and mandate water reuse
- Build desalination plants to serve communities along the entire coastline

Leadership Needed: Innovative leadership at the grass-roots level to create local water conservation projects, even if it requires privatizing water treatment and desalination

### Approach Three: "You Can't Fool Mother Nature!"

Focus: California needs a new 'agile' water flow response system; fish and wildlife habitats deserve careful stewardship; an unbiased water agency needs to intervene to build trust

Topics for Consideration and Action

- Protect fish and wildlife habitats as a co-equal goal with human water supply needs
- Form a non-profit, public benefit corporation to convene and manage water flow negotiations to minimize costly and inefficient legal and legislative gridlock
- Include climate change trends in water planning statewide...immediately

Leadership Needed: Networking among state, local, academic, and non-profit entities to respond quickly to changing water conditions, even if it means temporary financial loss