FACT SHEET:

5 Ways California is Harnessing Winter Storms to Boost Water Supplies

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- **California is boosting water supplies through groundwater recharge, stormwater capture, reservoir storage, water conveyance improvements and ambitious targets to build water resilience**

- **California has committed $8.6 billion to build water resilience in the last two state budgets, and the 2023-24 budget proposal includes an additional $202 million for flood protection**

To help California cope with **more extreme droughts and floods** driven by climate change, Governor Newsom and the Legislature have **committed more than $8.6 billion** in the last two budget cycles **to build water resilience across the state** and protect communities on the front lines of extreme weather.

This budget funding includes $500 million that will be provided in 2025-26 to help ensure strategic water storage projects can be completed.

In the 2023-24 state budget, Governor Newsom is proposing an **additional $202 million for flood protection** and $125 million for drought related actions.

The state is advancing targeted investments and aggressive action to:

- **Advance ambitious targets to build water resilience across the state**
- **Fast-track groundwater recharge projects**
- **Maximize stormwater capture**
- **Expand storage above and below ground**
- **Modernize conveyance infrastructure to capture more storm runoff**

ADVANCING CLEAR, AMBITIOUS TARGETS

California's historic investments in drought and flood resilience are allocated through the Newsom Administration's comprehensive strategy for the state's hotter, drier future.

- **California Water Resilience Portfolio:** Outlines 142 actions that state agencies are taking to support improved water resilience across the state, including bolstering water supplies.

- **California's Water Supply Strategy: Adapting to a Hotter, Drier Future**: Provides a roadmap for the state to achieve key targets that include:
    - Recycling 800,000 acre-feet of water by 2030
    - Boosting annual groundwater recharge by 500,000 acre-feet
    - Expanding urban stormwater capture capacity by 250,000 acre-feet by 2030
    - Creating an additional 4 million acre-feet of water storage capacity

FAST-TRACKING GROUNDWATER RECHARGE

Trillions of gallons of water from the recent storms are currently recharging groundwater basins throughout the state. Groundwater pumped to the surface accounts for 30 to 60 percent of the state's total water supply each year. The state is working to expand groundwater recharge by at least 500,000 acre-feet in potential capacity as part of our Water Supply Strategy.

- **Streamlining groundwater recharge permits**: The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) are partnering in a new pilot program to accelerate groundwater recharge efforts and capitalize on high flow events. The Governor's proposed budget includes $4.9 million to help agencies accelerate this permitting.
- **Investing in groundwater recharge capacity**: Since 2020, the State Water Board has provided a total of $1 billion in assistance to 13 projects that will bring a total of 88,000 acre-feet per year to the state's water supplies. Five of these projects are already complete and are currently providing 25,000 acre-feet per year of additional storage.

- DWR is evaluating an additional 52 groundwater recharge projects totaling $211 million. These projects will be awarded grants this year, based on available funding.

MAXIMIZING STORMWATER CAPTURE

California is taking action to support communities across the state in expanding the capture of stormwater from streets and urban lands to augment groundwater supplies.

- **Investing in stormwater capture**: To date, the State Water Board has provided about $176 million for 67 stormwater projects funded under voter-approved Proposition 1 of 2014.
- **Incentivizing stormwater capture:** The State Water Board's industrial stormwater permit and certain storm sewer system permits by the Regional Boards reduce some requirements for permittees that operate a stormwater capture facility that is designed to capture major storm events.

EXPANDING STORAGE ABOVE AND BELOW GROUND

California is working to boost water storage above as well as below ground to help local water districts increase capacity through investments in dam construction and expansion projects.

- **Advancing Proposition 1 storage projects**: California is supporting seven locally-driven Proposition 1 water storage projects that would expand the state's water storage capacity by 2.77 million acre-feet – about three times as much water as Folsom Lake can hold.
    - The Natural Resources Agency has established an interagency strike team to facilitate state permitting and support completion of these projects.
    - The Water Commission is funding positions within departments to facilitate permitting and development of contracts for public benefits of the projects.

  - To support completion of environmental documents and permits, the Water Commission awarded six projects early funding totaling $118 million and has given all projects an inflationary boost that totaled $100 million.

- **San Luis Reservoir expansion**: Outside the scope of Proposition 1, DWR is working with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to expand San Luis Reservoir in Merced County by 135,000 acre-feet to store more storm runoff for San Joaquin Valley farms, the Bay Area and Southern California.

MODERNIZING WATER CONVEYANCE INFRASTRUCTURE

California is working to modernize aging water conveyance systems across the state to safeguard long-term water reliability and help carry winter storm runoff into storage.

- **Delta conveyance**: The state is advancing the Delta Conveyance Project to ensure that we can make the most of winter storms and protect a critical water supply for roughly 27 million Californians and 750,000 acres of farmland.
  - Had the Delta Conveyance Project been in place, the State Water Project could have moved an additional 188,000 acre-feet of water into storage at San Luis Reservoir between January 1 and January 16 – enough water to serve over 650,000 households for a year.

- **San Joaquin Valley conveyance projects**: DWR has invested $100 million in the past year, with another $100 million slated for investment this year, to make repairs to regain carrying capacity in four major California water conveyance systems in the San Joaquin Valley – the California Aqueduct, San Luis Canal, Delta-Mendota Canal and the Friant-Kern Canal – which will improve water delivery to more than 29 million people, nearly three million acres of farmland and 130,000 acres of wetlands.