



Vision for the San Joaquin Valley: An Overview and Local Perspectives

Introduction

The San Joaquin Valley faces some of the State's most significant and interconnected water challenges, including groundwater overdraft, land subsidence, flood risk, aging infrastructure, and the growing impacts of climate change. To confront these growing pressures, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) developed [A Vision for the San Joaquin Valley](#) (Vision). The Vision is an integrated plan with near- and long-term strategies to strengthen water management and climate resilience in the San Joaquin Valley. The Vision provides a framework for climate-resilient water management, to help align local, State, and federal partners, and inform coordinated investments and policy improvements across the region.

After hearing an overview of the Vision, the Commission will hear from interested parties to discuss how to move forward with implementing the Vision. The presenters, representing academia, agriculture, and community based organizations, will share their perspectives and explore opportunities, barriers, and next steps for the Vision.

Background

The Vision is grounded in three recent DWR planning efforts that examine complementary aspects of water management in the San Joaquin Valley:

- [State Water Project Adaptation Strategy](#), which identifies actions to improve delivery of imported water through the State Water Project.
- [San Joaquin Basin Flood-MAR Watershed Studies](#), which evaluates the effectiveness of forecast-informed reservoir operations and groundwater recharge in the eastern San Joaquin Basin
- [San Joaquin Valley Conveyance Study](#), which assessed local and regional conveyance needs on the San Joaquin Valley floor.

Together, these studies provide the technical foundation for the Vision. Their findings inform both near-term actions and longer-term investments and policy improvements needed to build a more resilient San Joaquin Valley. The Vision emphasizes a proactive State role in supporting local agencies, water managers, and communities. It also recognizes that water management improvements alone will not fully address the Valley's long-term challenges and that strategic land repurposing will likely remain an important component of a sustainable future.

The Vision was developed with input from regional interested parties, state agencies, and federal partners. The document and its supporting studies were also featured during the California Water Institute's San Joaquin Valley Water Resilience Summit May 20-21, 2026. The

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draft document was released for public comment on May 1, 2026, and the public comment period closed July 21. DWR plans to release the final version of the Vision in late 2026.

This agenda item advances Goals Three and Four of the [Commission's Strategic Plan](#), which calls on the Commission to use its public forum to explore pressing water management issues and advise DWR to support implementation of [DWR's Strategic Plan](#).

Meeting Overview

At the August meeting, Joel Metzger, Deputy Director of DWR's Statewide Water Resources Planning and Enterprise Management, and Eric Tsai, Supervising Engineer, will provide an overview of the Vision for the San Joaquin Valley document. Laura Ramos, Director, California Water Institute; Eddie Ocampo, Director, Self-Help Enterprises; Kyle Jones, Facilitator, San Joaquin Valley Water Collaborative Action Plan; and Geoff Vanden Heuvel, Director of Regulatory and Economic Affairs, Milk Producers Council will share their perspectives on development and implementation of the Vision.

Following their remarks, the Commission will hear Tribal and public comment on the information presented. Commissioners will then have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

This is an informational item.

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