

Chino Basin Program

Draft Contract for the Administration
of Public Benefits – Water Quality

California Water Commission Meeting



Office of Research, Planning, and Performance September 16, 2026

Chino Basin Program Overview



- The Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) serves 950,000 residents in the Chino Groundwater Basin in Southern California.
- An Advanced Water Purification Facility will be built to produce 15,000 acre-feet per year of advanced treated recycled water that will be replenished into the Chino Basin.
- The Program will expand replenishing wells, extraction facilities, and a pipeline network to enable the delivery and storage of advanced treated recycled water in the Chino Basin.

Chino Basin Program Water Quality Benefit

The Program will:

- Treat, deliver, and recharge up to 15,000 acre-feet of advanced treated recycled water to protect groundwater quality.
- Improve salinity conditions by removing salt from treated recycled water and injecting the treated water into the basin, which will have lower salt concentration than the basin.



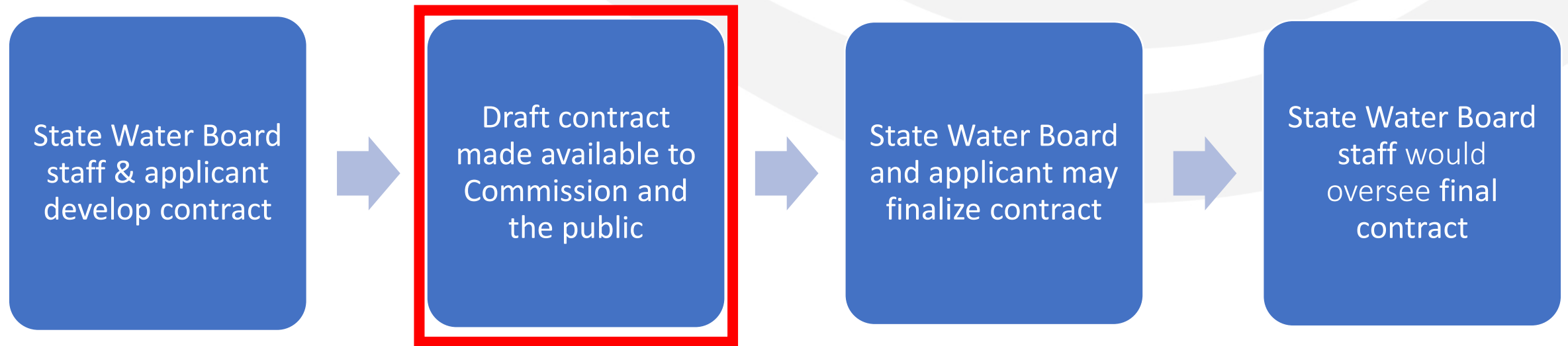
Water Storage Investment Program

State Water Board Role

- In 2018, identified water quality priorities and criteria for assessing the relative environmental value for the WSIP process.
- Conducted technical review of WSIP project applications that proposed water quality public benefits.
- May contract for the administration of public benefits for any project that provides water quality benefits consistent with WSIP.



State Water Board Contracting Process Overview



Chino Basin Program Draft Contract Overview



- Contract structure is similar to CDFW's draft contract.
- Draft contract focuses on:
 - Volume of water treated at the Program's Advanced Water Purification Facility
 - Volume of advanced treated recycled water replenished into Chino basin
 - Higher quality water injected in the basin improving salinity conditions
- Has a 50-year term.
- No change to originally proposed water quality benefit.

Chino Basin Program Draft Contract Overview

- Includes reporting requirements (annual summary reports).
- Outlines dispute process. May occur if adaptive management fails.
 - State Water Board may initiate if:
 - Disagreement on adaptive management actions
 - Disagreement if public benefit should be adjusted
 - Disagreement on whether the public benefit is feasible
 - IEUA is not delivering benefit due to failure of implementing Program Implementation Actions (the volume of water treated and replenished)
- Includes an Adaptive Management Plan.



Chino Basin Program

Draft Contract Adaptive Management Plan

Purpose: To guide ongoing monitoring and the adaptive management process to ensure the project meets its water quality benefit.

Includes:

- Monitoring
- Implementation Actions
- Thresholds
- Triggers
- Adaptive Management Actions



Adaptive Management Plan Monitoring



- IEUA will monitor the volume of and total dissolved solids concentration of the water generated, delivered, and stored.
- Report this information annually.
- Can determine the annual salt load reduction to the basin.

Adaptive Management Plan

Project Implementation Actions

- These two foundational project implementation actions will directly result in the water quality benefit:
 - Advanced treated recycled water
 - Replenishment of advanced treated recycled water to storage in the basin



Adaptive Management Plan Performance Thresholds

- Shows the minimum level of performance needed by the project to achieve the intended water quality benefit.
- Indicates the expected or better conditions above baseline to meet contract commitments.

Project Implementation Action	Performance Threshold and Adaptive Management Trigger Metrics
Advanced Treated Recycled Water	Annual volume of water generated
Replenishment of Advanced Treated Recycled Water to Storage	Annual volume of water replenished to storage in the Chino Basin

Adaptive Management Plan

Adaptive Management Triggers

The trigger for the Project Implementation Actions:

- Failure to treat, deliver, and inject an annual average of up to 15,000 acre-feet of highly treated water, with a low TDS concentration to the groundwater basin.

The trigger could arise from factors including:

- Disruption of the source water supply to the Advanced Water Purification Facility (AWPF),
- Operational constraints at the AWPF, the transmission pipeline or the replenishing wells.



Adaptive Management Plan

Adaptive Management Actions



These actions may be taken if an Adaptive Management Trigger occurs:

- Resolving operational or institutional issues that may limit the source water supply, including identifying new sources, routing flows differently between facilities, addressing diminishment of existing sources, and securing longer-term agreements.
- Maintenance or rehabilitation of the treatment and conveyance facilities.
- Maintenance, rehabilitation, or expansion of replenishment facilities.
- Other actions mutually agreed upon between IEUA and the State Water Board.

Chino Basin Program Path to a Final Contract

- The State Water Board is a Responsible Agency under CEQA and must conduct CEQA review.
 - Any findings will be completed before execution of the final water quality contract.
- Water Boards will finalize the water quality contract, engaging closely with IEUA and Commission staff.
- Final funding award anticipated in late 2027.

