

Putting Data to Work

The Open & Transparent Water Data Act

Open and Transparent Water Data Platform for California

The Open and Transparent Water Data Act (AB 1755, Dodd) requires Department of Water Resources (DWR), in consultation with State Water Resources Control Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Water Quality Monitoring Council, to create, operate, and maintain a statewide integrated water data platform¹. Agencies must also develop protocols for data sharing, documentation, quality control, public access, and promotion of open-source platforms and decision support tools related to water data. Statutory deadlines include:

- ❑ January 2018 – protocols and strategic plan to guide program implementation (available on the AB 1755 website)
- ❑ September 2019 – operational integrated water data platform with available water and ecological/fisheries state agency datasets
- ❑ August 2020 – available water and ecological/fisheries data related to California water supply and management held by identified federal agencies

What approach is the State using to implement AB 1755?

DWR and partner agencies are charting a path forward in collaboration with State and federal agencies, data experts, data providers, data consumers, and other stakeholders. This important effort is being informed by a broad range of expertise, including water resource management, data science, information technology, and library science:

- UC Waterⁱ report, “Data for Water Decision Making,” aimed at development of a water data and information sharing system organized around key water management decisions and use cases;
- California Council on Science Technology’s exploration of system requirements for an Open Water Information Architecture (OWIA)ⁱⁱ;
- Aspen Institute Dialog Seriesⁱⁱⁱ report, “Internet of Water: Sharing and Integrating Water Data for Sustainability,” a vision for a national policy framework that addresses institutional barriers to scaling the integration of water data and information to support sustainable water management; and
- other State, federal, and local open data initiatives.

¹ DWR and partner agencies are exploring governance and funding mechanisms to support long-term sustainability of the statewide integrated water data platform.

Why is an open data platform important?

- Increased access to data will support better-informed decisions and cost-effective investments
- Water data and information technology tools and applications developed and gathered using state funds should be made publicly accessible and open-source, whenever possible
- Integration of existing water and ecological data will:
 - support analysis across datasets and disciplines;
 - help water managers operate more efficiently; and
 - help water users make informed decisions based on water availability and allocation
- Making information accessible, discoverable, and usable by the public can foster entrepreneurship, innovation, and scientific discovery
- More comprehensive and interoperable datasets will provide unique opportunities, such as the development of data-search and -packaging products and services

How can I get involved?

Upcoming opportunities for stakeholders to inform implementation include participation in data challenges and test beds, as well as publication of data on federated platforms. Additionally, we encourage interested parties to contact us with ideas about how they would like to participate. Successful implementation of the Open and Transparent Water Data Act depends upon the collaboration and cooperation of other agencies, academia, and interested stakeholders.

Where can I learn more?

For additional information, including progress to date, please visit our website (www.water.ca.gov/Programs/All-Programs/AB-1755).

If you have questions or wish to subscribe to our email list for project updates and other announcements, please contact us at: AB1755@water.ca.gov.

ⁱ <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/research/clee/research/wheeler/data/>

ⁱⁱ <ftp://mae2.sdsc.edu/Download/OWIA-SRD-Master.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/internet-of-water/>