



San Diego County Water Authority

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News Release

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Water Authority Board Endorses State Bond to Fund Natural Resource Upgrades *Proposition 68 would benefit Salton Sea restoration and other vital projects*

The San Diego County Water Authority's Board of Directors today voted to endorse Proposition 68, a state bond measure that would fund projects important to the San Diego region and allocate more than \$1 billion for water-related initiatives statewide. If passed by California voters on June 5, the bond would provide \$200 million to Salton Sea restoration activities and \$12 million for the San Diego River Conservancy as part of a \$4 billion package to address natural resource issues across California.

“Robust Salton Sea funding in this bond measure is significant for San Diego County because it supports agreements that generate substantial water supplies for our region,” said Mark Muir, chair of the Water Authority's Board of Directors. “The bond would help the state

meet its obligations for Salton Sea restoration, and allow our region to compete for other funds to further enhance water supply reliability and local watersheds.”

The bond became eligible for the ballot last fall after Gov. Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 5, also known as the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018. To read the full text of SB 5, click [here](#).

Of particular importance to the San Diego region is that the bond would help the State of California maintain its renewed commitment to restoring the Salton Sea. In November 2017, the State Water Resources Control Board revised its 2002 order that approved a water transfer between the Water Authority and the Imperial Irrigation District that provided 100,000 acre-feet of water for San Diego County last year. In doing so, the State Water Board reaffirmed the state’s continued support for the nation’s largest agriculture-to-urban water transfer, the broader 2003 Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement, and the ongoing mitigation program outlined in the QSA. For more information about the QSA, go to www.sdcwa.org/quantification-settlement-agreement.

Specifically, Proposition 68 includes \$170 million for the Natural Resources Agency for restoration activities in the state’s 10-year Salton Sea Management Program. It also includes \$30 million for the Salton Sea Authority for capital projects that provide air quality and habitat benefits to the Salton Sea, and projects that implement the Salton Sea Management Program.

In addition, Chapter 8 of the bond would allocate \$12 million to the San Diego River Conservancy, as part of a \$180 million package for conservancies statewide.

No bond funds would be allocated directly to the Water Authority. However, important regional water projects could benefit because Proposition 68 would provide funding

opportunities for which local agencies could compete in water recycling, advanced water treatment technology and regional water supply sustainability. Those opportunities include:

- Chapter 11 – \$250 million for safe drinking water programs – particularly within disadvantaged communities – including expenses, grants and loans for projects that improve water quality or help provide clean drinking water.
- Chapter 11.1 – \$80 million to the State Water Board for grants that fund groundwater sustainability projects, including treatment and remediation activities that prevent or reduce groundwater contamination.
- Chapter 11.6 – \$260 million to advance regional water supply sustainability projects, including investments in water recycling, stormwater and groundwater recharge.

The Water Authority’s endorsement of the bond measure is consistent with the agency’s legislative policy guidelines, which support initiatives that provide state or federal funding for Salton Sea restoration. The guidelines also support initiatives that fund conservation, water recycling, potable reuse and groundwater recovery and recharge efforts, among other programs and projects to sustain reliable water supplies.

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The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$220 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers wholesale water supplies to 24 retail water providers, including cities, special districts and a military base.



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