

CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL UTILITIES ASSOCIATION



WATER POLICY GUIDELINES

Adopted by CMUA Board of Governors April 1, 2011

California Municipal Utilities Association Preamble

CMUA Mission Statement

The California Municipal Utilities Association represents the common interests of a diverse coalition of California's publicly owned water and power utilities before statewide jurisdictional bodies and provides a forum to develop and discuss statewide policy issues affecting its members. CMUA effectively advocates on behalf of its members by providing a better understanding of issues relevant to the State's publicly owned water and power utilities and disseminating accurate information regarding its members. CMUA's strength is derived from the diversity of its membership allowing CMUA to be a persuasive advocate for the advancement of public policies that mutually benefit its members and the State of California.

CMUA Vision Statement

The California Municipal Utilities Association shall represent the shared interests of California publicly owned water and power utilities on statewide issues, providing advocacy on behalf of its members in a manner that is universally recognized as knowledgeable, principled, and innovative. This is accomplished through a proactive approach that creates an authoritative, unified voice representing a membership as diverse and dynamic as the great State of California itself.

CMUA WATER POLICY

Statement of Assumptions/Preamble

Water is life's mater and matrix, mother and medium.

There is no life without water.

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

(Hungarian biochemist, awarded 1937 Nobel Prize for Medicine)

California's water systems are both highly interconnected and also highly decentralized, and it stands to reason that solutions to the unprecedented challenges faced by water agencies at this time will, they themselves, also be complex and inter-related. The multiple challenges include areas as diverse as water supply and quality, infrastructure, funding, and environmental impacts – yet, while these areas are distinct – there is much overlap. Further, to complicate an already complicated situation, these challenges take place in a constrained and multi-layered political environment – with environmental and public health concerns at the forefront, on both legislative and regulatory fronts and national and state levels. Therefore, in order to facilitate good policy-making and to best serve all member agencies, CMUA explicitly states *at the outset of these policy guidelines*, that there is no one solution or “silver bullet” to the complicated sets of

issues with which our member water agencies and districts must contend – rather we intend that policy solutions advance a sustainable, comprehensive, cohesive, and science-based approach to this complex set of issues. Moreover, we want to ensure that policy solutions in one geographic area do not create unintended consequences in other areas of the state.

Further, CMUA is uniquely situated to speak to the concerns and intersections of both public water agencies and public power agencies. We recognize the interdependence of water and power – that water deliveries depend on sustainable electric power and that power assets rely on sustainable water deliveries. We are committed to close attention being paid to making clear the nexus between power and water inter-dependencies, relationships -- with particular attention to the mutual challenges and opportunities.

State Financing Water Infrastructure

California urgently needs investment in its water infrastructure. Generally speaking Californians agree that such infrastructure should be financed by those that “benefit” from the projects. CMUA supports additional state funding for a variety of water infrastructure measures.

However, CMUA will take a cautious approach to supporting specific proposals to dedicate state funds to water infrastructure. CMUA will evaluate each proposal to ensure that it is cost-effective, provides long term benefits to the State and its inhabitants and that the beneficiaries of the project are paying their fair share of the project costs. CMUA has no policy on Delta financing at this time.

California Municipal Utilities Association

Water Policy Guidelines

Water Conservation and Water Use Efficiency

- Support the development and implementation and appropriate financial assistance of cost effective urban water conservation programs. These programs should provide flexibility to California communities and protect critical infrastructure, recognizing each community's widely varying climatic and economic circumstances.
- Support the development and implementation and appropriate financial assistance of cost effective agricultural water conservation and water efficiency programs. These programs should provide flexibility to California's agricultural communities and protect critical infrastructure, recognizing each community's widely varying climatic and economic circumstances.
- Ensure that water conservation and water use efficiency activities and programs do not diminish or otherwise impact the existing water rights of the entity engaged in water conservation or water use efficiency.

Water Recycling

- Support additional state and local funding for water recycling projects.
- Support the use of recycled water for indirect potable reuse, while protecting water quality and human health.
- Support additional research on direct potable reuse of recycled water.
- Ensure that regulatory decisions on the use of recycled water are primarily science-based.

Water Quality

- Support watershed based management and point source pollution control programs that protect and improve surface and groundwater water quality for urban and agricultural uses, as well as the environment.
- Support water quality policies and regulatory decisions that are timely, based on sound science and prioritized on the basis of cost benefit methodology.
- Support continued state funding assistance to upgrade water treatment systems.
- Support legislative and administrative efforts to adopt cost-effective drinking water regulations to help ensure the protection of human health, maintain or improve water quality from constituents of emerging concern.
- Support regulatory and legislative activities to ensure support for a fair and balanced compliance and enforcement structure for potable and related water charges.
- Support policies that provide economically feasible and environmentally sound solutions to both agricultural and non-point source run-off.

Water Rights

- Support documentation of water rights actions necessary to assure illegal diversions are identified, eliminated and prohibited.
- Support and preserve existing water rights holders' authorities and standing in order of priorities.

Areas of Origin and Water Transfers

- Support area of origin protections in existing law.
- Support voluntary water transfers for both short and long term needs, while protecting water rights, the environment and local economies.

Water Storage

- Support the creation of additional economically feasible and environmentally sound surface and groundwater storage facilities.
- Support policies to ensure that mitigation and project costs are the responsibility of the project beneficiary, consistent with existing law.

Delta

- Support policies that recognize and maintain the "co-equal goals", which provide a more reliable water supply for California and protect, restore and enhance the Delta ecosystem.
- Support programs and policies that address the multiple stressors impacting the health of the Delta, including water quality and waste water discharges, invasive species, predation and non-native species.
- Support new Delta conveyance that:
 - Contributes to improving the aquatic environment within the Delta to address fishery issues, preservation of pelagic species and restoration of habitat.
 - Improves water supply reliability within the Delta and outside the Delta, and allows for better water management and planning for the 25 million California residents who are currently dependent upon the Delta.
 - Provides for improved water quality, with respect to reducing exposure to salinity and naturally occurring organic compounds.
- Support the development of flow criteria for regulatory and adjudicatory purposes, which balance and consider a variety of factors including, but not limited to, environmental, economic, and hydropower impacts.

Flood Management

- Support state levee protection in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, where levee failure would have negative water quality, water supply and economic impacts statewide.
- Support local cooperative planning and state funding to match local spending for flood control projects.
- Whenever economically feasible, support the inclusion of environmental enhancements and farmland protection as part of flood control projects.

Groundwater

- Support the management of groundwater supplies through the development of voluntary local groundwater management plans.
- Support science-based policies that protect groundwater basins from contamination, and land use policies that preserve and protect groundwater recharge basins.
- Support expansion of conjunctive use management of groundwater and surface water supplies.
- Support additional state and local funding for groundwater management programs.
- Support increased use of stormwater and recycled water for recharge of groundwater basins, in a manner that does not degrade groundwater.
- Support local control of groundwater uses and groundwater rights.

Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation

- Support, integrating climate change considerations, into state and local water and resources planning.
- Support, the inclusion and development of cost-effective renewable energy in the delivery and treatment of water supplies and wastewater.
- Support policies that encourage the development of diversified local water portfolios and that take into consideration the greenhouse gas emissions associated with those supplies.
- Support policies that recognize, support and credit the role of water conservation and water use efficiency in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Water Resource Planning and Management

- Support local control for planning management and use of water supplies to address local needs and contribute to long-term sustainability.
- Support efforts that facilitate the development of local or regional conveyance facilities that assist in providing more efficient distribution of water supplies, consistent with local and regional planning activities. The mitigation and project costs of these local conveyance facilities should be the responsibility of the project(s) beneficiary.
- Support integrated planning, while maintaining local control, among groundwater, surface water, local water, imported water, stormwater and recycled water for improved flexibility and new achievements in the management of water resources.
- Support comprehensive basin wide planning

Water as Power

- Support water use policies that give consideration to water use for critical power plant assets.
- Support policies that recognize hydropower is a domestic source of climate-friendly renewable energy that also benefits flood control, water supply, air quality and the economy.

Sustainable Stormwater Management

- Support the development of local sustainable stormwater management plans that use or mimic natural systems, and address the effects of increased urbanization.
- Support the development of plans that achieve multiple stormwater benefits including the removal of pollutants, the replenishment of groundwater, habitat restoration and lowered energy use for treatment and disposal of stormwater.
- Support additional state and local funding for sustainable stormwater management programs.

Desalination

- Support policies to streamline the regulatory approval process of desalination projects.
- Support policies that minimize environmental impacts of desalination projects.
- Support research that will lower energy use in the desalination process and research on emerging technologies that will make desalination projects more cost effective.
- Support additional state and local funding for desalination projects.

Greywater

- Support the development of standards for commercial and residential greywater systems for both indoor and outdoor use with the concurrent goals of protecting public health, water quality and expanding the utilization of greywater to displace potable water use.

Finances

- Support state and federal funding for water infrastructure projects that are cost-effective; provide long-term benefits to the state and its inhabitants, provided that the direct beneficiaries and cost causers are paying their fair share of the project costs.
- CMUA has no policy on Delta financing at this time.
- Support the protection of local property taxes for use by publicly owned power and water utilities and the maintenance of critical reserve accounts of publicly owned power and water utilities.
- Support efforts that seek to bring federal sources of funding to California for water infrastructure development and renewable energy development through water management.