

ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM



The Foundation envisions a California that manages, stewards, and conserves its water and land to support a resilient environment and healthy communities.

Integrated water management solutions

The S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation invests in pursuing policies that promote integrated water management, and in demonstrating solutions at a regional scale.

Goal

California water management is informed by research, grounded in best practice, and enabled by sound water policy. As a result, California transitions to a sustainable water management system that meets the needs of people and nature.

Approach

- A** Demonstrate the effectiveness of integrated water management solutions that promote the holistic management of water alongside land, and other related resources.
- B** Pursue state policies and incentives that move water management toward sustainable solutions.
- C** Strengthen the water field through investments in leadership development, organizational capacity, and strategic partnerships and collaborations.

Intended outcomes

- ✓ Near-term responses to extreme conditions improve the state's ability to sustainably manage water over the long term.
- ✓ California brings its groundwater basins into balance and manages them as an integrated part of the water system.
- ✓ New sources of public, private, and philanthropic funding support sustainable water solutions.
- ✓ Los Angeles and the Central Valley adopt regional water solutions that meet the needs of people and nature.
- ✓ The water field has strong leaders, institutions, and partnerships that are well positioned to respond to new challenges and pursue integrated water solutions.

Progress to date

- In 2014, the Water Foundation played a critical role in the passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in California.
- In 2014, with input from organizations like Tree People, Heal the Bay, and others, Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti issued an Executive Directive mandating an integrated water strategy that increases local water supplies and improves water security.
- In 2015, a network of community foundations launched to work individually and collectively to advance sustainable water management in California by building regional capacity to pursue solutions.
- In 2016, the Water Funder Initiative released Toward Water Sustainability: A Blueprint for Philanthropy to guide and inspire efforts to make water systems more balanced, resilient, and sustainable.
- In 2017, the Water Foundation launched as an independent organization to direct philanthropic funding to ideas, collaborations, and approaches to resolving water challenges across the West.
- In 2018, the Water Solutions Network, a cross-sector collaboration of leaders focused on the future of water management in California, launched.