



Media Release

Major state-funded Sacramento project to provide environmental, water recycling benefits

Water Board provided \$1 billion in loans to Regional San's EchoWater Project, which will upgrade Sacramento's treatment of wastewater

May 19, 2023

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SACRAMENTO – Celebrating one of the largest public works projects in Sacramento's history, the State Water Resources Control Board and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board joined the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District today to mark completion of the [EchoWater Project](#), a \$1.7 billion upgrade to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant to achieve new water quality standards.

The upgrade equips the treatment plant to carry out new, tertiary treatment processes that remove 99% of ammonia and 89% of nitrogen from wastewater. The result is cleaner wastewater for discharge to the Sacramento River and water that meets recycling standards for non-potable reuses, such as irrigating landscapes and crops.

This major project was in part made possible by \$1 billion in State Water Board low-interest loans from the [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#). The 10-year project began after the Central Valley Water Board's 2010 decision to include strict conditions in the plant's discharge permit to protect water quality in the Sacramento River and in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta downstream. Meeting these conditions necessitated an overhaul of the plant's infrastructure and technology.

"The Delta is the largest estuary in the state – its water supplies benefit most of California's regions and economies – but its resources are strained. We know we must modernize, diversify and secure a more sustainable water supply system to meet the state's needs," said California Secretary for Environmental Protection Yana Garcia. The Regional San project shows us that we can protect our invaluable ecosystems and habitat and increase our water supplies. I am excited to see this project, and more like it, move forward with the support of state and federal investment dollars."

In addition to supplying cleaner water for discharge to the Delta, the plant will be a source of 50,000 acre-feet per year of recycled water for the district's [Harvest Water](#) project, one of the largest agricultural water recycling projects in California's history, once it becomes operational in 2025. Harvest Water is poised to receive a total of \$292



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million in state funding through the [Water Storage Investment Program](#) as part of voter-approved Proposition 1 of 2014. The California Water Commission, which will consider final approval of the funding award next month, previously awarded \$14 million in early funding for project.

“This is a spectacular achievement and I want to acknowledge the joint role of Regional San, environmental groups, Sacramento County, and the state and regional water boards in making the new facility a reality,” said E. Joaquin Esquivel, chair of the State Water Board. “The state’s \$1 billion investment in this project speaks to our commitment to helping water districts meet water quality requirements and create drought-resistant supplies.”

The board’s [Division of Financial Assistance](#) provided low-interest loans to Regional San throughout all eight phases of the project, with funds from the State Revolving Fund, a federal-state partnership that provides low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. Annually, California receives about \$100 million in federal dollars from the fund and provides \$20 million in matching dollars.

“EPA applauds Regional San for taking a bold step in drought resiliency by providing a new source of water for irrigation and agriculture,” said Tomás Torres, Water Division Director, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9. “EPA’s contribution of over \$700 million in partnership with the State Water Resources Control Board through the State Revolving Fund will also remove harmful nutrient pollution impacting the Sacramento River and Delta.”

Regional San’s plant processes the wastewater generated by all of Sacramento County and the city of West Sacramento in Yolo County, totaling about 135 million gallons each day. It is now the second-largest full advanced secondary and full tertiary wastewater treatment plant in the nation, after the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant in Washington, D.C.

“Regional San is proud to say we delivered the EchoWater Project on time and under budget,” said Christoph Dobson, Regional San’s General Manager. “We are very appreciative of the low-interest loan we received from the State Water Board, which saved our ratepayers more than a half-billion dollars in interest costs and kept our customers’ rates much lower than originally projected.”

The State Water Board’s mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California’s water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.