

# REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

## A Decade of Collaboration – A Solid Foundation for the Future



In the late 1990s, water purveyors in the Sacramento region faced an increasingly complex landscape. Communities were growing rapidly and concern for the environment was on the rise. The spread of groundwater contamination and agreements to protect the lower American River were adding new challenges to the job of ensuring a safe and reliable water supply.

Guided by the idea that agencies can accomplish more together than separately, local water providers began a two-year process to combine existing efforts and provide a unified voice on regional water issues. The result was the Regional Water Authority, a joint powers authority formed in June 2001. A decade later, the regional approach is paying dividends. With its emphasis on partnerships and technical excellence, RWA has netted tangible results for its members and marked milestones on numerous projects to help secure the region's water future.

# AB Solid Foundation for the Future

From integrated regional planning to water efficiency, RWA has taken the lead on forward-looking initiatives that are putting the Sacramento region on the map. It has expanded its membership to 23 water suppliers and affiliated agencies in Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado and Yolo counties, and forged partnerships with numerous organizations working to improve the region's water supply reliability.

RWA's collaborative approach also has positioned the region to take advantage of grant funding opportunities, making RWA and its members a model for 21st century water management strategies.

## A Common Mission, a Unified Voice

RWA members are at the center of progress and historic agreement on regional water issues. Through innovative partnerships, RWA and its members have taken the lead on protecting water resources and planning for the future. Along the way, they have reinforced the value of working together.

On issues such as Delta solutions and governance, water rights decisions, water conservation requirements and regulatory approval of new water storage strategies, RWA has provided a strong voice and helped raise the region's clout on statewide water matters.



RWA members brief Congressman Pete Visclosky on the Metro Chamber Cap-to-Cap trip.



An expert panel briefs the RWA Board.

## Forum for Collaboration

True to its mission of providing a forum for regional water issues, key leaders have addressed RWA and its members over the years. Movers and shakers such as legislators, members of Congress, statewide water leaders and political commentators have shared insights with RWA members on such topics as state legislation, regional water management and developments in the

quest to resolve the water supply and environmental crisis in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

RWA has also mobilized regional responses to legislative and regulatory issues, ensuring that local needs are not overlooked in the statewide debate over solutions. Most recently, RWA has strengthened its efforts to position the region's water providers as an effective part of the policy debate. RWA's regional nature makes it the natural forum for water suppliers to interact with other regionally-focused groups such as the Sacramento Metro Chamber and SACOG.



## Key milestones RWA

2000

April Sacramento Water Forum Agreement signed by 40 stakeholder organizations.

2001

June Regional Water Authority is formed. Ed Winkler becomes first executive director.  
September RWA Board of Directors elects first Executive Committee.

2002

February Regional Water Efficiency Program launched. Aimed at helping RWA members fulfill Water Forum best management practices.

2003

July RWA awarded a \$22 million grant for the American River Basin Regional Conjunctive Use Program. RWA's WEP receives over \$500,000 from Prop. 13 Urban Water Conservation grant program.

2003

June WEP is awarded a grant from the Department of Water Resources for a rebate program for large landscape irrigation systems.

October American River Basin Cooperating Agencies hands reins to RWA & SGA to implement regional conjunctive use program.

Members of Regional Water Authority  
 • California-American Water Company  
 • Placer County Water Agency  
 • Sancho Pineda Community

# Leading the Way with Regional Planning

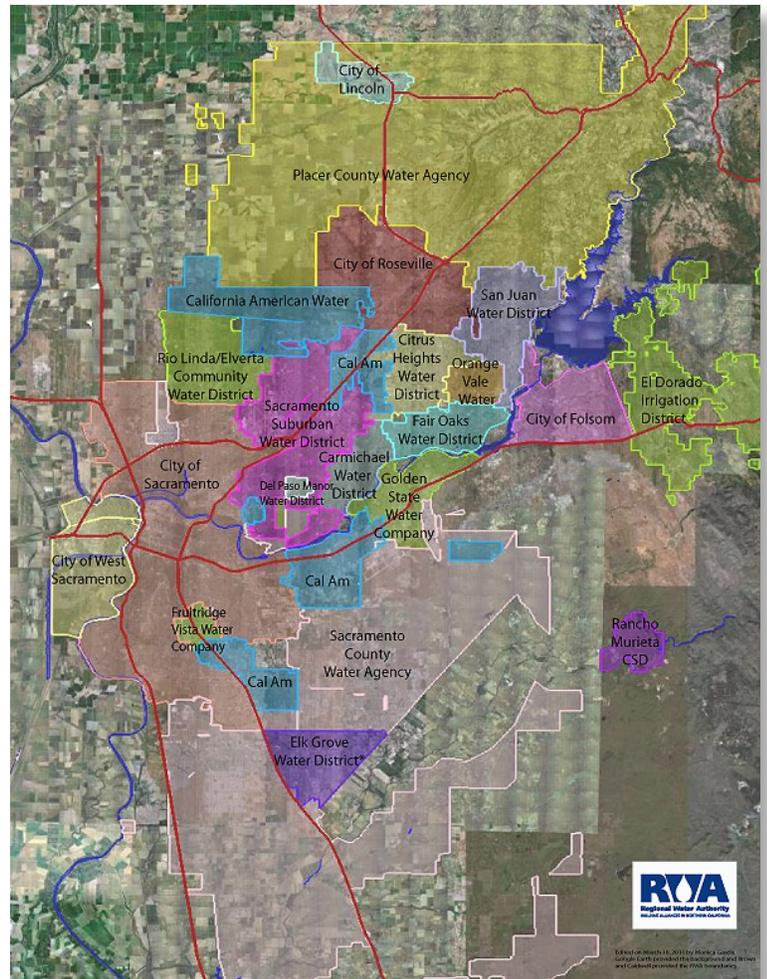
A prime example of the power of regional collaboration is the cutting-edge program developed by RWA to improve water supply and water quality for all uses in the American River basin.

The American River Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan received \$25 million in grant funding from the California Department of Water Resources in 2006 to help the region move forward with a variety of projects that will result in improvements in water supply, water quality and protection for the lower American River and the lower Cosumnes River.

The first phase of implementation of the program includes a suite of 14 infrastructure projects such as groundwater wells, surface water pipelines, water treatment plants and water recycling facilities. In addition, the projects will generate statewide benefits by improving habitat and the quality of water reaching the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, an ecologically sensitive estuary that is also a critical link in the state's water delivery system.

In May 2011, the program was recommended for an additional \$16 million to fund 15 more high priority projects for the region that would expand the range of benefits to flood damage reduction, water conservation, and watershed protection.

RWA has also marked tremendous progress through completion of the American River Basin Conjunctive Use Program. The \$43 million effort includes pipelines, pumps, treatment plan expansions, and other facilities that will help the region better manage surface and groundwater supplies. Aided by a \$22 million Proposition 13 grant awarded in 2002, RWA members have now completed all 12 projects that comprise the program. The expanded capacity to practice conjunctive use benefits not only the region, but other parts of the state and the environment through water transfers in dry years.



Map of the Regional Water Authority Service Area



## Why Save Water?

Though the Sacramento region is blessed with two major rivers and healthy groundwater basins, our water resources are finite. Even in normal rainfall years, it is critical to use water wisely to reduce pressure on the American River.



**2004**

December RWA marks completion of first four components of the American River Basin Conjunctive Use Program.

**2005**

August RWA receives U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Commissioner's Award for the Regional Water Efficiency Program.

**2006**

January RWA awarded Prop. 50 planning grant to prepare American River Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan.

April RWA receives Environmental Recognition Award from Sac. Environ. Commission.

May RWA launches the Be Water Smart Campaign.

June RWA adopts ARB IRWMP and submits application for Prop. 50 funds.

**2007**

February RWA receives \$25 million Prop. 50 grant for the ARB IRWMP.

July RWA's WEP receives Prop. 50 grant to expand rebate partnership.

# Grant Funding Successes

RWA's collaborative programs and planning processes have captured millions of dollars in grants for the region to help local water suppliers meet their customers' needs while keeping rates low. Among the highlights:

- \$22 million grant for the American River Basin Regional Conjunctive Use Program. Awarded in 2002, the grant funding supported 12 projects to strengthen management of the region's surface and groundwater resources.
- \$10 million in grants for Water Efficiency efforts over the years from the state and federal government.
- \$25 million Proposition 50 grant for the American River Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. Awarded in 2007, the grant will help fund 14 priority projects.
- \$16 million recommended from Proposition 84 to implement 15 priority projects from the American River Basin IRWMP



ARBCUP Project Sites

*"It's becoming clear that regions that come together and develop regional plans are way ahead of the game. I applaud your efforts and encourage you to do more." – Former State Senator Jim Costa, May 2003 (later elected to Congress)*

## Regional Water Efficiency

RWA's Water Efficiency Program continues to log successes with its array of services and on-the-ground activities. Through partnerships with local utilities and offerings such as landscape seminars and rebates, the region is saving water, energy and money, and closing in on conservation targets. Aided by some \$10 million in grant funding over the years, the Water Efficiency Program is carrying out progressive regional rebate programs for high efficiency toilets and clothes washers and efficient irrigation equipment.

The program also pushes for awareness by 1.7 million residents in the region through education and public outreach efforts, including successful lawn makeovers and a popular "Blue Thumb" program highlighting local residents to promote landscape water efficiency in the region.

The program has included regional television and radio advertising, public service announcements, social media, and partnerships with the Sacramento River Cats, Lowes, EPA's WaterSense program, Home Depot and the statewide Save Our Water program.



RWA's WEP popular "Blue Thumb" Campaign launched in May 2010.

### 2008

June John Woodling becomes new executive director.

August RWA receives grant from the Office of Homeland Security to study water system security needs.

### 2009

July RWA adopts Strategic Plan.

August RWA secures \$5 million from the USBR for a meter acceleration program.

### 2010

February RWA marks completion of 12 projects funded as part of ARBCUP.

September RWA launches effort to update ARB IRWMP.

### 2011

February RWA awarded a planning grant to help update the ARB IRWMP.

April RWA unveils new website [www.BeWaterSmart.info](http://www.BeWaterSmart.info).

May RWA recommended to receive \$16 million from Prop. 84 to implement 15 priority projects from the ARB IRWMP.

# *R*egional Water Authority

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) is a joint powers authority formed in 2001 comprised of 23 water providers and affiliated agencies in the greater Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado and Yolo County region.

## *Mission*

RWA's mission is to serve and represent regional water supply interests and assist RWA members with protecting and enhancing the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

## RWA Member Benefits

- Participation in a regional forum to facilitate water policy development, networking and collaboration among the region's major water interests.
- Access to highly successful subscription programs, such as regional grant applications and the regional WEP.
- Cost savings through pooling of resources and economies of scale.
- Legislative and regulatory representation along with regular updates on water-related policy issues.
- Representation in the Sacramento Water Forum.
- Timely updates on current issues through workshops, briefings and active public outreach efforts.



Before

**RWA Water Smart  
Landscape Makeover  
Contest winner.**



After

The grand prize of RWA's Landscape Makeover Contest was a beautiful and water efficient front yard valued at \$40,000. Equipment and services were donated by over 20 partners and RWA members.

*“RWA has been a leader in advancing regional cooperation and local resources development. Partnerships such as those forged through RWA are widely seen as the future of California water.”*

*– Timothy Quinn, executive director, Association of California Water Agencies*

## The Water Forum Agreement

The lower American River is the only nationally designated wild and scenic river in the country that runs through a major metropolitan area.

Recognizing the need to protect the lower American while meeting the region's needs for a reliable water supply, a broad representation of stakeholders signed the historic Water Forum Agreement in 2000.



A centerpiece of the agreement is a regional program to improve water use efficiency in conjunction with other strategies to help meet water needs while reducing diversions from the lower American River during dry spells or environmentally sensitive times.

**“California’s water future is clearly multi-purpose, multi-party regional projects. It’s going to be regional strategies, working together to optimize resources and develop regional and integrated plans.” – Lester Snow, then-director, Department of Water Resources**

# Award Recipients through the Years

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) presents two awards each year. The Water Statesperson of the Year is intended to recognize specific "timely achievements" during the award year. The Distinguished Service Award is awarded for services and / or leadership rendered to the region's water community over a period of years.

## Water Statesperson

Rich Plecker (2001)  
 Vanessa Nishikawa (2002)  
 Ed Winkler (2002)  
 John Woodling (2002)  
 Dave Breninger (2003)  
 Derrick Whitehead (2004)  
 Paul Bartkiewicz (2005)  
 Stephen Hall (2005)  
 James McCormack (2006)  
 Pauline Roccucci (2006)  
 Steven Nugent (2007)  
 Rob Roscoe (2007)  
 Shauna Lorange (2008)  
 Ryan Bezerra (2009)

## Distinguished Service

Jim Sequeira (2002)  
 Jim English (2003)  
 Lyle Hoag (2003)  
 LaNell Little (2003)  
 Joseph Alessandri (2004)  
 Walt Pettit (2004)  
 Dave Spath (2005)  
 Frederick Tomich (2005)  
 Byron Buck (2006)  
 Leo Winternitz (2006)  
 Ane Deister (2007)  
 Ed Tiedemann (2008)  
 John Fraser (2009)  
 Keith DeVore (2010)  
 Sandy Kozlen (2010)

# RWA Chairpersons

Jay O'Brien - 2001  
 Rich Plecker - 2002  
 Gary Reents - 2003  
 Bob Churchill - 2004  
 Pauline Roccucci - 2005  
 Rob Roscoe - 2006  
 Joe Dion - 2007  
 Joe Dion - 2008  
 Shauna Lorange - 2009  
 Rob Roscoe - 2010  
 Bill George - 2011



2011 Executive Committee L-R: Ron Greenwood, Bob Churchill, Rob Roscoe, Ken Payne, Marty Hanneman, Bill George, Paul Schubert, Pam Tobin and Kerry Schmitz.



The first RWA Executive Committee in 2001. Clockwise from back: Rob Roscoe, Derrick Whitehead, Pauline Roccucci, Lyle Hoag, Jay O'Brien, Gary Reents, Rich Plecker, Bob Churchill (William Porter not pictured).

## MEMBER AGENCIES

California American Water	City of West Sacramento	Placer County Water Agency	<b>Associates</b>
Carmichael Water District	Del Paso Manor Water District	Rancho Murieta Community Services District	El Dorado County Water Agency
Citrus Heights Water District	El Dorado Irrigation District	Rio Linda / Elverta Community Water District	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
City of Folsom	Fair Oaks Water District	Sacramento County Water Agency	Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
City of Lincoln	Fruitridge Vista Water Company	Sacramento Suburban Water District	
City of Roseville	Golden State Water Company	San Juan Water District	
City of Sacramento	Orange Vale Water Company		