THE FUTURE OF CALIFORNIA WATER

COEQUAL COLLABORATORY FOR EQUITY IN WATER ALLOCATION

PROJECT BRIEF MAY 2024

"So much water is moved around California by so many different agencies that maybe only the movers themselves know on any given day whose water is where." Joan Didion, The White Album (1979)

What is COEQWAL?

To ensure a healthy water future for all, California needs to consider diverse perspectives about how we use our water. To meet this need, we launched **COEQWAL**, a **COllaboratory for EQuity in Water ALlocations**.

With partners and collaboration, we cocreate tools that help us understand tradeoffs among many possible water futures. Our data and tools will be shared online for anyone to envision a just and equitable water future.



California's reservoirs (circles) dam rivers (blue lines) to store water when streamflows are high. A system of canals and tunnels (non-blue lines), pumps and weirs move water across the state (source: PPIC, CA DWR).

How will COEQWAL empower Californians to influence water management decisions?

VOICE DATA TOOLS KNOWLEDGE ACTION

COEQWAL allows us to explore more equitable water futures.

By building tools with diverse California communities, we elevate unheard voices, learn from each other, and build relationships.

By connecting people and ideas, we open opportunities for new solutions to emerge.



For more information, visit us at **COEQWAL.BERKELEY.EDU**

Why do we need COEQWAL?

O CLIMATE CHANGE

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COLLABORATORY FOR EQUITY IN WATER ALLOCATION

Climate change brings more extreme weather to California. We get less water than we need or more than we can manage. Rising sea levels push salt water into the California Delta, a growing risk to our water supply. Ecosystems face increasing stress.

How can we adapt? COEQWAL will evaluate how our water system will respond to climate change and identify pathways to a sustainable, equitable, and resilient water future.



Lake Shasta in 2021 photo by A. Innerarity

INSUFFICIENT WATER, DIVERSE DEMANDS

California has one of the largest systems in the world for moving water where and when we need it. However, between agriculture, cities, and the environment, we rarely have sufficient water to meet all demands.

What is the best way to divide and distribute our limited supply? COEQWAL will explore new ways to balance competing needs. By co-creating data and tools with diverse water users, COEQWAL will promote inclusive and comprehensive evaluation of trade-offs.

EVERYONE NEEDS A VOICE

Computer models allow us to explore different possible futures. They help us make informed decisions about who gets water, where and when.

But who decides what scenarios to consider?

COEQWAL opens access to data and tools that have been the domain of experts. Using a collaborative approach, we combine existing and new computer models that are tailored to the values and priorities of diverse community members.

How to get involved?

COEQWAL is a two-year project. Launched in 2023 at public universities across the state, we invite Californians to collaborate with us through interviews, surveys, and workshops. Share your voice! Use the contact form on our website. Learn more at **coeqwal.berkeley.edu**.

CALIFORNIA

OF



Tulare County resident photo by L. Valenzuela



Yurok fishing on the Klamath River photo by B. Finley / CC BY-NC2.0



Scan to visit our contact form.

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CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVE