

# Memorandum

Date: February 2, 2010

To: All DWR Employees

From: **Department of Water Resources**

Subject: Vision Statement from Director Cowin

I consider it both an honor and a privilege to be appointed Director of the Department of Water Resources. As I reflect on the qualities of the leaders that have held this position over the Department's 50+ year history, I am both humbled and sobered by the responsibilities of this office. This year will mark my 30th year with our Department. Like many of you, I grew up in DWR and have made my career here. My experience provides me with a broad understanding and great respect for our organization, as well as recognition of our current challenges. I strongly believe in our work as a Department, and also in our collective ability to carry it out successfully on behalf of millions of Californians who rely upon us to do so.

My vision for DWR is straightforward. We must continue to lead California towards more sustainable, integrated resources management to provide for a productive economy, healthy ecosystem, and desirable quality of life for all Californians. This is the same vision articulated by Governor Schwarzenegger, Director Snow, and many other California water leaders. It is also the vision described in the 2005 and 2009 Updates of the California Water Plan. In broad strokes, sustainable, integrated resources management means considering water supply reliability, flood management, water quality, and ecosystem protection and restoration in all resource management decisions.

Through implementation of the historic water legislation package passed by the state legislature and signed into law by the Governor late last year, I am confident that we can take significant steps toward achieving this vision. As a result of this legislation, DWR has the responsibility and opportunity to work within a new Delta governance structure to complete plans for improving both the Delta ecosystem and the reliability of water supply derived from the Delta. We must also step up our efforts to integrate this work with our ongoing responsibilities to develop a Central Valley Flood Protection Plan and implement the FloodSAFE California initiative. At the same time, we must continue our work with local agencies to advance Integrated Regional Water Management and implement new mandatory requirements for water conservation and groundwater monitoring to improve statewide water supply reliability.

Aside from these issues that are currently in the public eye, DWR has a base of important responsibilities we must continue to carry out. These include operation and maintenance of the State Water Project, operation and maintenance of flood management facilities, dam safety, emergency response, financial and technical assistance to local agencies, data collection and many, many more important programs and projects. We must continue to carry out this work effectively and efficiently, while striving to collaborate with other agencies, local government, our customers, stakeholders, and the public.

Moreover, we need to continue to strive to improve our efficiency and the cohesiveness of our organization. Specific initiatives I would like to advance include using formal project management principles in carrying out more of the Department's work, and implementing new information technology to improve our ability to collect, manage, and share water information among our own staff and among local, state and federal agencies.

Even as I describe these many diverse responsibilities and goals, I understand we face new obstacles and constraints in our budgets and staffing. Clearly, both our opportunities and challenges are as great as any time in our department's history. We must do our best to prioritize our activities, work together efficiently, and scope work plans that are within our means. To this end, I encourage every DWR employee to understand and take ownership of the Department's broad mission, and to consider how our day-to-day actions can not only contribute to specific program and project goals, but to the furtherance of the Department's mission as a whole.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for your many contributions to DWR. I believe the strength of our organization lies not only in the diverse and strong abilities of our staff, but also in the level of passion we have for our work. Even in the face of the challenges ahead, I encourage you to protect and cultivate that passion. As Director, I will do everything I can to assure that DWR continues to succeed and remains a leader in managing California's precious water resources.

/s/

Mark W. Cowin  
Director

Attachment