

## **California WaterFix Critical to South County**

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is 435 miles from South Orange County, but the impacts of what happens there are felt as close to home as your shower.

The Delta is the heart of the State Water Project. Near Stockton, the Delta is where the tidal forces of the Pacific meet the outflows of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. Water flows through the Delta before entering a series of reservoirs, pumps, and canals that bring water from the Sierras to Southern California.

About 50 percent of the water used in South Orange County flows through the Delta. Without a rich aquifer, we are nearly entirely dependent on water imported from the Sierras or the Colorado River.

Before that abundance of melted snow and freshwater reaches us, it must navigate more than 1,100 miles of levees that channel water through the Delta. In contrast, the entire California coastline is about 840 miles! But the levees are old and susceptible to failure from age, earthquake – even too much water. A catastrophic failure would cripple our water supply.

Efforts to protect fish and other environmental regulations also mean that Southern California gets only 60 percent of its water allotment from the Sierras in an average year, which increases our dependence on the Colorado River.

State officials and water leaders support a solution: the California WaterFix, which would build twin tunnels beneath the Delta to deliver the water to Southern California. A partner project, California EcoRestore, would create natural habitat through the Delta to support fish and address other environmental concerns.

A study of Orange County's future water supply determined the WaterFix is the single-most cost-effective large-scale project to ensure long-term water reliability for Southern California.

The WaterFix will ensure we receive our share of the water by taking it directly from the Sacramento River during high-flow periods, and funneling it beneath the Delta. Instead of losing valuable stormwater to the Pacific Ocean, the WaterFix will allow it to be captured and used where it is needed.

Your local water suppliers, all members of the Municipal Water District of Orange County, are working on new sources of water, too. The Santa Margarita and South Coast water districts and San Juan Capistrano want to maximize use of the area's groundwater basin; South Coast plans a desalination plant, and all agencies, including Moulton Niguel Water District, are honing the art of using water efficiently.

The Orange County Water Reliability found the WaterFix will remain a critical part of California's water system even with these projects. Yes, the WaterFix comes with a pricetag– about \$5 per month per customer – but the cost of ignoring our infrastructure needs are much greater.

Leaders of the Laguna Beach County, Moulton Niguel and South Coast water districts have endorsed the WaterFix. Reach out to your elected officials – city, state and federal – and let them know you do, too.

Because while your shower might be the first place you notice a water shortage, the impacts will be felt throughout Southern California.

See [www.californiawaterfix.com](http://www.californiawaterfix.com) for more information.

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