



Delta Counties Coalition

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"Working together on water and Delta issues"

Delta Counties Reject Department of Water Resources' Latest "Report" Promoting the Delta Tunnel Conveyance Project

For Immediate Release

August 19, 2025

Contact: Michael Grinstead

GrinsteadM@saccounty.gov

916-875-7276

In response to the California Department of Water Resources' announcement today promoting its latest "report" claiming the Delta Tunnel Conveyance Project (Delta Tunnel) will solve California's water crisis made worse by climate change, Patrick Hume, Chair of the Delta Counties Coalition (DCC), issued the following statement on behalf of the five counties and 4 million California residents that stand to be most negatively impacted by this controversial megaproject:

"The Delta Counties Coalition strongly rejects the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) recent claim that the Delta Tunnel will address climate change and provide a resilient, statewide water supply. These assertions are misleading and unsupported by evidence.

Despite being portrayed as a climate adaptation project, the Delta Tunnel would do nothing to solve the root issue of California's over-allocated water system, which is already pushed beyond its limits by long-term drought, unsustainable groundwater pumping, and shifting weather patterns. Transporting water in a big new tunnel to places water already goes is not climate resilience — it's wishful and wasteful thinking.

As California continues to face extended droughts and flood events, the tunnel offers no real solution. It's a transport system that cannot realistically capture significant amounts of flood flows and does nothing to address the State's very real infrastructure maintenance and repair needs. Nor will it provide security in dry years when water supplies are dangerously low. DWR's claims use scare tactics in the absence of scientific or operational evidence that a tunnel will increase water reliability under real climate stress.

This is on top of DWR's misleading claims that the tunnel could have captured 956,000 acre-feet of water in 2024 yet offers no concrete plan for how or where that water would be stored — underground or otherwise.

If this Administration — and those before it — had prioritized common-sense, climate-smart water investments over a multi-decade, multi-billion-dollar tunnel, California would be far better prepared to weather our current crisis. Areas like Orange County and San Diego are already leading the way with investments in local water reuse, stormwater capture, and recycling — projects that provide real water and real resilience.

The State should re-focus on maintaining and strengthening levees to protect the Delta's freshwater pathway through the Delta to the existing export pumps, investing in above- and below-ground water storage, and expanding conservation and reuse across all sectors. The State's adopted budget makes no investments in protecting and strengthening Delta levees, despite wild claims of their imminent collapse. The Delta Tunnel is not a climate solution and has severe negative effects on the Delta ecosystem and

communities. It is a costly distraction that risks sacrificing the Delta ecosystem without delivering meaningful benefits for California's future.

It's time to reject the Governor's divisive tunnel politics and invest in water strategies that actually work — for people, the environment, and generations to come.”

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