



## **Anchored Within the Tide**

*A look ahead at investing in water supply reliability in 2024 and beyond*

By Gary Martin, Board President, SCV Water

Over the past few years, California has experienced weather whiplash – recording the three driest years from 2020 through 2022, followed by extreme precipitation in 2023. Locally, the SCV received 40 inches of rain last year, far surpassing our annual average of 17.4 inches.

While these two weather extremes are occurring more frequently, at SCV Water we continue to anchor ourselves within the tide – that is, our steadfast focus on investing in future water supplies while maintaining our current supplies. This ensures reliability, so that we can meet our customers' water needs today, for the dry years tomorrow, and for generations to come.

In 2024, we've set our sights on investing in two new (imported) supply reliability initiatives – the Delta Conveyance and Sites Reservoir Projects.

### **Delta Conveyance Project**

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has approved the [Final Environmental Impact Report \(EIR\)](#) for the Delta Conveyance Project – an effort to modernize the state's water system infrastructure to make it more resilient to climate change and natural disasters while protecting and enhancing the environment in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. While this is an important step forward toward modernizing the State Water Project (SWP), it will require a substantial financial investment by the State Water Contractors, of which SCV Water is a member, to construct the Project.

The State Water Project is a significant ongoing investment and plays an essential role in our overall supply portfolio. In an average year, SCV Water typically relies on water imported through the SWP to provide about half of the supplies for our region. The Delta Conveyance Project reinforces the reliability of our imported supply from the SWP providing critical support during dry periods while helping to accommodate climate extremes.

For more information, visit <https://www.yourscvwater.com/delta-conveyance>.

### **Sites Reservoir Project**

SCV Water is also participating in the Sites Reservoir Project, a planned and environmentally beneficial off-stream reservoir in Northern California that would capture excess water from major storms and save it for drier periods to supply reliable water when other sources are low. The development and construction of Sites Reservoir is a critical component of California's long-term water supply strategy, focused on increasing California's water supply resiliency while protecting and enhancing the environment.

SCV Water is a member of the Sites Project Authority, which is pursuing a water right permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. This will provide Sites with legal authority to divert water under certain conditions, for a specific purpose for use within a specified area.

Once completed, the available water supplies from this project will become a part of our robust water supply portfolio for the Santa Clarita Valley.

For more information, visit <https://www.yourscvwater.com/sites-reservoir-project>.

### **Continued Water Resiliency**

In the coming years, SCV Water's supplies will be subject to a wide variety of known and unknown risks and uncertainties, including more extreme droughts, floods, rising temperatures, and changing regulatory requirements.

We will continue to maintain our water supply reliability investments, including:

- **Our 2020 Board-approved Water Resiliency Initiative** focuses on taking actions to ensure safe and resilient water supplies and healthy ecosystems for our community, economy, and the environment. The Initiative seeks to provide the best possible guidance to the Board on matters of public policy by expanding Agency knowledge, developing necessary analytic tools, and preparing associated studies, planning directions, and other activities to inform SCV Water's investment strategies.
- **Local groundwater sustainability.** The Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SCV-GSA) is a joint powers authority responsible for sustainably managing groundwater in the Santa Clara River Valley East Subbasin. The SCV-GSA's Groundwater Sustainability Plan was recently approved in January 2024 by the California Department of Water Resources' Sustainable Groundwater Management Office. For more information, visit: <https://scvgsa.org/>
- **Restoring water quality in the SCV: Addressing PFAS.** Like many communities throughout the nation, a group of chemicals known as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have been found in the Santa Clarita Valley's groundwater supply.

Within the last two years, SCV Water has invested more than \$20 million to construct and operate several PFAS groundwater treatment plants at our N-Wells and Valley Center Well sites. Over the next 10 years, it is expected that 15 PFAS groundwater treatment plants in total will be completed at an estimated cost of approximately \$161 million.

Additionally, we have purchased state-of-the-art lab equipment that keeps our PFAS testing in-house, saving time and money. And our lab is one of a handful of labs across the nation, certified by the state's Environmental Lab Accreditation Program to conduct PFAS Testing. For more information, visit: <https://www.yourscvwater.com/pfas>

So, as we continue to weather the storms (literally and from a regulatory perspective), we know that we are anchored and rooted so that we can withstand the ebbs and flows of the tide to ensure we are fulfilling our mission to provide reliable, quality water at a reasonable cost to the SCV.

###