

Strategies for Healthy Rivers and Bays



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Key Water Code Provisions

11.02362 (o) Each basin and bay area stakeholders committee shall review the environmental flow analyses and environmental flow regime recommendations submitted by the committee's basin and bay expert science team and shall consider them in conjunction with other factors, including the present and future needs for water for other uses related to water supply planning in the pertinent river basin and bay system. The basin and bay area stakeholders committee shall develop recommendations regarding environmental flow standards and strategies to meet the environmental flow standards and submit those recommendations to the commission

...

(p) In recognition of the importance of adaptive management, after submitting its recommendations regarding environmental flow standards and strategies to meet the environmental flow standards to the commission, each basin and bay area stakeholders committee, with the assistance of the pertinent basin and bay expert science team, shall prepare and submit for approval by the advisory group a work plan. The work plan must...

(3) establish a schedule for continuing the validation or refinement of the basin and bay environmental flow analyses and environmental flow regime recommendations, the environmental flow standards adopted by the commission, and the strategies to achieve those standards.

SB 3 Legislative Findings

11.0235(b) Maintaining the biological soundness of the state's rivers, lakes, bays, and estuaries is of great importance to the public's economic health and general well-being. The legislature encourages voluntary water and land stewardship to benefit the water in the state, as defined by Section 26.001.

11.0235(d-3)(2) in those basins in which the unappropriated water that will be set aside for instream flow and freshwater inflow protection is not sufficient to fully satisfy the environmental flow standards established by the commission, a variety of market approaches, both public and private, for filling the gap must be explored and pursued.

Existing Rights to e-flows

11.0237(a)The commission may not issue a new permit for instream flows dedicated to environmental needs or bay and estuary inflows. The commission may approve an application to amend an existing permit or certificate of adjudication to change the use to or add a use for instream flows dedicated to environmental needs or bay and estuary inflows.

Strategies



- Market tools
 - Permanent acquisition from willing sellers
 - Temporary compensated fallowing or forbearance (dry year)
- Spring flow protection
- Land stewardship
- Reservoir operation protocols
- Dedicated return flows



Matagorda Bay photo from LCRA Archives site.