

Putting Data to Work

The Open & Transparent Water Data Act

Open and Transparent Water Data Platform for California

Easily accessible, well-documented data of known quality is necessary to improving water management in California. Currently, water resource-related datasets reside in numerous state, local, and federal agencies, academia, and non-governmental organizations, making it very challenging to identify, access, and use data to inform water planning, management, and decision-making.

The Open and Transparent Water Data Act (AB 1755, Dodd) requires the Department of Water Resources (DWR), in consultation with the California Water Quality Monitoring Council, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, to create, operate, and maintain¹ a statewide integrated water data platform; and to develop protocols for data sharing, documentation, quality control, public access, and promotion of open-source platforms and decision support tools related to water data.

- ❑ January 1, 2018 – protocols and strategic plan to guide program implementation
- ❑ September 1, 2019 – operational integrated water data platform with available water and ecological/fisheries state agency datasets
- ❑ August 1, 2020 – available water and ecological/fisheries data related to California water supply and management held by identified federal agencies

What approach will DWR use to implement AB 1755?

DWR and partner agencies are collaborating with and learning from other State and federal agencies, data experts, and AB 1755 stakeholders, including data providers and consumers to chart a successful path forward. This important effort is also being informed by the insightful work of technology and open data experts, including: the Aspen Institute Dialog Seriesⁱ report, “Internet of Water: Sharing and Integrating Water Data for Sustainability”; UC Waterⁱⁱ work to support development of a water data and information sharing system organized around key water management decisions and use cases; California Council on Science Technology’s exploration of system requirements for an Open Water Information Architecture (OWIA)ⁱⁱⁱ; and other State, federal, and local open data initiatives. These efforts, and others, offer a broad range of expertise, including data science, water resource management, information technology, and library science.

¹ DWR will explore mechanisms to support long-term sustainability of the statewide integrated water data platform.

Why is an open data platform important?

- Integration of existing water and ecological/fisheries data will: support analysis across datasets and disciplines; help water managers operate more efficiently; and help water users make informed decisions based on water availability and allocation;
- State agencies should promote openness and interoperability of water data;
- Increased transparency of public data is good government;
- Water data and information technology tools and applications developed and gathered using state funds should be made publicly accessible and open-source, whenever possible;
- Increased access to data will support better-informed decisions and cost-effective investments;
- AB 1755 will support greater use of data collected and increase awareness of the importance of data in water management;
- Making information accessible, discoverable, and usable by the public can foster entrepreneurship, innovation, and scientific discovery;
- More comprehensive and interoperable datasets will provide unique opportunities to develop data-search and -packaging products and services

How can I get involved?

Successful implementation of the Open and Transparent Water Data Act depends upon collaboration and cooperation with other agencies, academia, and interested stakeholders. The AB 1755 Partner Agency Team encourages public participation and strives to understand stakeholders' needs, concerns, and aspirations at key points in the AB 1755 implementation.

Drafts of the strategic plan and protocols will be available for public review in fall 2017.

Where can I get more information?

If you have questions or wish to subscribe to our email list for project updates and announcements, please contact us at: AB1755@water.ca.gov.

ⁱ <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/internet-of-water/>

ⁱⁱ <http://ucwater.org/data-for-decision-making>

ⁱⁱⁱ <ftp://mae2.sdsc.edu/Download/OWIA-SRD-Master.pdf>