

1997
STRATEGIC PLAN
UPDATE

FOR THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD AND
THE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS

California State Water Resources Control Board
and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards

Strategic Plan

July 1997



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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Message from the Chairman

The ability to plan long-term direction is key to an agency's success. We must be able to visualize and articulate our vision of the future to get there. Water policy needs to be developed with the input of stakeholders, the Legislature and the Administration to take into account the needs of future generations of Californians who will rely on this precious resource. We must look to long-range plans to lay out the path to improvement.

Governor Pete Wilson recognizes this statewide need and directed the Department of Finance to provide strategic planning guidance and direction to all agencies. In this way, the Governor, Legislature and agencies can clearly describe and discuss our vision, mission and goals. The plans also provide an avenue to integrate very important new initiatives such as the watershed, quality management, regulatory improvement, and competitiveness initiatives.

The FY 1994/95 Strategic Planning effort was a very successful and productive venture. For the first time, the State Water Resources Control Board and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards formally involved internal and external stakeholders in identifying concerns and ideas for new strategic directions. Their suggestions, captured in the June 22, 1995 Plan, provided the basis for new, clear and focused direction.

The 1995 Strategic Plan goals continue to guide the State and Regional Boards - they have weathered well. The State and Regional Boards have pursued numerous strategies and activities to realize these goals. We have made substantial progress over the last two years. Staff have done an excellent job in implementing the Strategic Plan but we recognize that challenges remain before us.

This 1997 Strategic Plan updates and builds on the earlier stakeholder and staff work. Changes have been made to reflect new initiatives, the current budgetary situation and advances made since the 1995 Plan. I look to it to further chart the fine work begun in 1995. My thanks to all who are working so diligently to turn plan into action.

John Caffrey
Chairman

Executive Summary

Since 1993, the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards) have conducted formal strategic planning efforts to establish Boardwide directions and priorities. Through direct input and feedback from nearly 1500 Board employees and external stakeholders, the State and Regional Boards (Boards) have been able to reevaluate their programmatic and organizational approaches, and develop a framework for fulfilling the Boards' mission through achievement of strategic goals and objectives. The Boards described this framework in a June 22, 1995 Strategic Plan. This 1997 document formally updates the 1995 Plan.

Thus, the following five year strategic plan articulates goals, objectives, and performance measures to guide ongoing decision-making and help ensure the fulfillment of the Boards' mission through the most appropriate actions and allocation of scarce resources.

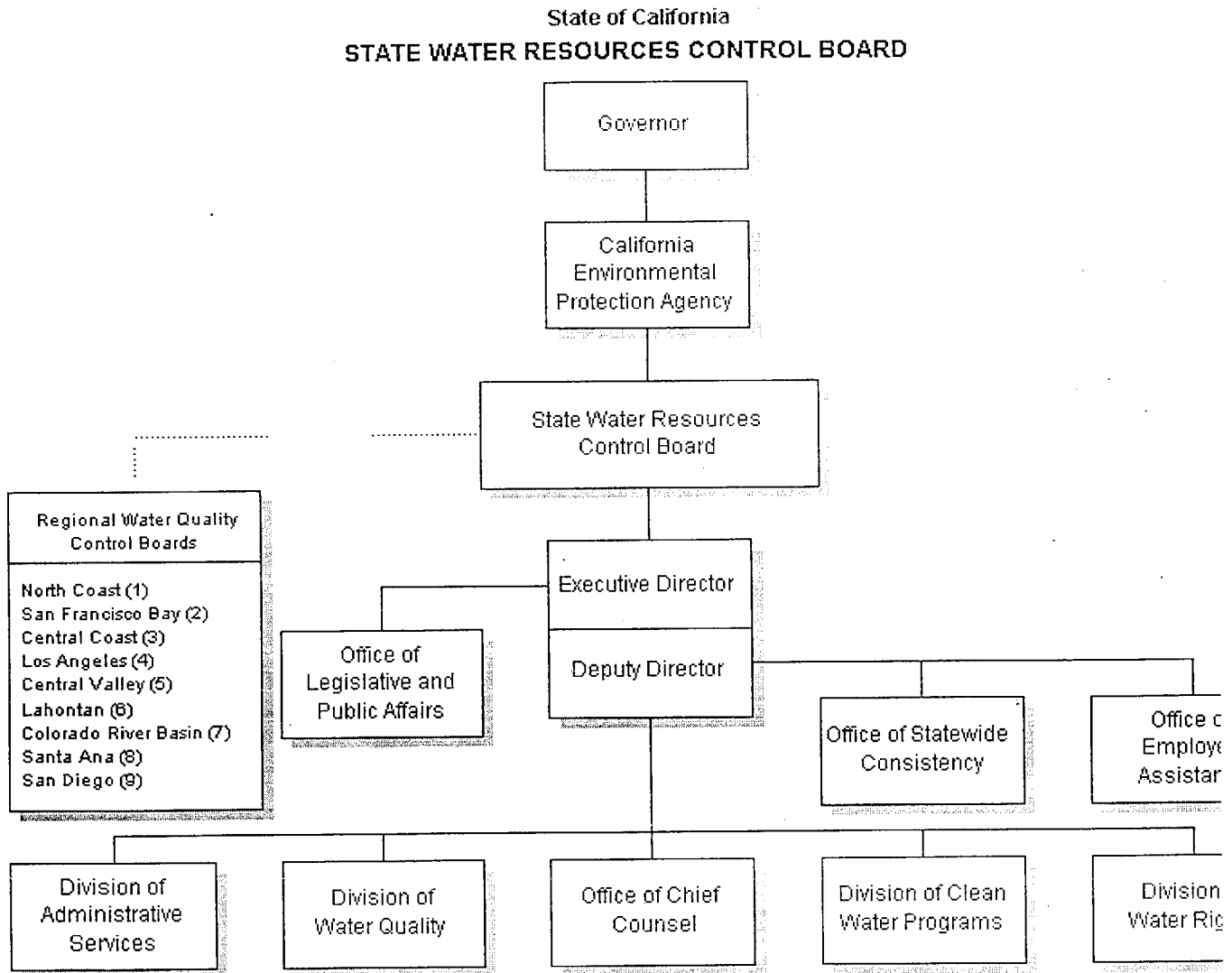
Specific, measurable performance targets have been associated with many of the objectives outlined for each strategic goal within this plan. Key strategies for achieving each goal also have been included and form the basis for detailed implementation plans designed to make the strategic plan a living document within the Boards. The identified performance measures and specific targets will be measured and monitored on a regular basis with a formal strategic plan assessment occurring annually.

The strategic plan includes the following key elements:

- Background information regarding the organization of the Boards
- A summary of the formal approach to strategic planning implemented by the Boards since 1993
- A summary of the changing environment and challenges faced by the Boards based on input throughout the strategic planning process from internal and external stakeholders
- The Boards' mission, vision and values
- The Boards' strategic goals, objectives, performance measures, current efforts and strategies that will guide actions and decision making over the next five years
- Resource assumptions and full time equivalent (FTE) position information that acknowledges that the strategic planning process is an ongoing and inherent function of management
- A plan for monitoring and tracking performance, and updating the strategic plan

The State and Regional Boards

The State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Boards) work together to protect California's water resources. Created by the Dickey Water Pollution Act, the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards) have been responsible for protecting the surface, ground and coastal waters of their regions since 1949. In 1967, the State Water Rights Board and the State Water Quality Control Board were merged to create the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board), integrating water rights and water quality decision making authority. With the passage of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act in 1969, the Boards together became the "principal state agencies with primary responsibility for the coordination and control of water quality." In 1991, the Boards were brought together with five other State environmental protection agencies under the newly created California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA). The Board's current organization structure is depicted below. Detailed organizational charts are provided in Appendix A.



The State Water Resources Control Board

The State Board is generally responsible for overall policy-setting and consideration of petitions contesting Regional Board actions. The State Board is responsible for allocation of surface water rights. Today, the State Board is organized into four divisions encompassing three program areas and an administration function that supports not only the State Board, but also the nine Regional Boards. Five full-time, appointed Board members and over 550 employees work at the State Board.

The *Division of Clean Water Programs* is responsible for the implementation of the State Board's financial assistance programs for the construction of municipal sewage facilities, water recycling facilities, and the remediation of effects of releases from underground storage tanks. The Division also provides program implementation assistance in the regulation of waste discharges to land, including: underground storage tanks, toxic pits, landfills and unauthorized waste discharges which may effect the State's ground waters. In addition, the Division certifies wastewater treatment plant operators and licenses tank testers.

The *Division of Water Quality* is responsible for providing the statewide perspective on a wide range of water quality planning and regulatory functions such as: monitoring for compliance with permit requirements, inspections of treatment facilities and pretreatment of industrial waste water discharged to

municipal systems. Other major functions of the Division include developing criteria and water quality standards for inland surface waters, bays and estuaries, and the ocean.

The *Division of Water Rights* processes water right permit applications, assists in protest resolution, holds hearings as necessary and issues permits. Once a project is completed and full beneficial use of the water has been made, the Division issues a license as final confirmation of the water right. The Division also processes changes to water right projects including transfers, investigates complaints and takes enforcement action against illegal diverters.

The *Division of Administrative Services* provides a wide range of support services to employees of both the State and Regional Boards including: accounting, contracting, personnel, data management and business services.

In addition, the State Board has a number of offices: The Executive Office, the Office of Chief Counsel, Office of Legislative and Public Affairs, Office of Employee Assistance and the Office of Statewide Consistency.

The Regional Water Quality Control Boards

The nine Regional Boards are each semi-autonomous and comprised of nine part-time Board members appointed by the Governor. Regional boundaries, as illustrated below, are based on watersheds. Together, the Regional Boards have over 650 employees working in 12 regional locations. Each Regional Board makes water quality decisions for its region. These decisions include setting standards, issuing waste discharge requirements and taking enforcement actions. Most Regional Board decisions can be appealed to the State Board.

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS



- NORTH COAST REGION (1)**
- SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION**
- CENTRAL COAST REGION (3)**
- LOS ANGELES REGION (4)**
- CENTRAL VALLEY REGION (5)**
- FRESNO BRANCH OFFICE**
- REDDING BRANCH OFFICE**
- LAHONTAN REGION (8)**
- VICTORYVILLE BRANCH OFFICE**
- COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION**
- SANTA ANA REGION (9)**
- SAN DIEGO REGION (9)**

Strategic Planning Approach

Since late 1993, the Boards have conducted formal strategic planning efforts to establish multi-year, organization-wide directions and priorities. This ongoing process assesses the current environment and projects future directions by asking:

- Where are we today?
- Where do we want to be?

- How do we get there?

To answer these questions, the Boards sought input from both external and internal stakeholders. The term stakeholders is used throughout this document and is defined as any person or group who directly or indirectly affects, is affected by, or has an interest in the actions of the Boards. Stakeholders include:

- Members of the regulated community
- Environmental groups
- Local, state and federal government agencies and elected officials
- Present and future generations of Californians
- Boards' members and employees

Sources of external stakeholder input included the External Program Review and discussions with parties affected by Water Rights processes. Sources of internal stakeholder input included interviews and focus groups with Board members and employees of both the State and Regional Boards and a Boardwide survey. As a result of the Boards' efforts, a strategic plan document was developed and finalized in June 1995 and updated via this document in July 1997.

External Approach

External Program Review

All environmental protection agencies under Cal/EPA have or are engaged in efforts to review and streamline their operations. In July 1993, Governor Wilson requested that the State Board commence an external review of current programs to "identify how best the Boards can meet their mandates to protect the water resources of the State..." The External Program Review (EPR) began in September 1993 and was completed in June 1994. Through the work of four EPR Task Forces and a Review Committee, 11 critical and urgent issues were identified that would require early attention from the Boards.

The critical and urgent EPR-identified issues were the need for:

- Greater consistency between and among the State and Regional Boards in broad areas of policy and procedure
- Additional computerization as a management and communication tool
- Better integration of scientific advisory panels and peer review in decision-making
- Technical assistance to small businesses who interact with the Boards
- A review of program efficiencies and establishment of stable and reliable funding
- Involvement of petroleum tank stakeholders in the development of recommendations for clear and consistent policy, regulations and standards relating to cleanup oversight and Clean Up Fund payments
- Expanded use of statewide general permits to minimize workload, reduce cost and assist applicants
- A more integrated and reorganized water quality regulatory structure in the form of a watershed management approach
- A comprehensive and ongoing training program for the Boards' staff
- Revised civil service procedures to more efficiently recruit and retain qualified personnel
- Implementation and monitoring of EPR recommendations

In addition, the EPR made over 190 specific recommendations to improve statewide consistency, protect ground water, reform the permit process and protect water resources.

Throughout the strategic planning process, the Boards have worked to address these critical issues and to incorporate them into ongoing planning efforts. Resource limitations made immediate implementation of all the recommendations impossible. Through strategic planning, the Boards sought a way to prioritize efforts and concentrate resources in areas where the greatest benefits could be realized.

Water Rights

Because the EPR focused on water quality issues, the State Board conducted an external review process of its Water Rights function. Two full-day panel discussions and a public workshop were conducted. The results of this review contributed not only to the development of strategic goals, but are currently being used to streamline and improve Water Rights processes.

Internal Approach

Interviews and Focus Groups

Individual interviews were conducted with all State Board members, the chair or a member of each Regional Board, each Regional Board Executive Officer and State Board management. Groups of employees were brought together in each organizational unit. These focus groups provided input on organizational strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and priority setting. In all, over 400 of the Boards' members and employees participated in these interviews and focus groups.

Boardwide Survey

A strategic planning survey was distributed to all the Boards' members and employees. The survey was developed using findings from the focus groups, and designed to give all the Boards' members and employees an opportunity to validate the findings, rank potential strategic goals in order of priority and identify specific opportunities for future improvements. Nearly 700 survey responses were received.

The Steering Committee

A Strategic Planning Steering Committee composed of three Regional Board Executive Officers and State Board management staff was established to guide this effort. The Steering Committee reviewed data collected in interviews, focus groups and external reviews, and used it to define a strategic direction for the Boards, as documented in the June 22, 1995 Strategic Plan.

The 1997 Strategic Plan Update

The Boards have continued the strategic planning process by: (1) monitoring and updating the 1995 Plan; (2) tracking implementation efforts; (3) conducting regular management reviews; and (4) developing corresponding progress reports. While the planning process has been ongoing, a formal update to the Strategic Plan document was needed to reflect the most current State and Regional Board efforts and ensure the Plan could guide future actions and decision making over the upcoming five year time period. Recently, a reconstituted Steering Committee (Appendix B) was organized to facilitate this update of the Strategic Plan and performance measurement approach.

Stakeholder Assessment Results and Environmental Scan

This section summarizes the changing environment and challenges faced by the Boards based on input throughout the strategic planning process from internal and external stakeholders.

Today's Water Resource Issues

Protecting water resources from pollution has been a long-standing goal of the State of California. The State's water resource protection program truly came of age with the enactment of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act in 1969. At the federal level, pollution-control efforts were greatly expanded by the 1972 passage of a complete revision of the Water Pollution Control Act, known as the Clean Water Act. Historically, water pollution control efforts focused primarily on controlling the point discharge of sewage (from sewage treatment plants) and industrial wastes into surface waters-rivers, streams, lakes and the ocean. Today, thanks to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the Clean Water Act, and other stringent pollution control laws, as well as the efforts of the Boards and other regulatory agencies, the point discharge of pollutants into the State's surface waters is closely regulated. Water resource concerns are now shifting to pollution of ground water resources, nonpoint sources of pollution, and allocation of our limited water supply.

Nonpoint Source Pollution

Nonpoint source pollution has been long recognized as a major contributor to water quality problems in California. Nonpoint sources arise from multiple land uses such as runoff from agriculture and timber harvesting areas, mines, subdivisions, and range and dairy cattle areas. These discharges threaten the quality of the State's waters. The challenge of nonpoint source pollution lies in its very nature: diffuse, sporadic and difficult to trace to its sources, and thus more difficult to regulate through a permitting process. Because treatment to remove nonpoint source pollutants is an expensive and potentially endless task, it becomes essential to keep these pollutants from reaching the water. Effective water quality protection requires a comprehensive management approach towards nonpoint sources. Prevention needs to be emphasized and consideration given to cumulative effects of nonpoint source pollution on entire watersheds.

Groundwater Pollution

Groundwater basins underlie half of the State's land areas and supply nearly 40% of the water Californians use. Until the late 1970s, groundwater was considered relatively safe from pollution because it was commonly believed that the overlying soil mantle functioned to filter out pollutants. Since then, various pollutants have been discovered in groundwater aquifers. In many cases, wells have had to be shut down due to unacceptable concentrations of chemicals.

Once a groundwater supply is polluted, it is difficult and expensive to clean up. Some of the more common ways ground water can be polluted include:

- Chemicals spilling onto the ground surface during storage, transport or disposal
- Leakage through the soil from improperly lined waste disposal ponds, leaking storage tanks and landfills or from septic systems
- Percolation of pollutants from illegal dumping of waste materials
- Sea water intrusion into coastal aquifers when ground water is pumped out faster than it can be replenished by surface fresh water sources
- Migration of salts and other chemicals through the soil due to various land use practices such as irrigated agriculture, and dairies and other confined animal operations

In addition to pollution, groundwater is threatened by long-term overpumping. Ground water is considered a renewable resource, yet a balance must be maintained between its replenishment and withdrawal. Lacking proper management and planning, both quality and quantity may suffer. One method of effectively managing this supply is by "conjunctive use " using surface and groundwater sources interchangeably based on their availability.

Water Supply Challenge

There is a direct link between water quantity and the impact on water quality. Currently, the allocation and approval of water rights is not fully coordinated with overall water quality efforts. To be able to more effectively coordinate water rights and water quality issues and determine the water quality effect of approving water rights permits or transfers, accurate data relating to water quality within water bodies is needed. An affordable method of obtaining this data is a challenge that has yet to be met.

The water supply challenge is to maintain a system of water rights and facilitate water transfers to ensure the State's limited water resources are used in the best interests of current and future generations. This entails balancing domestic, recreational, industrial, irrigation and other beneficial uses.

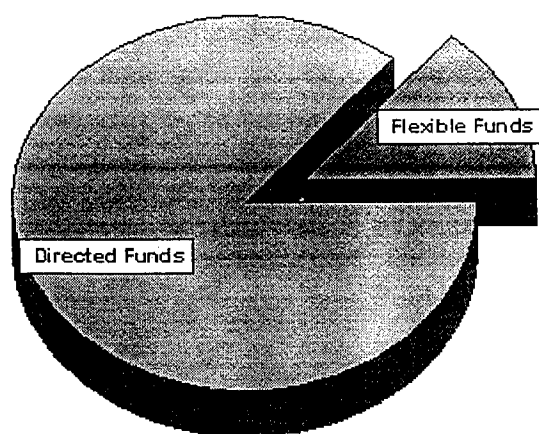
Increasing Demands for Water

California's population has increased to over 30 million and continues to grow. By 2020, the State's population will reach approximately 50 million. As this number continues to increase, so will the demands made on California's limited water supply. Some areas of the State already obtain large volumes of water from the Colorado River. Inadequate water supply and water of bad quality adversely affect all Californians. California's water supply will be unable to meet tomorrow's demand unless more emphasis is given to conservation, recycling and water transfer activities throughout the State.

Funding Constraints

State and Federal budget deficits are forcing all public agencies to reevaluate their programs and streamline their services. Historically, most State and Regional Board programs have been financed through California's General Fund. Today, the General Fund and other "flexible" funds make up less than 14% of the Boards' total budget. In contrast, approximately 86% of the Boards' budget is tied to specific mandated programs with limited flexibility for redirection.

For example, of the Boards' \$313 million budget for fiscal year 1996/97, \$206 million (66%) was targeted for Underground Storage Tank cleanup and local assistance programs.



These programs primarily address specific sources of pollution and the monies directed at these programs are restricted from being used to address other high priority pollution problems.

At the same time that the restricted fund sources have increased, the Boards' "flexible" fund sources (General Fund and "Old Bond Funds") have declined dramatically. For example, in fiscal year 1989/90, these two funds provided a total of \$48.6 million (52% of the Boards' total budget) and supported approximately 500 staff. By fiscal year 1996/97, the total had decreased to \$28.4 million (only 11% of the Boards' total support) and 300 staff. This reduction of \$20.2 million and 200 staff significantly reduced the Boards' ability to shift funds to meet new priorities. This reduction has been partially offset by the

1997/98 Governor's Budget proposed restoration of \$8.1 million from the General Fund to meet several high priority activities within the Boards' Core Regulatory Program. Even with this addition, however, the Boards' ability to address new challenges remains severely constrained by the large number of restricted fund sources.

Having restricted funding sources tied to the Boards' specific programs:

- Limits the ability to direct funds to the highest priority water problems as they arise
- Restricts pollution prevention efforts by targeting available funds at clean up efforts after problems occur
- Requires more time and money to be spent on program administration and less on implementation
- Magnifies the difficulty of responding to unfunded mandates

With the general trend toward increasing restrictions on funding and an over-burdened General Fund, a more reliable and flexible mix of funding sources is critical to continuing effective water resource protection efforts.

Today's changing environment poses a complex challenge for the Boards. In order to meet this challenge, the Boards need a strong management vision and must focus efforts on established goals. In addition, the Boards need to optimize the use of resources and maximize productivity by having efficient work processes, and by providing employees with the necessary tools and training to accomplish organizational goals and objectives.

Our Mission, Vision and Values

The mission of the California Environmental Agency (Cal/EPA) is to improve environmental quality in order to protect public health, the welfare of our citizens, and California's natural resources. Cal/EPA will achieve its mission in an equitable, efficient, and cost-effective manner.

In alignment with Cal/EPA's mission are the State and Regional Boards' mission, vision and values.

Our Mission

Our mission is to preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.

Our Vision

We envision a future that includes:

- Protection of California's water resources for the benefit of all
- Cooperation among diverse interests such that water is available where and when it is needed
- Effective coordination with federal, other state and local agencies
- Focused attention on problems that pose the greatest risk to California's water resources by making scientifically, environmentally and economically sound decisions
- High standards of public service and open decision making processes
- Opportunities for our employees to contribute to personal and organizational success
- Vigorous and consistent enforcement of water laws and regulations
- Innovative approaches to water resource protection
- A recognition of the Boards' contribution to the quality of life for Californians

Our Values

We recognize that as we strive to realize our vision of the future, all our actions and efforts must be guided by a certain set of values:

Protection: Our responsibility is the protection of water resources.

Integrity: We must continually earn the trust of those we serve, making an active commitment to truth, accuracy and fairness.

Leadership: California strives to be a national and international leader in innovative approaches to water resource protection. We must foster and reward leadership actions at all levels of our organization.

Service: We serve the public as a whole: our customers who seek a product or service from us, and future generations whose interests are affected by today's actions.

Professionalism: We are professionals committed to our mission and vision. We provide career development and professional growth opportunities.

Our Strategic Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures

We recognize that we need to respond to today's changing environment. Protecting water resources has become more complex and our strategic direction is designed to respond to this challenge. Our goals are to:

- Preserve, enhance and restore water resources while balancing economic and environmental impacts
- Promote cooperative relationships and to improve support for the regulated community and the public
- Encourage balanced and efficient use of water through water transfers, recycling and conservation
- Continuously improve internal efficiency and effectiveness
- Establish a more stable and flexible mix of funding sources

Each goal is equally critical to our future success, and we have established objectives and performance measures to clarify how we intend to meet these goals. Measurable objectives have been developed in areas where sufficient baseline data exists. For many objectives, however, we are developing new methods to more clearly measure progress. Objectives for each goal are outlined on the following pages. Performance measure information and data is provided in Appendix C.

Goal 1:

Our goal is to preserve, enhance, and restore water resources while balancing economic and environmental impacts.

Comprehensive water resource protection has emerged as an urgent and essential requirement for meeting water quality standards in California's surface and ground waters. Point and nonpoint source pollution, economic and environmental impacts, and allocation of available resources must all be considered simultaneously in making our water resource decisions.

All land-use activities, within a specific geographical area, that drain onto a surface water body and/or recharge the underlying ground water basins contribute to the cumulative impacts on those waters.

We must employ sound scientific methods, data, and tools to accomplish the following: characterize our natural resources and the communities that depend upon them; specify the appropriate water-related environmental objectives for specific water bodies given resource availability and economic impact; and, identify and prioritize all issues and problems preventing us from realizing the environmental objectives. We must develop and implement action plans, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our actions, and make appropriate modifications to continually improve our water resources.

To ensure effective and efficient implementation of our action plans we must provide for and continuously encourage active involvement of those parties most affected by our water resources decisions.

Objectives

We commit to maintaining a comprehensive perspective that considers all water resource issues simultaneously throughout the State focusing particularly in targeted watersheds. This approach will:

- Generally characterize water resource issues within targeted watersheds while continuing to address water issues outside the targeted watersheds
 - Increase the number of watersheds being addressed by 10% per year over 5 years
- Quantitatively demonstrate environmental and economic benefits and costs of alternative actions
- Select the most appropriate water-related environmental objectives for targeted watersheds
- Identify and prioritize specific water problems preventing us from realizing beneficial uses in targeted watersheds
- Pursue protective and corrective actions that will provide the greatest benefits for costs incurred
- Involve all stakeholders in the development and implementation of solutions
- Continue to place a high priority on all surface water and ground water core regulatory activities, throughout the State
 - Increase the total number of leaking underground tank sites with no further action necessary to 2400 each year by the end of FY 2001/02

Future Benefits and Performance Measures

We know we will have made significant progress towards achieving our goals when our efforts target activities that have the most impact on California's water resources. As a result, we will maximize California's water resources for all beneficial uses. By involving stakeholders in problem resolution and the development of solutions, we anticipate greater stakeholder agreement and compliance with regulations and policies. Our performance measures include:

Output Measures

- Number of watersheds being addressed
- Number of leaking underground tank sites with no further action necessary

Outcome Measures

- Improved surface water quality for maximum feasible beneficial uses as measured by
The State Mussel Watch and Toxic Substance Monitoring Program
- Number of health advisories issued
- Improved groundwater quality for maximum feasible beneficial uses as measured by:

Department of Health Services (DHS) drinking water well compliance data

Detailed performance measure information and data is provided in Appendix C for this and all subsequent strategic goals.

Current Efforts

The Boards are in the process of developing workplans for implementing watershed management programs beginning in FY 1997/98, which include the development of more effective means of receiving and evaluating environmental management information.

In addition, the implementation portions of the State's Inland Surface Water and Enclosed Bays and Estuaries Plans are being developed for adoption by June, 1998. Development of the full plans will be completed in 1999. Amendments to the State's Ocean Plan are being developed in a phased approach. The first phase was adopted in March, 1997.

The Boards are also working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to develop more efficient and effective processes for using federal funds together with State funds in implementing the State's water quality control programs.

The State Board has sought outside advice regarding the problems associated with cleanup of underground petroleum storage tank releases. The State Board will develop a water quality control policy to guide such cleanups in the future.

Strategies

Our strategies include:

- Phase in an integrated watershed management approach that prioritizes water resource protection actions within targeted watersheds through watershed management plans that consider water use and water quality
- Participate in the development and activities of a watershed coordinating group that includes representatives of State agencies that manage lands and resources
- Improve our ability to quantitatively demonstrate economic and environmental benefits
- Continue ongoing statewide monitoring programs; evaluate, propose, and establish new long-term monitoring and assessment mechanisms to appraise our progress
- Ensure fair, firm, and consistent regulation and enforcement that is cost-effective and responsive
- Develop, implement and update statewide and regional water quality control plans
- Employ risk assessment practices in decision-making to ensure public health and resource protection
- Base all technical activities on sound science with periodic peer review

Goal 2:

Our goal is to promote cooperative relationships and to improve support for the regulated community and the public.

Our water resources are relied on and enjoyed by over 30 million Californians and countless visitors each year. Ensuring future generations will have the same opportunity will require the cooperative development of practical solutions to today's water problems.

As a regulatory agency, our obligation is to implement and enforce current laws governing water resources. As an environmental protection agency, our first responsibility is to protect California's water

resources. We believe that water resource protection can be most effectively accomplished through pollution prevention and compliance assistance as well as coordinated enforcement.

We will work in partnership with federal, other state and local agencies to coordinate regulatory activities to ensure they are fair and equitable to the regulated community. We will work with the regulated community and public to build a broad-based awareness of how water resources influence the quality of life for Californians.

We recognize that in order to gain public support for water resource protection, we need to educate people about the results of our efforts and the benefits to Californians. We also need to encourage our stakeholders to be part of the solution and help in mutual problem solving.

Objectives

We are committed to leading cooperative efforts to:

- Enhance protection of water resources through improved outreach, education, and pollution prevention
- Increase participation by the regulated community, the public and government agencies in our processes that protect water resources and uses
 - Provide the regulated community with responsive compliance support and consistent enforcement
- Increase percentage of staff trained in customer service skills to 50% in 5 years
- Provide consistent regulatory action

Future Benefits and Performance Measures

We know we will have made significant progress towards achieving our goal when increased stakeholder participation in the development of regulations, the review of policies and procedures and program implementation leads to improved compliance with laws. We anticipate more implementation decisions being made at the level of local government, where there is a better understanding of local issues and decision makers are closer to the people directly affected. We will bring about greater consensus on local and regional water resources improvements and protection. Our performance measures include:

Output Measures

- Number of public outreach, education and pollution prevention efforts
- Percentage of staff trained in customer service skills

Outcome Measures

- Positive feedback percentages on customer service surveys
- Number of compliance violations

Current Efforts

The Office of Statewide Consistency combines evaluation and consistency, training, economics, quality improvement and ombudsperson functions under one umbrella for a comprehensive approach to consistency. The Office of Statewide Consistency coordinates efforts to provide increased compliance assistance through improved guidance, public education and outreach, and customer service training for employees. In addition, we have established customer assistance desks at the San Francisco and Los Angeles Regional Boards and an ombudsperson serves the regulated community at each Regional Board and the State Board.

Our Strategies

Our strategies include:

- Continuously improve compliance assistance through improved guidance, public education, outreach, and training
- Increase availability of information (e.g., technical information, meeting agendas, forms, etc.) through electronic media such as electronic mail, electronic bulletin boards, and the Internet
- Improve our regulatory processes through a customer oriented quality improvement partnership
- Expand employee and organizational skills to provide consistently high quality, responsive customer service in our regulatory activities
- Involve the public and regulated community in decision making for watershed improvement

Goal 3:

Our goal is to encourage balanced and efficient use of water through water transfers, recycling and conservation.

California's growing population and business requirements for water are increasing demands on a limited water supply. Our protection efforts must not only recognize both increasing demands and limited supply, but also strive to balance the two while protecting the public trust.

Objectives

In an effort to ensure that environmental and economic progress proceed together, we will focus our efforts to:

- Increase the reliability of water supplies to agricultural and urban uses
- Facilitate water transfers by removing barriers and minimizing procedural delays
- Minimize adverse impacts on areas from which water is transferred
- Encourage the coordinated use of ground and surface water
- Maximize the effective use of California's limited water supply
- Provide financial assistance for water recycling projects

Commit 100% of available bond dollars to financial assistance for water recycling over the life of the bond

Future Benefits and Performance Measures

We know we will have made significant progress towards achieving our goal when we see greater volumes of water transferred, recycled and conserved. We will better facilitate beneficial water transfers by decreasing transfer approval time. Our performance measures include:

Output Measures

- State Board action time for transfer approval
- Dollars committed to financial assistance for water recycling projects

Outcome Measures

- Volume of water recycled annually that augments water supplies by projects receiving financial assistance from the State Board
- Volume of water transferred through the State Board approval process

Current Efforts

We have consolidated applications for the State Revolving Fund and Water Reclamation Loan Program and have reviewed and revised loan policies. Stakeholder meetings are continuing to discuss issues surrounding water transfers and how other improvements can be made and implemented. We anticipate that after these discussions, the State Board will conduct public workshops to address suggestions made by these stakeholders and develop guidance to expedite water transfers. In addition, Water Rights staff are continuing to encourage early consultation by parties involved in potential transfers in order to expedite the approval process.

Our Strategies

Our strategies include:

- Streamline applicable laws and regulations governing water transfer
- Give the highest degree of financial assistance to projects recycling the greatest immediate volume of water which would otherwise be discharged to saline water
- Encourage local implementation of coordinated ground and surface water use programs
- Require water conservation as a component of major water rights decisions
- Provide policy direction encouraging water recycling
- Develop a policy for the distribution of water recycling financial assistance
- Attempt to have financial assistance continuously available for water recycling projects
- Provide high priority to approval of water transfers
- Encourage parties who transfer water to involve the State Board at an early stage

Goal 4:

Our goal is to continuously improve internal efficiency and effectiveness.

No organization can effectively achieve its goals unless its employees share a sense of purpose and work in partnership towards that common end. This requires work and communication processes that can coordinate the efforts of the geographically distant State and Regional Boards.

Objectives

Working together, we must strive to continuously improve our internal operations. We will:

- Improve statewide consistency between and among the Boards
- Improve our planning ability and the implementation of strategic planning into current programs
- Work to ensure effective, empowered and well-trained staff
- Increase number of in-house training classes offered by 30% over 5 years
- Increase employee participation in the decision making process through appropriate assignment of authority
- Continuously assess our internal work processes for improvement

Reduce the average time for payment of reimbursement requests in our Clean Up Fund payment activities by 10% over 3 years

- Increase the number of Water Rights permits processed by 17% over 5 years
- Improve information flow and data management capabilities throughout our organization

Future Benefits and Performance Measures

We know we will have made significant progress towards achieving our goal when our internal stakeholders are provided with consistent, accurate and timely assistance and responses, and we are all provided the training, tools and management support needed to contribute to personal and organizational success.

Output Measures

- Number of in-house training courses offered
- Average time (in days) for payment of reimbursement requests in our Cleanup Fund payment activities
- Number of Water Rights permits issued

Outcome Measures

- Percent of positive responses to employee surveys regarding training, delegation of authority and communication efforts
- Achievement of Information Management Strategy (IMS) implementation milestones

Current Efforts

Our people are our most important asset. We have committed ourselves to providing continuous training and professional development opportunities.

The Boards instituted a formal statewide training program in early 1995, guided by a training committee comprised of both State and Regional board staff. During the first two years, the program sponsored over 40 training sessions on a variety of topics, with emphasis on providing consistent and high-caliber training in the core technical/scientific programs as well as skills needed by managers and supervisors to implement the Strategic Plan. In addition, the program established three contracts to secure high-priority outside training services and instituted a set of core curricula for all the Boards' employees.

The Boards' Quality Implementation Plan, focusing on three areas: quality improvement training and education for all staff, quality improvement projects, and quality improvement support activities, was distributed to all Board organizations in March 1996. Courses such as "The Role of Managers and Supervisors in a Team Environment", and "Effective Meeting Management" were developed and offered to the Boards' supervisors. Additional classes are being developed to provide the skills necessary to support the quality improvement efforts.

Quality Improvement Teams have been initiated and trained in quality concepts and skills. Two pilot team projects were completed - the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund Payment Team and the Water Right Application Processing Team. Additional cross-functional teams, such as the Fiscal Systems Review Team, were formed to recommend improvements. Based on the positive results from these teams, management established a process to nominate and establish new improvement teams on a regular basis.

Internal consistency is one of the biggest issues facing the State and Regional Board system. As such, the Boards have provided a focal point for this issue with the establishment of the Office of Statewide Consistency. There, external and internal stakeholder concerns are raised, prioritized and addressed. Currently, the Office is involved in internal organizational reviews to evaluate the State and Regional Board underground storage tanks program - one of the greatest consistency challenges.

The Boards are dedicated to using information technology (IT), as appropriate, to facilitate information sharing, streamline business processes and assist staff in achieving strategic goals and objectives.

Consistent with the Boards' efforts, the External Program Review Committee identified "computerization as a management and communication tool " as a critical issue facing the organization, while staff and regional Board employee focus groups identified "information technology " and "data management " as areas offering significant improvement opportunities.

To address IT-related needs, the Boards have implemented Local Area Networks and are in the process of developing a Wide Area Network system. An 11 member, interdisciplinary State and Regional Board team was formed in 1996 to work with an information systems consultant to prepare a Boardwide Information Management Strategy. The team collected extensive data on current systems, constructed a business process and information flow model and proposed a consolidated list of 22 issues for resolution in a comprehensive strategy. This umbrella strategy, completed in July 1997, requires significant commitment of resources to address the highest priority needs. Implementation of the strategy will be a significant focus of Strategic Plan efforts.

Our Strategies

Our strategies include:

- Identify, prioritize and address internal program consistency issues through cooperative program and Office of Statewide Consistency efforts
- Utilize training as part of the continuous professional development of employees and the Boards' members
- Maximize use of internal trainers to provide specific technical skills training to staff
- Provide frequent on-site training
- Acquire external training expertise through streamlined, efficient mechanisms
- Improve communication forums/mechanisms including implementation of an Information Management Strategy for statewide communication, data sharing, monitoring and tracking
- Prioritize and examine internal work processes for quality improvement opportunities
- Establish an employee recognition program that emphasizes process improvement and teamwork, and values ongoing employee contributions
- Delegate authority for decision making to the most appropriate staff level
- Refine work process performance measures to assess quality, productivity and efficiency
- Regularly assess employee perceptions as to improvements in internal efficiency and effectiveness

Goal 5:

Our goal is to establish a more stable, and flexible mix of funding sources.

With the general trend toward increasing restrictions on funding and an over-burdened General Fund, a more reliable, flexible mix of funding source is critical to continuing water resource protection efforts.

Objectives

In order to realize the greatest reasonable protection of California's water resources, we will strive to:

- Create the flexibility to allocate scarce resources to the highest priority water resource problems and issues
- Simplify our funding structure and reduce the complexity of reporting mechanisms

- Increase the number of federal grants included under a single administrative workplan by 400% over 5 years

Future Benefits and Performance Measures

We know we will have made significant progress towards achieving our goal when we have fewer restrictions on funding sources and consequently, improve our ability to redirect monies to programs and activities that address the highest priority water resource issues, or respond to new or emerging water resource issues.

Output Measures

- Number of individual federal grants included under a single administrative workplan

Outcome Measures

- Number of state support budget dollars from flexible funds

Current Efforts

In FY 1995/96 and FY 1996/97, we worked with a number of agencies including the Integrated Waste Management Board and the Department of Toxic Substances Control to reduce overlap and duplication of efforts. We initiated efforts with the USEPA to develop greater flexibility in the use of grant funds for the Watershed Initiative. We reviewed and prioritized the activities of the Core Regulatory Program and assessed future trends. Based on that effort, the FY 1997/98 Governor's Budget proposes a restoration of \$8.1 million from the General Fund which partially offsets a \$20.2 million reduction in the Core Regulatory Program over the past five years.

Our Strategies

Our strategies include:

- Review and prioritize existing programs and identify opportunities for redirection or savings
- Resolve unnecessary overlap, duplication of efforts, and funding constraints with other federal, state and local agencies
- Involve representatives of the regulated community and other external stakeholders in the identification and evaluation of alternative funding sources
- Consider legislative options that support alternative or simplified funding structures

Resource Assumptions and Financial and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Position Information

The Boards' primary goals of protecting and enhancing California's water quality are supported by a complex mix of over 60 discrete fund sources. State funding sources include the General Fund, direct fees and special purpose bonds. USEPA provides grants for very specific purposes. The costs of selected activities are recovered directly from property and facility owners. Most of these fund sources tend to be directed at specific activities and cannot be easily re-directed as priorities change. For example, of the total \$313 million State Board budget for FY 1996-97, almost half of the total (\$132 million or 42%) will be passed through to underground storage tank owners to cover costs related to site cleanup.

Maintaining adequate funding for the Boards' key regulatory functions and Strategic Plan goals has required concerted effort as General Fund and bond fund appropriations have declined over the past ten years. The proposed FY 1997/98 Governor's Budget provides some stability for the core programs in the form of a General Fund augmentation. The Strategic Plan is substantially based on this budget. To accomplish the objectives in this Plan, however, the State Board must redefine how it carries out its core functions, how it communicates internally and externally, and how it measures its effectiveness. Budget adjustments may be necessary to achieve these objectives. Identification of a more stable and flexible mix of funding sources is another objective that will most likely require legislation as well as budget action. Fluctuations in program levels due to changes in federal direction or funding availability, or due to sunseting state legislation, may also necessitate budget adjustments.

	1995/96 Actual Expenditures	1996/97 Estimate	1997/98 Budget Request
Total Resources	\$401,410,000	\$313,131,000	\$434,475,000
General Fund	28,257,000	28,562,000	36,664,000
Other Appropriated Funds	191,670,000	206,168,000	291,569,000
Federal Funds	24,087,000	33,006,000	29,370,000
Other Non-Appropriated Funds	157,396,000	45,395,000	76,872,000
Total PYs (FTE Positions)	1,182	1,312	1,333

The Plan for Monitoring and Tracking Performance

Building on the Strategic Plan goals, objectives and strategies, we have developed implementation plans to make this Strategic Plan a living document. The implementation plans provide staff with a layout of the activities, timelines and responsible individuals that will drive our progress towards our goals. Tracking the advancement of these milestones, in concert with the analysis of performance measurement data, will provide the Boards' managers with tools to monitor progress. Management will review milestone progress monthly; performance measure data will be captured and analyzed quarterly. The Boards' members and staff will be provided with a progress summary on a yearly basis as part of a regular Strategic Plan assessment.

Appendix A Organizational Charts

Organizational charts are not available with this version of the Strategic Plan. They are available with the hardcopy version.

Appendix B

Steering Committee Members

Steering Committee participants in the Strategic Plan update effort include:

Walt Pettit

Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board

Dale Claypoole

Deputy Director
State Water Resources Control Board

Roger Briggs

Executive Officer
Central Coast Region

John Robertus

Executive Officer
San Diego Region

Jesse Diaz

Chief, Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board

Ed Anton

Chief, Division of Water Rights
State Water Resources Control Board

Bill Brown

Chief, Division of Administrative Services
State Water Resources Control Board

Harry Schueller

Chief, Division of Clean Water Programs
State Water Resources Control Board

Barbara Evoy

Chief, Office of Statewide Consistency
State Water Resources Control Board

Fran Vitulli

Public Information Officer
Office of Legislative and Public Affairs

The Warner Group, Management Consultants

David Shickman
Jennifer Litten

Appendix C

Performance Measures and Data

Actual and projected performance data is provided for each output and outcome measure where available. Narrative descriptions of how the data will be collected for future measurement purposes is provided for those performance measures not currently tracked.

Goal 1:

Our goal is to preserve, enhance, and restore water resources while balancing economic and environmental impacts.

Output Measures

- Number of watersheds being addressed

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Targeted Watershed</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	0	actual
1995/96	0	actual
1996/97	30	estimated (target)
1997/98	33	expected (target)
1998/99	36	expected (target)
1999/00	40	expected (target)
2000/01	44	expected (target)
2001/02	44	expected (target)

- Number of leaking underground tank sites with no further action necessary

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Sites Needing No Further Action</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	1177	actual
1995/96	1646	actual
1996/97	2800	estimated (target)
1997/98	2300	expected (target)
1998/99	2300	expected (target)
1999/00	2400	expected (target)
2000/01	2400	expected (target)
2001/02	2400	expected (target)

Outcome Measures

- Improved surface water quality for maximum feasible beneficial uses as measured by:

- The State Mussel Watch and Toxic Substance Monitoring Program
- Number of health advisories issued

Improved surface water quality for maximum feasible beneficial uses can be

monitored using indicators such as the Boards' Mussel Watch and Toxic Substance Monitoring (TSM) Programs, and the annual number of fish consumption health advisories issued by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). In the Mussel Watch and TSM programs, organisms are sampled and analyzed for bioaccumulation of chemicals. It is not possible to predict ahead of time how many polluted sites will be found, however beginning in FY 1997/98, the number of polluted sites and Regional Board corrective actions taken as a result of program findings will be reported annually. Also, the Boards will report OEHHA health advisory data recommending no or limited consumption of fish as an indicator of water quality on an annual basis.

- Improved ground water quality for maximum feasible beneficial uses as measured by:
 - Department of Health Services (DHS) drinking water well compliance data

DHS drinking water data provides an indicator of ground water quality. DHS is compiling historic data which will be available in August 1997. The Boards will report this data annually.

Goal 2:

Our goal is to promote cooperative relationships and to improve support for the regulated community and the public.

Output Measures

- Number of public outreach, education and pollution prevention efforts

A workgroup of State and Regional Board staff was convened in FY 1996/97 to define these activities for measurement in FY 1997/98. Numeric objectives for future years will be based on this baseline.

- Percentage of staff trained in customer service skills

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Percentage of Staff Trained</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	10%	actual
1995/96	14%	actual
1996/97	19%	estimated (target)
1997/98	25%	expected (target)
1998/99	31%	expected (target)
1999/00	37%	expected (target)
2000/01	43%	expected (target)
2001/02	50%	expected (target)

Outcome Measures

- Positive feedback percentages on customer service surveys

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Percentage of Positive Feedback</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	N/A	
1995/96	94.7%	actual
1996/97	95%	estimated (target)
1997/98	96%	expected (target)
1998/99	96%	expected (target)
2000/01	96%	expected (target)
2001/02	96%	expected (target)
Note: Percentages indicate positive customer service survey responses to compliance assistance questions.		

- Number of compliance violations

It is expected that compliance violations will decrease as outreach, education, and pollution protection efforts increase. The Boards' staff will collect comprehensive enforcement data as part of the implementation of the 1997 enforcement policy. FY 1997/98 data will form the baseline; future numeric objectives will be developed based on this information.

Goal 3:

Our goal is to encourage balanced and efficient use of water through water transfers, recycling and conservation.

Output Measures

- Time for transfer approval

Actual transfer approval time for FY 1994/95 was 68 days, and for FY 1995/96 was 84 days. The FY 1996/97 estimate is 112 days. These time frames represent the total number of days involved in a petition from State Board acceptance to approval. The applicant is often responsible for preparing additional data during the process, during which time, State Board staff cannot act on the petition. Applicants can also ask for a delay in the process to accommodate their needs. State Board staff will be developing a new system during FY 1997/98 which will track only State Board action time to give a clearer picture of the staff efficiency. This information will be used to prepare baseline and future objective information.

- Dollars committed to financial assistance for water recycling projects

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Financial Assistance Dollars</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	\$18,644,271	actual
1995/96	\$19,925,804	actual
1996/97	\$16,000,000	estimated (target)
1997/98	\$15,000,000	expected (target)
1998/99	\$15,000,000	expected (target)
1999/00	\$15,000,000	expected (target)
2000/01	\$15,000,000	expected (target)
2001/02	\$15,000,000	expected (target)

Note: Total dollars are based on commitments in form of loan contract from 1984, 1988 or 1996 Bond Laws or the State Revolving Fund.

Outcome Measures

- Volume of water recycled annually that augments water supplies by projects receiving financial assistance from the State Board

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Acre-feet of Water</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	16,900	actual
1995/96	20,140	actual
1996/97	24,000	estimated (target)
1997/98	37,000	expected (target)
1998/99	55,000	expected (target)
1999/00	69,000	expected (target)
2000/01	80,000	expected (target)
2001/02	95,000	expected (target)

Note: Numbers are volume of acre-feet recycled based on projects funded by commitments in form of loan contract from 1984, 1988, or 1996 bond laws or the State Revolving Fund.

- Volume of water transferred through the State Board approval process

Actual volume of water transferred in FY 1994/95 was 49,500 acre-feet and in FY 1995/96

was 161,250 acre-feet. Estimated volume for FY 1996/97 is 240,000 acre-feet. As the State Board cannot predict future dry/wet years and the related number of transfer requests generated, no target numbers are provided. The State Board will instead report annually on the number of transfer petitions received and approved, and the volume of water that these petitions represent.

Goal 4:

Our goal is to continuously improve internal efficiency and effectiveness.

Output Measures

- Number of in-house training courses offered

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Number of Courses</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	N/A	
1995/96	40	actual
1996/97	45	estimated (target)
1997/98	50	expected (target)
1998/99	55	expected (target)
1999/00	60	expected (target)
2000/01	60	expected (target)
2001/02	60	expected (target)

- Average time (in days) for payment of reimbursement requests in our Cleanup Fund payment activities

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Number of Days</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	44	actual
1995/96	43	actual
1996/97	40	estimated (target)
1997/98	38	expected (target)
1998/99	37	expected (target)
1999/00	36	expected (target)
2000/01	36	expected (target)
2001/02	36	expected (target)

- Number of Water Rights permits issued

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Number of Permits</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	51	actual
1995/96	49	actual
1996/97	60	estimated (target)
1997/98	62	expected (target)
1998/99	65	expected (target)
1999/00	67	expected (target)
2000/01	70	expected (target)
2001/02	72	expected (target)

Outcome Measures

- Percent of positive responses to employee surveys regarding training, delegation of authority and communication efforts

An annual employee survey will be developed and implemented during FY 1997/98. As a new measurement tool, no historic data is available. FY 1997/98 information will represent baseline. Numeric objectives will be developed in FY 1997/98.

- Achievement of Information Management Strategy (IMS) implementation milestones

The July 1997 IMS report includes an implementation and action plan with specific milestones, timeframes and designations of responsible parties to be used to monitor progress and performance. Achievement of these milestones will be reported annually.

Goal 5:

Our goal is to establish a more stable, and flexible mix of funding sources.

Output Measures

- Number of individual federal grants included under a single administrative workplan

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Number of Grants</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	0	actual
1995/96	0	actual
1996/97	0	expected (target)
1997/98	0	estimated (target)
1998/99	0	estimated (target)
1999/00	3	estimated (target)
2000/01	3	estimated (target)
2001/02	4	estimated (target)

Outcome Measures

- Number of state support budget dollars from flexible funds

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Budget Dollars</i>	<i>Basis</i>
1994/95	\$39,500,000	actual
1995/96	\$44,900,000	actual
1996/97	\$42,600,000	expected (target)
1997/98	\$48,900,000	estimated (target)
1998/99	\$48,900,000	estimated (target)
1999/00	\$55,400,000	estimated (target)
2000/01	\$55,400,000	estimated (target)
2001/02	\$58,900,000	estimated (target)