

WATER CODE

SECTION 1240-1244

1240. The appropriation must be for some useful or beneficial purpose, and when the appropriator or his successor in interest ceases to use it for such a purpose the right ceases.

1241. If the person entitled to the use of water fails to use beneficially all or any part of the water claimed by him or her, for which a right of use has vested, for the purpose for which it was appropriated or adjudicated, for a period of five years, that unused water may revert to the public and shall, if reverted, be regarded as unappropriated public water. That reversion shall occur upon a finding by the board following notice to the permittee, licensee, or person holding a livestock stockpond certificate or small domestic use, small irrigation use, or livestock stockpond use registration under this part and a public hearing if requested by the permittee, licensee, certificate holder, or registration holder.

1241.6. If water appropriated for irrigation purposes is not used by reason of compliance with crop control or soil conservation contracts with the United States, and in other cases of hardship as the board may by rule prescribe, the five-year forfeiture period applicable to water appropriated pursuant to the Water Commission Act or this code, and the forfeiture period applicable to water appropriated prior to December 19, 1914, shall be extended by an additional period of not more than 10 years or the duration of any crop control or soil conservation contracts with the United States if less than 10 years.

1242. The storing of water underground, including the diversion of streams and the flowing of water on lands necessary to the accomplishment of such storage, constitutes a beneficial use of water if the water so stored is thereafter applied to the beneficial purposes for which the appropriation for storage was made.

1242.5. The board, subject to the provisions of Section 100 and whenever it is in the public interest, may approve appropriation by storage of water to be released for the purpose of protecting or enhancing the quality of other waters which are put to beneficial uses.

1243. (a) The use of water for recreation and preservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources is a beneficial use of water. In determining the amount of water available for appropriation for other beneficial uses, the board shall take into account, when it is in the public interest, the amounts of water required for

recreation and the preservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources.

(b) The board shall notify the Department of Fish and Wildlife of an application for a permit to appropriate water. The Department of Fish and Wildlife shall recommend the amounts of water, if any, required for the preservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources and shall report its findings to the board.

(c) This section does not affect riparian rights.

1243.5. In determining the amount of water available for appropriation, the board shall take into account, whenever it is in the public interest, the amounts of water needed to remain in the source for protection of beneficial uses, including any uses specified to be protected in any relevant water quality control plan established pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of this code.

This section shall not be construed to affect riparian rights.

1244. The sale, lease, exchange, or transfer of water or water rights, in itself, shall not constitute evidence of waste or unreasonable use, unreasonable method of use, or unreasonable method of diversion and shall not affect any determination of forfeiture applicable to water appropriated pursuant to the Water Commission Act or this code or water appropriated prior to December 19, 1914.

This section does not constitute a change in, but is declaratory of, existing law.
