



Media Release

State Water Board Adopts Pair of Resolutions on the Human Right to Water, Beneficial Use

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SACRAMENTO – Today the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) highlighted the important uses of water, both for drinking and cultural use, by adopting a pair of resolutions related to the human right to water, Native American tribal cultural uses of water and subsistence fishing.

Assembly Bill (AB) 685, signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in 2012, added section [106.3 to the Water Code](#) on Jan. 1, 2013 declaring every human has a right to clean, affordable and accessible water for consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.

The adopted resolution identifies the human right to water as a top priority and core value of the state and regional Water Boards “to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California’s water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.”

The resolution affirms the State Water Board’s commitment to consider how its activities impact and advance the human right to safe, affordable and clean water to support basic human needs. Actions taken by the Water Boards in which the human right to water would be considered are those that implicate sources of drinking water. They include revising or establishing water quality control plans, policies and grant criteria; permitting; site remediation and monitoring; and water right administration.

Under the resolution, State Water Board staff will work with relevant stakeholders to -- as resources allow -- develop new or enhanced systems to collect data needed to identify and track communities that do not have, or are at risk of not having, safe, clean, affordable and accessible water for drinking, cooking and cleaning.

Another point highlighted in the resolution is that State Water Board staff will prepare annual progress reports to the board regarding implementation of the human right to water, and those benchmarks will be incorporated into the State Water Board’s annual [performance report](#).

Understanding and recognizing California Native American tribes’ cultural connection to the waters of the state, and subsistence fishing by tribes and other cultures, the State Water Board





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adopted a resolution to direct staff to develop proposed [beneficial use categories](#) pertaining to those uses. The resolution also directs the Board to consider the proposed beneficial use categories no later than April 2017.

The resolution also directed staff to engage Native American tribes in the public participation process when developing these beneficial use categories, as well as seek input from environmental justice groups, the regulated community and other interested stakeholders.

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