



# **SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

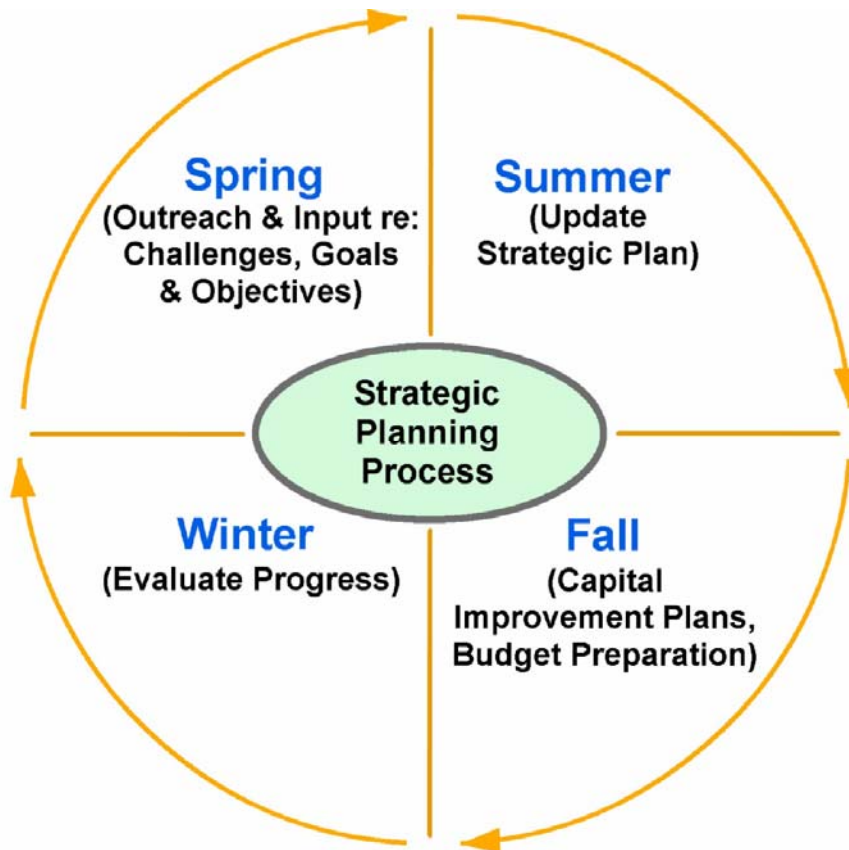


**October 2006**

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Agency) faces many diverse challenges in advancing its mission. In order to better allocate the Agency's resources towards high-priority needs the Agency has undertaken a strategic planning process. Based on the results of this process, the Agency has identified the what it believes are the top strategic challenges that the Agency must address to meet its mission of effectively managing resources in our care for the benefit of people and the environment in our service area.

These challenges cover a broad array issues and include water supply, flood control, sanitation, human resources, long-term sustainability and organizational improvement. Often the issue of how a strategic challenge is addressed can be as important as what is being addressed. The Agency's value statement and water policy guide both the identification of strategic challenges and actions to the address these challenges. The Agency's *Value Statement* and *Water Policy Statement* are attached to this report.

This document is the product of the Agency's strategic planning process. This process includes reviewing the Agency's mission, vision and policies, conducting outreach to identify the Agency's strategic challenges, and identifying actions to address these challenges, ensuring that funding and resources are prioritized towards these actions and monitoring progress on these actions. This process is summarized in the figure below.



The strategic priorities identified by the Agency and actions the Agency plans to take to address these priorities are presented below (not listed in order of priority). Many of the action listed represent multi-year efforts and will not be completed in the next fiscal year.

***Fulfill contractual water supply obligations***

- *Prepare draft environmental impact report for the water supply and reliability project*
- *Plan, design and construct water supply and transmission facilities to meet contractor needs*
- *Work with the Water Contractors to develop local water and recycled water supplies, perform groundwater studies and protect groundwater recharge areas.*
- *Work to obtain additional water rights and limit unauthorized water diversions that adversely affect the Agency's water supply*
- *Work with the Water Contractors to increase water conservation in Agency service area*

***Protect water quality and improve the reliability of the water transmission system***

- *Conduct natural hazard reliability assessment of diversion and transmission facilities*
- *Actively monitor projects that could impact source water quality*

***Address impacts on listed salmonid species***

- *Obtain a Biological Opinion for the Agency's water supply and flood control activities*
- *Assist in development of salmonid recovery plans*
- *Reduce potential fisheries impacts associated with the water transmission, flood control and sanitation facilities*
- *Integrate fisheries recovery with Russian River Project agreements*

***Lead development of regional sustainability programs and water resource partnerships***

- *Define components of the Agency's sustainability program*
- *Provide support for development of integrated regional water management plans*

***Obtain multi-year programmatic permit and engineering report for stream maintenance***

- *Prepare NEPA/CEQA documents and programmatic stream maintenance permit*
- *Develop programmatic education and restoration program*
- *Update hydrology and hydraulics models in flood control zones*
- *Prepare engineering report for benefit assessment in Flood Control Zones 1A, 2A and 3A/9A*

***Improve public understanding of the Agency and Agency programs***

- *Develop and implement a strategic communications plan*
- *Collect and analyze customer data on awareness and expectations of Agency programs*
- *Maintain and improve the Agency's media outreach program*

***Address critical infrastructure needs for sanitation systems***

- *Fund and monitor CEQA document preparation for Occidental CSD/Camp Meeker treatment and disposal project*

- *Prepare CEQA documents for Russian River CSD irrigation expansion project and equalization basin project*
- *Prepare long range capital and financing plans for each of the sanitation districts*

***Improve Agency's business efficiency and effectiveness***

- *Follow Malcolm Baldrige model for organizational improvement and obtaining ISO 9000 and 14000 registrations*
- *Develop formalized program for updating Agency facility drawings*
- *Develop GIS for Agency facilities*
- *Develop and/or update existing long term financial plans for the general fund, water transmission, and flood control*
- *Monitor and provide input on legislative and regulatory issues*
- *Implement IT Master Plan*
- *Protect IT system from internal and external threats*

***Improve employee recruitment and retention***

- *Develop an affordable housing program*
- *Develop programs for interns and apprentices*
- *Work to establish relationships with colleges and universities for top student referrals.*

## SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY MISSION, VISION, VALUE AND POLICY STATEMENTS

### Mission Statement

*The mission of Sonoma County Water Agency is to effectively manage the resources in our care for the benefit of people and the environment in our service area.*

### Vision Statement

*The Agency will achieve the sustainable use of natural resources in all aspects of water resources management.*

### Value Statement

#### ***Solutions and Innovation***

*We will focus on finding solutions to the water management challenges we face, whether it is in the day-to-day operation of our systems or the development of long-term programs to meet future needs. We will encourage innovation, creativity and ingenuity, recognizing that the best solutions often have not been tried before.*

#### ***People and Teamwork***

*We believe that the Agency's employees are its most valuable asset. We respect the diversity of our staff and promote teamwork and mutual respect among all sections of the Agency. We also believe that a creative and empowered workplace can inspire staff to use their talents and commitment to fulfill the Agency's mission.*

#### ***Community Service***

*The Agency strives to provide high-quality service to those who rely on our water supply, flood control and sanitation services. We also recognize that we are part of a larger community and believe that we should support the ideas of environmental stewardship and sustainability to improve the quality of life for both present and future generations.*

#### ***Integrity and Continuous Improvement***

*Drawing upon the experience of our staff and the needs of our employees, our customers and our community, we will strive to make decisions in a sound and reasonable manner. We believe that our communication with others should be honest and sincere. We will also strive to continuously improve the services we provide and the quality of our workplace.*

## **Water Policy Statement**

### ***Sustainability and Stewardship***

*The Agency will manage the natural resources with which it is entrusted to provide sustainable and high quality water supply, flood control, and wastewater services while protecting the environment for future generations.*

### ***Leadership***

*The Agency will provide the leadership for water resources issues within the North Bay Region to ensure policy decisions are based on the best available information.*

### ***Strategic Partnerships***

*The Agency will partner with stakeholders on technical, policy, and legislative initiatives where it serves to benefit the watersheds within which the Agency works.*

### ***Multi-Benefit and Integrated Water Resource Projects***

*The Agency will seek opportunities to develop innovative projects and programs that consider integrated water resources management and fisheries recovery, and achieve multiple benefits within the watersheds in which the Agency works.*

### ***Communication***

*The Agency will communicate with the public and other public entities regarding its water supplies, sanitation and flood control services to better inform land use planning decisions.*

### ***Regional Water Resources Management***

*The Agency will provide, manage, and protect water resources to meet public needs. The Agency will balance the use of surface water and groundwater, and promote the use of recycled water and water conservation.*

### ***Cost Effective Management***

*The Agency will employ best management practices and cost-effective methods in providing its services and implementing projects.*