



2020 Year in Review – California Water Data Consortium

2020 was an historic year, full of challenges and unpredictability. Despite the uncertain times, I'm proud of all that the California Water Data Consortium and our partners have accomplished. While 2020 may not have been the ideal year to launch a new nonprofit, it also reinforced how critical open, transparent data is to good government, public health, water resilience, equitable decision-making, and much more. Our mission is urgent and necessary, now more than ever.

Since starting in August, I've been incredibly impressed by the team's thoughtful, agile approach to remote collaboration, virtual public engagement, and online relationship building. In 2021, we're building on this strong foundation and will be demonstrating the value of open and transparent data through several pilot projects already underway.

I'm pleased to provide the following highlights on what we have accomplished together!

Tara Moran
Chief Executive Officer

The California Water Data Consortium was formed to support implementation of the Open and Transparent Water Data Act (AB 1755, Dodd), with active public, private, and nonprofits partnerships embedded directly in our governance structures, uniquely positioning us to support resilient water management in California.

CONSORTIUM 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

We are accelerating statewide progress on new pilot projects.

Building on our relationships across public, private, and nonprofit sectors, we are advancing collaborative pilot projects to streamline the reporting of critical water management data in both urban and agricultural sectors. These projects will help transform California's water data and information infrastructure to ensure reliable, accessible data across regions:

- **Developing Pathways to Statewide LiDAR Data:** In partnership with the California Department of Conservation, we're convening a statewide discussion among federal, state, and local agencies, NGOs, private sector organizations, and the philanthropic community to develop shared goals of statewide LiDAR data and a collective action plan.
- **Streamlining Groundwater Elevation Reporting:** Consortium working groups are coordinating diverse stakeholders, including growers, local and state agencies, water districts, and NGOs, in an effort to reduce the burden of regulatory reporting of groundwater elevation data and ensure that the data reported can be readily accessed and used for decision-making by state and non-state entities.
- **Streamlining Urban Water Data Reporting:** Consortium working groups are coordinating with state agencies and urban water suppliers to streamline urban water data reporting to California agencies and improve data usefulness across sectors and regions.

We launched our board, incorporated as an independent nonprofit, and secured start-up funding.

In the first half of 2020, we seated a deeply knowledgeable and active Board of Directors, bringing together expertise and experiences in state and local government, urban and agricultural water agencies, academia, philanthropy, and business. The board worked quickly and collaboratively to incorporate the Consortium as an independent 501c(3) and mobilized S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Water Foundation, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District, and Moulton Niguel Water District to provide start-up funding.

We held two public meetings, convening over 150 members of the diverse, active California water data community.

The Consortium and the State agencies implementing AB 1755 co-hosted two online public meetings, in June and October to launch the Consortium and advance AB 1755 implementation. Future public meetings will continue to leverage the neutral space of the Consortium to improve outcomes for all water data users.

We established a cross-sector governance structure.

In October, we seated an energetic [Steering Committee](#) that includes representatives from state and local agencies, the private sector, academia, and more. Committee members bring expertise in data and information science, technology, as well as decades of proven impact in private-public partnerships, policy development, and fundraising.

In December, we launched our [Data Users Working Group](#) and a [Technical Working Group](#). Together, these groups will advance pilot projects to demonstrate the value of accessible, interoperable data, convene diverse voices to help us to implement Consortium priorities, and identify new opportunities for cross-sector collaboration that supports data-informed water management.

FUNDING PARTNERS

The Consortium is supported by funding from the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the Water Foundation, as well as several water agencies including the Bay Area Water Agency Coalition, Metropolitan Water District, Moulton Niguel Water District, and Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District. To enable this work and our continued growth, we have raised approximately \$1.3 million to date.

We're embarking on a new year with a powerful track record and valuable, trusted partners. To stay up to date on Consortium activities and news, please visit www.cawaterdata.org.

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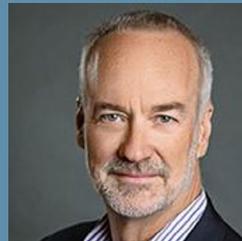
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