



**TO** Interested Parties

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FM3 Research

**RE:** California Water Infrastructure Issues Survey

**DATE** May 9, 2023

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**Summary of key survey<sup>1</sup> findings:**

- **The public is highly concerned about the condition of state and local water infrastructure;**
- **Voters strongly support increased funding for water-related infrastructure projects; and**
- **Voters across all parties and regions of the state are highly supportive of the Delta Conveyance Project.**

**Significant Voter Support for Added Investments in Water Infrastructure Projects**

Two-thirds (68%) of California voters rate the “condition of state and local water supply infrastructure like reservoirs, dams, canals, sewers and storm drains” as an extremely or very serious problem. Furthermore, as **Figure 1** shows, overwhelming majorities of Californians believe there is a need for funding various water infrastructure projects.

**Figure 1: Level of Need for Funding for Water Infrastructure Projects**

*Question Wording: “For each one, please indicate if you think California has a great need, some need, a little need, or no real need to invest additional funding in that type of infrastructure.”*

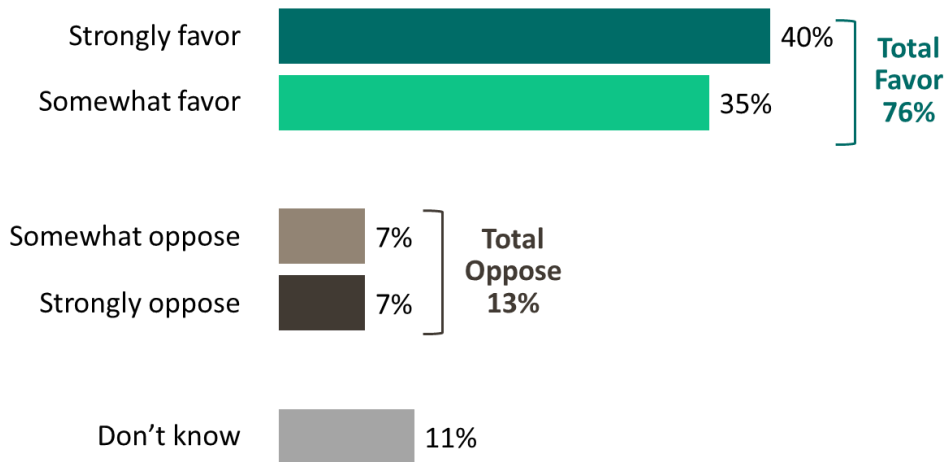
Water Infrastructure Project	Percentage Great Need	Percentage Great/Some Need
Modernizing water infrastructure to protect clean drinking water supplies	58%	88%
Developing new local sources of water, including desalination, stormwater cleanup, recycled water and groundwater	56%	86%
Increasing water storage and delivery systems by upgrading and building new reservoirs and dams	54%	85%
Upgrading California’s water distribution system of levees, canals, pipes and pumps that deliver water from the Sierra Nevada mountains to homes, businesses and farms to the entire state	50%	85%

**Strong Support for Delta Conveyance Project**

**Voters express strong support for the Delta Conveyance Project.** As **Figure 2** shows, following a statement summarizing the project, three in four (76%) favor the project.

**Figure 2: Favor/Oppose Upgrading the Delta Conveyance Project & Building Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Tunnel After Project Summary**

*PROJECT SUMMARY STATEMENT: “More than two-thirds of Californians rely on the state water project – a system of dirt levees, canals and pipes to transport water long distances from the Sierra Nevada Mountains through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to homes, farms and businesses in the Bay Area, Northern California, Central Valley, Southern California and San Diego. This system is more than 60 years old and engineers say it is outdated and must be modernized to continue operating reliably. The project would upgrade California’s primary water delivery infrastructure, **including building a new tunnel underneath the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta**, as well as upgrading pumps and levees to carry and deliver the water more reliably throughout the state.”*



It is worth noting that the project receives solid backing from voters regardless of party affiliation and across all major demographic and geographic groups. As **Figure 3 on the next page** shows, eight in ten Democrats (81%), three in four nonpartisans (76%) and two-thirds of Republicans favor the Delta Conveyance Project as well as the vast majority of voters in every region of the state.

**Figure 3: Favor/Oppose Upgrading the Delta Conveyance Project & Building Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Tunnel After Project Summary by Party & Region**

Demographic Group	Total Favor	Total Oppose	Don't Know
<b>PARTY AFFILIATION</b>			
Democrats	81%	10%	9%
No Party Preference /Other	76%	12%	12%
Republicans	65%	20%	15%
<b>REGION</b>			
Los Angeles County	80%	11%	9%
Counties Surrounding Los Angeles County	79%	10%	11%
Bay Area	73%	13%	14%
San Diego	78%	8%	14%
Sacramento/Rural North	64%	30%	6%
Central Coast/Central Valley	74%	17%	19%
Inland Empire	79%	9%	12%

**Even after a battery of opposition arguments, two-thirds (67%) continue to favor the Delta Conveyance Project while just one in four (24%) oppose.** Voters were not persuaded by messages that sought to characterize these proposed upgrades as outdated and unnecessary, too costly or having negative impacts on the environment or disadvantaged communities.

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<sup>1</sup> **Survey Methodology:** From February 9-16, 2023, FM3 conducted a survey of 1,099 California voters likely to cast a ballot in the November 2024 Presidential Election. Respondents were contacted via text messaging, email and telephones and interviews were conducted online and via landline and cell/mobile telephone by live interviewers. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The sample margin of error for the results is +/-3.1% at the 95% confidence level; the margin of error for population subgroups will be higher. Due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100%.