



Northern California Water Association Water Transfer Policy

Revised by NCWA's Board of Directors December 3, 1997

The Northern California Water Association (NCWA) represents sixty-six agricultural water districts and agencies, private water companies and individual water rights holders with senior water rights and entitlements to the surface waters of the Sacramento Valley.

NCWA believes the transfer of water is one means of insuring that California's most precious resource can be put to reasonable beneficial use to the maximum degree practicable. Although water transfers may, in certain years, alleviate water shortages, these resources alone can not meet California's long-term water supply needs. Water transfers, where appropriate, should adhere to certain fundamental principles grounded in the recognition that rights in water are both a property right and a community resource.

NCWA's water transfer policy is based upon the recognition of the fundamental property right of those with water rights and the importance of water rights to local communities dependent upon area of origin water resources.

NCWA believes that the actual water right holder - the owner of the water right - should determine the disposition of the water to be transferred.

NCWA encourages its members to develop water transfer programs that facilitate district or agency transfers, and allow for all water users within a district or agency, where appropriate, to participate equitably in those transfers.

NCWA members should review all transfer proposals developed pursuant to district or agency water transfer programs to ensure that those proposals, if carried out, will not result in unreasonable community, financial, water supply, operational or environmental impacts. Transfer proposals which result in the least impacts to the area of origin shall be preferred over those with greater potential adverse impacts.

NCWA believes that transfer proposals that would result in degradation of groundwater quality should be restricted. Transfer proposals that would result in overdraft of the safe yield of affected groundwater basins should also be restricted. The development of groundwater management plans is encouraged as a means of maintaining groundwater quality and to prevent groundwater overdraft.

NCWA believes that all transfers in accord with this water transfer policy should be deemed a beneficial use of water, including the transfer of water made possible through conservation or efficient water management.

NCWA believes that consumptive and or historic use limitations should not apply to district or agency-wide transfer proposals within the area of origin.

NCWA believes that watershed, county and other area of origin protections are essential and must be honored and adhered to. Consequently, any intra-basin user should have a right-of-first refusal regarding an out-of-basin transfer proposal.