



New Regional Plan Provides Roadmap for Actively Managing the Upper American River Watershed to Promote Long-Term Resiliency

El Dorado Hills, December 20, 2023 -- The [El Dorado Water Agency](#) (EDWA) is pleased to announce the completion of the [Programmatic Watershed Plan](#) (PWP) that serves as a roadmap for collectively addressing the challenges threatening the upper American River watershed. The PWP outlines resource management strategies and actions to help build a sustainable, climate-resilient watershed now and into the future.

The PWP was developed by the Upper American River Watershed Group (UARWG), which consists of local land use authorities, water purveyors, resource conservation districts, non-governmental organizations, Tribes, academics, and state and federal agencies. Convened by EDWA, the group developed the PWP to address the unique conditions of the region and present a holistic approach to watershed management.

“The development of the PWP is the result of over a year and a half of collaboration with partners who all understand the importance of investing in and protecting the upper American River watershed,” Rebecca Guo, General Manager of EDWA. “The watershed is an incredibly valuable resource and it is essential that we have a regionally developed approach to addressing the various challenges impacting the watershed.”

The headwaters of the upper American River watershed provide far-reaching benefits for the region, state, nation, and even globally. The headwaters support natural capitals such as agricultural and residential water needs and provide natural habitats, sustainable food and fiber production, cultural value, recreational and tourism opportunities, and more. The headwaters also provide water for beneficial uses in the Sacramento metropolitan area and a significant portion of the state and contribute to downstream river and estuary ecosystem protection.

However, the upper American River watershed, comprising over 1.5 million acres, faces substantial threats from recent disasters. Drought, floods, fires, and other climate change impacts threaten the watershed’s capacity to support the state’s multifaceted residential, business, agricultural, and environmental needs. There have been multiple states of emergencies, leading to significant challenges for both the communities and ecosystems within the watershed, as well as those reliant on its resources.

The PWP lays out the identified resource management strategies and focused management actions to alleviate and mitigate watershed management challenges for collective implementation by partners. To complement the PWP, EDWA is developing an ecosystem valuation report to quantify the goods and services provided by the upper American River watershed. By increasing understanding of the watershed’s value, this report, which will be

released in early 2024, will help guide future watershed investments. To learn more please visit the [El Dorado Water Agency website](#).

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