



NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Delivers \$15 Million To Support Tribal Water Infrastructure Projects

Funding Agreement Serves as An Example of Successful State & Tribal Government Collaboration

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority celebrate the signing of a funding agreement that provides \$15 million in direct financial assistance to Tribal communities.

As California experiences a third consecutive year of drought – and plans for the possibility of a fourth dry year to come – many communities face challenges in accessing clean, safe drinking water. This funding will help advance water infrastructure projects that will improve water for families, enhance water supply reliability, and upgrade existing water infrastructure on Tribal lands.

“The State is committed to getting financial assistance directly to Tribal communities and providing resources to improve the water supply infrastructure and clean water access that these communities need to respond to California’s extreme drought and a hotter, drier future,” said Karla Nemeth, DWR Director. “This funding agreement is a first of its kind and a true government-to-government collaborative effort.”

The \$15 million delivered to the San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority was approved by the legislature as part of the [Budget Act of 2021](#) and is separate from the funding awarded by DWR’s drought relief grant programs. The funding will be divided equally amongst five Tribes represented by the San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority and will support the planning, design, and construction for a suite of projects. These projects will include water storage tank

installation, water distribution system upgrades, emergency generators, and more. All projects are expected to be completed by 2025.

“This is a historic achievement demonstrating that the Tribes and the State can respectively work together to achieve a common goal,” said Bo Mazzetti, President of the San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority. “It is our hope to continue our positive working relationship. This achievement is a major step in the right direction.”

This is also the first funding agreement that has been negotiated with the State that addresses Tribal concerns and contract requirements that have historically presented challenges for Tribal Governments in securing funding. The funding agreement takes into consideration sensitive matters that have precluded Tribes from entering into grant agreements with the State including a limited waiver of sovereign immunity and environmental review of funded projects.

“The funding agreement signed by DWR and the San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority will serve as a model that can help advance future statewide efforts and best practices in developing grant agreements with Tribes,” said Anecita Agustinez, DWR Tribal Policy Advisor.

To learn more about DWR’s partnerships and coordination with California Tribes, visit [DWR’s Tribal Policy webpage](#). For information about other DWR and State drought response efforts and funding programs, visit drought.ca.gov.



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