



NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DWR Releases Funds for Repairs of the Friant-Kern Canal

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – With California now in its third year of drought, collaboration among state, federal and local partners is critical to improving the resiliency of California’s water system. Today, the California Department of Water Resources announced it has released \$29.8 million in funding to the Friant Water Authority (FWA) to repair segments of the Friant-Kern Canal, a key water conveyance facility in the San Joaquin Valley damaged by land subsidence.

“Through this investment, we are furthering a partnership to restore California’s major water conveyance systems to improve the resiliency of California’s water supply during drought and flood conditions,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “The projects, when completed, will maximize the canal’s capacity to move water efficiently through the system and improve California’s ability to boost and store its water supply.”

The state-funded program, which aligns with Governor Newsom’s Water Resilience Portfolio to improve water quality and supplies for California, is part of a cooperative approach to fixing California’s water conveyance infrastructure pursued by local, state, and federal agencies, who will financially support the projects.

The Friant-Kern Canal plays a critical role in delivering water to 1 million acres of farmland and more than 250,000 Californians from Fresno to Bakersfield. In January,

[FWA](#) began the first phase of the Friant-Kern Canal Middle Reach Capacity Correction Project, which will restore carrying capacity along 33 miles of the 152-mile-long canal in eastern Tulare County. The Friant-Kern Canal, owned by the [U.S. Bureau of Reclamation](#), has lost more than 60 percent of its original conveyance capacity in the middle section due to land subsidence. Phase one of the project is expected to cost \$292 million and be completed by early 2024.

“This funding is a large part of the reason that we were able to break ground on the Friant-Kern Canal Middle Reach Capacity Correction Project in January,” said FWA Chief Executive Officer Jason Phillips. “Our partners at the State of California have invested in the San Joaquin Valley’s future at a critical time, and we are grateful to the Newsom Administration and for DWR’s dedicated efforts to release these funds as quickly as possible in recognition of the urgent need to implement the project.”

The Friant-Kern Canal is one of four projects that will receive funds as part of a \$100 million initiative in the California Budget Act of 2021 to improve water conveyance systems in the San Joaquin Valley. DWR is working on agreements for projects on the Delta-Mendota Canal, San Luis Canal, and California Aqueduct.

To receive program funding, participants must show proof of adequate non-state cost share to match the State financial assistance. Program funds will be used to pay for planning, permitting, design, and construction of near-term subsidence rehabilitation projects, such as raising canal embankments or repairing check structures. Agencies with funded projects will need to investigate the risk of subsidence and how to prevent continued subsidence.

An additional \$100 million in funding is slated for the coming fiscal year.

Subsidence is a long-term issue for water conveyance systems that has been exacerbated by recent droughts. If not addressed, continued subsidence will further reduce the water delivery capacity of regional canals and aqueducts and increase the costs for remediation.

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