

# Poll: Calif. water improvement price tags too high

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

Californians say the state's water supply system has serious problems that require improvement, but they are unwilling to spend billions of dollars in ratepayer and taxpayer funds on the task, according to a new USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times poll.



Shasta Dam is an integral component of California's water system. Photo/LTN file

The results suggest an uphill fight for proponents of a state water bond and for a proposal to replumb the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the transfer point for Northern California supplies delivered to the San Joaquin Valley and urban Southern California.

Reluctance to pay for big public works projects was reflected throughout the survey, which also questioned voters on the California prison system and the high-speed rail project.

"On all three of these issues voters have very clear concerns and want to see something done – until they see the price

tag,” said Dan Schnur, director of USC’s Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics.

In initial questioning, 60 percent of those polled said they would favor a bond to finance statewide water improvements such as levee repair and groundwater cleanup. But when told the bond would require the state to borrow \$5 billion to \$6 billion, support plunged to 36 percent.

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