Opinion: What if the drought is permanent?

By Dan Walters

California’s prolonged drought drew a bit of official attention last week.



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The state Water Resources Control Board tightened, ever so slightly, water conservation rules on local water agencies and users.

Two days later, Gov. Jerry Brown and legislative leaders announced a $1.1 billion drought response plan, mostly old wine in new bottles with little immediate effect.

Underlying these tepid responses are assumptions that the drought is still a temporary condition and that mild steps will suffice without major economic or social disruptions.

But what if the drought continues for many years or is even permanent? Shouldn’t we be thinking about alternatives?

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