

Opinion: Fix California water and data systems

By Michael Kiparsky and Roger Bales, Modesto Bee

Few people realize how outdated our systems for water information are. Because of data limitations, real-time, transparent decisions about drought management, flood response and groundwater protection have eluded the state for the past century. Without basic numbers on where, when and how much water is available and being used, we can't improve how we manage our most precious water and natural resources.

A proposed law, the Open and Transparent Water Data Act – Assembly Bill 1755 – could coordinate and integrate existing data. Paired with the vision of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, AB1755 could foster entrepreneurship, innovation and scientific discovery. But the long-term opportunity is even greater: AB1755 could help move water and natural resource management in California from sticky notes and push pins to the smart data tools of the 21st century.

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