



State and Federal Legislative Goals and Strategy for 2026

FEDERAL

Federal Legislative Policy Priorities	Status and Outlook	Strategy	New or continued effort from 2025	Rank
Exempt water and wastewater agencies from any CERCLA liability for PFAS cleanup costs	Legislation is pending that OCWD supports & gained Congressmembers Kim and Correa to co-sponsor the bill	Work with passive receivers to ensure full liability protections for water sector	Continue	#1
Preserve the Safe Drinking Water Act's use of cost-benefit analysis in the development of drinking water standards such as PFAS family of chemicals and other constituents of emerging concern	Amendments and legislation that OCWD opposed that would have altered the use of cost-benefit analysis have not been adopted	Work with Senate and House Committees and OCWD congressional delegation to ensure that cost-benefit analysis is relied upon in any PFAS legislation	Continue	#2
Advocate for water infrastructure funding (grants) for OCWD's water producers	OCWD has provided multiple support letters for producer's projects	This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities	Continue	#3
Target federal assistance to support construction of all water supply facilities to support urban and agricultural needs which otherwise would not be constructed without such funding	OCWD board, staff and consultant continue to convey this message to the OC delegation	Ensure that current program is reauthorized and is fully funded working with OCWD congressional delegation and key western water House and Senate committees	Continue	#4

Maintain Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations congressional support and funding to update water control manual at Prado Dam		Work with Senate and House Committees, OCWD congressional delegation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Scripps Institute of Oceanography	Continue	#5
Gain “Phase 2” funding for Local groundwater Supply Improvement Project (“Local SIP”)	OCWD staff will collaborate with its Local SIP partners: Mesa Water, City of Huntington Beach, and City of Newport Beach to apply for federal and state grant funds	This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities	Continue	#6
With dam safety as a priority, maximize implementation of minor deviation at Prado Dam during upcoming repairs of the Prado Dam spillway		Work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to collaborate	New	#7
Support collaboration to enable long-term sediment management behind Prado Dam		Work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, elected officials (state and federal), cities, counties, beach communities, University of California-Irvine, etc. to collaborate; possibilities include pulsing sending through Prado Dam during wet weather; gaining funding in the Water Resources Development Act, etc.	New	#8
Gain funding for the South Basin groundwater cleanup project	OCWD staff will apply for federal and state grant funds	Seek federal and state grants (This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities)	New	#9

Gain funding for the Sunset Gap Barrier project	The CA state 2025 water climate bond now has eligibility language in for the Sunset Gap project -OCWD staff will apply	Seek federal WaterSMART grants and state grants through the 2025 climate bond (This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities)	New	#10
Gain funding for a multipurpose education center at OCWD's headquarters and at Prado Dam		Seek federal and state grants (This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities)	New	#11

STATE

Support water infrastructure funding opportunities, including PFAS cleanup	Advocate for climate bond (Prop 4) funds to be used for PFAS cleanup		Continue	#1
Advocate for water infrastructure funding (grants) for OCWD's water producers	OCWD has provided multiple support letters for producer's projects	This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities	Continue	#2
Ensure indoor water use is not limited as outlined in the OCWD board adopted resolution 23-9-134		OCWD must protect from having "stranded assets" which may happen to the GWRS if indoor water use is further constrained by pending regulations	Continue	#3
Gain "Phase 2" funding for Local groundwater Supply Improvement Project ("Local SIP")	OCWD staff will collaborate with its Local SIP partners: Mesa Water, City of Huntington Beach, and City of Newport Beach to apply for federal and state grant funds	This applies to both federal and state funding opportunities	Continue	#4

<p>Oppose legislation that would impose stringent water quality requirements on OCWD and its producers or increase the cost of PFAS clean-up</p>	<p>OCWD's firms lobbied in opposition to SB 601 and AB 794. Neither bill passed in 2025. Both bills are "2-year bills" that can still move in 2026. While it is good that they were defeated in their first year more work will be necessary on these issues in 2026.</p>	<p>SB 601 (Allen) and AB 794 (Gabriel) were introduced in 2025 and would have imposed costly new requirements on OCWD and its producers. OCWD lobbyists will work to oppose these bills</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>#5</p>
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