

## **Background**

The ***California Water Plan***, also known as ***Bulletin 160***, is a document produced by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to serve as a framework for water managers, legislators, and the public to consider options and make decisions regarding California's water future. The plan, updated every five years, presents basic data and information on California's water resources, such as water supply evaluations and assessments of agricultural, urban, and environmental water uses, as well as goals, objectives and strategies to address the State's water needs.

DWR's intent for the Water Plan is to: 1) meet water code requirements, 2) receive broad support among those participating in California's water planning, and 3) be a useful document for the public, water planners throughout the state, legislators and other decision-makers.

Work on the next five-year update, which is scheduled for release in 2013, began last year. Given the substantial contributions of Sierra watersheds to the overall State water picture, the SNC worked with DWR and the 2013 update facilitators to be added to the State Agency Steering Committee (SASC) overseeing the development of the 2013 Update.

The SASC represents the executive branch in the development of the plan through the active participation of 27 agencies, boards, departments and commissions that have a statutory and/or policy nexus to the water plan. A list of SASC members is included as Exhibit A to this report.

The SASC is informed by a Public Advisory Committee as well as regional and topic-area caucuses, a Tribal Advisory Committee, federal agencies and the Statewide Water Analysis Network, the science arm of the effort. The goal of the collaborative SASC is to develop a more comprehensive Water Plan update. It does this by integrating into the final document issues related to water supply, water use efficiency, water quality, flood management, and environmental stewardship, as well as the respective missions, goals and priorities of the involved agencies.

## **Current Status**

As part of the SNC's efforts to improve relationships with other State agencies and communicate the importance of the Sierra Nevada to those who live and work outside of the Region, we view the addition of the SNC to the SASC as an important achievement. We have already begun consulting with various stakeholders in the Sierra Nevada to let them know about this unprecedented opportunity to influence the issues, strategies and recommendations that get addressed in this next update to the California Water Plan.

The 2013 Update will include a number of new goals and objectives that relate to the Sierra, including: working through the existing Integrated Regional Water Management

(IRWM) program, better integrating federal and tribal goals and issues into the planning approach, and tapping more heavily into local knowledge to identify regional diversity and unique attributes that need special attention. DWR, under the auspices of the SASC, will hold regional meetings around the state several times a year, working with stakeholder-based “design teams” to assist with the content and outreach for each regional meeting. Regional teams will also be convened to develop regional reports that become part of the water plan. These reports describe current conditions, unique objectives, locally developed priorities and recommendations for resource management strategies by region.

While there is no single hydrologic region that includes the entire Sierra Nevada, DWR does have what is called an “overlay” for the mountain counties area, covering primarily the western portions of Plumas County in the north to Madera County in the south. A map showing the current hydrologic regions and overlay areas is included as Exhibit B to this staff report. One of the SNC’s goals has been to encourage other agencies and entities to recognize the Sierra Nevada as a distinct Region. In a possible step toward that goal, DWR is considering expanding the Mountain Counties overlay area to include much more of the SNC Region – at least on the western side – from Modoc in the north to the western foot of the Tehachapi’s in Kern County. A map showing the possible expansion area is included as Exhibit C.

### **Next Steps**

The SNC plans to continue working with stakeholders in the Region to identify and put forward key messages and objectives for the Sierra Nevada, as well as to generate Regional and Subregional stakeholder participation in the planning workshops. In addition, we will be leading efforts on the design team for both the regional outreach meetings and development of the regional plan for the mountain counties, along with other key partners such as the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association. And finally, the SNC will participate in the caucus group addressing potential financing for strategies and recommendations included in the update.

In a related effort, the SNC is also involved on the State Interagency Team for the Delta Plan, a legislatively mandated effort designed to achieve the co-equal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. This plan is being developed by the Delta Stewardship Council as a requirement of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009.

While the primary planning area for the Delta Plan is limited to the statutorily defined Delta, the draft plan does contemplate certain actions in the secondary planning area, which includes the upper watersheds of the Sacramento River and areas outside of the Delta that receive exported water. Because so much of the inflow to the Delta comes from the Sierra Nevada, the SNC believes it has a critical role to play in the development of this plan, as well.

SNC staff will continue to explore opportunities to engage on a variety of other efforts taking place affecting the Delta and other water policy issues in order to better facilitate understanding of and appropriate involvement among Sierra stakeholders in these efforts.

**Recommendation**

**This is an information item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.**

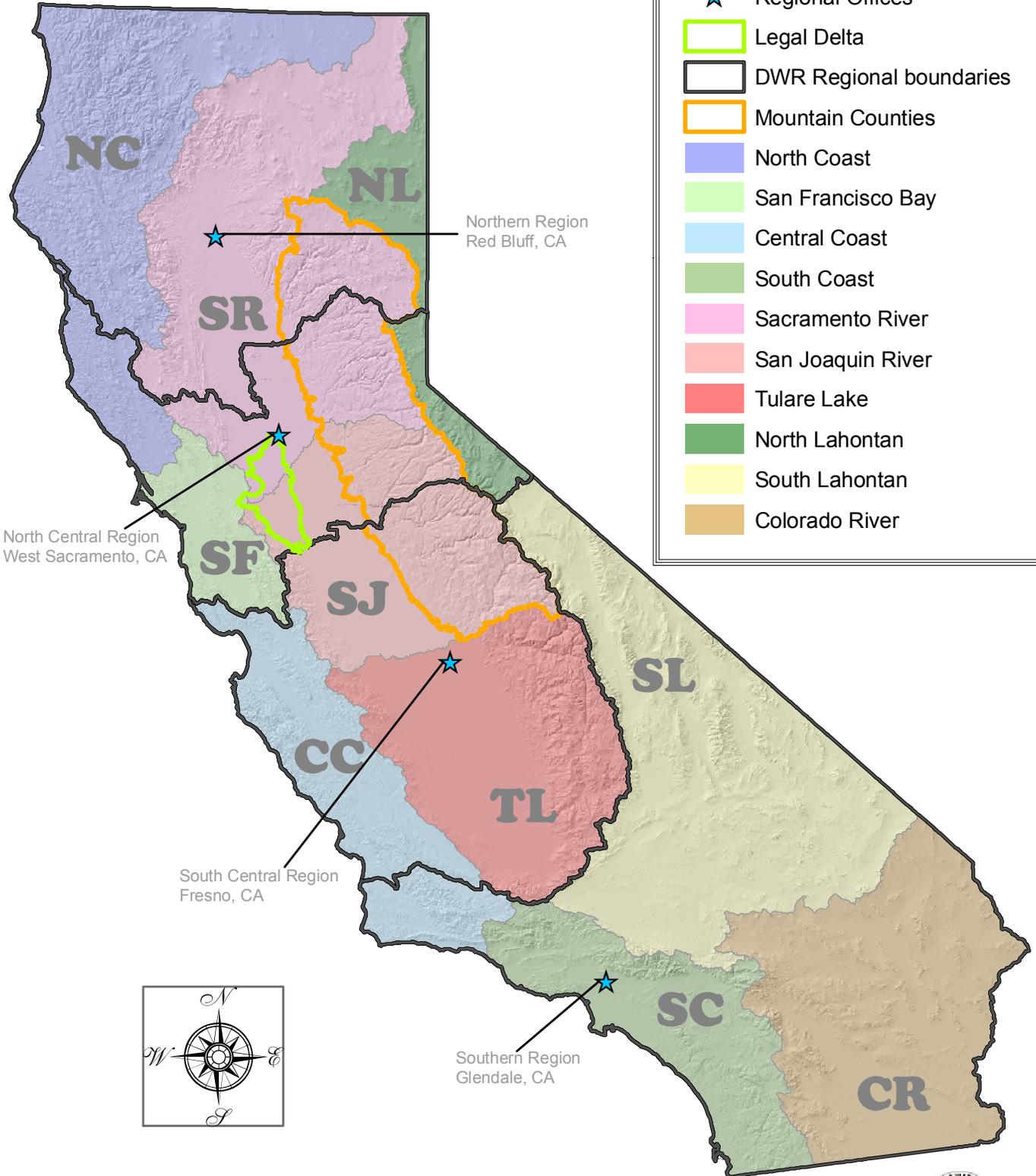
UPDATE 2013  
CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN  
**STATE AGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE**  
*Last updated 03/22/11*

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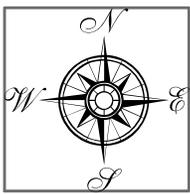
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# Hydrologic Regions & Overlay Areas of Interest



- ★ Regional Offices
- Legal Delta
- DWR Regional boundaries
- Mountain Counties
- North Coast
- San Francisco Bay
- Central Coast
- South Coast
- Sacramento River
- San Joaquin River
- Tulare Lake
- North Lahontan
- South Lahontan
- Colorado River



# Western Sierra Overlay Area

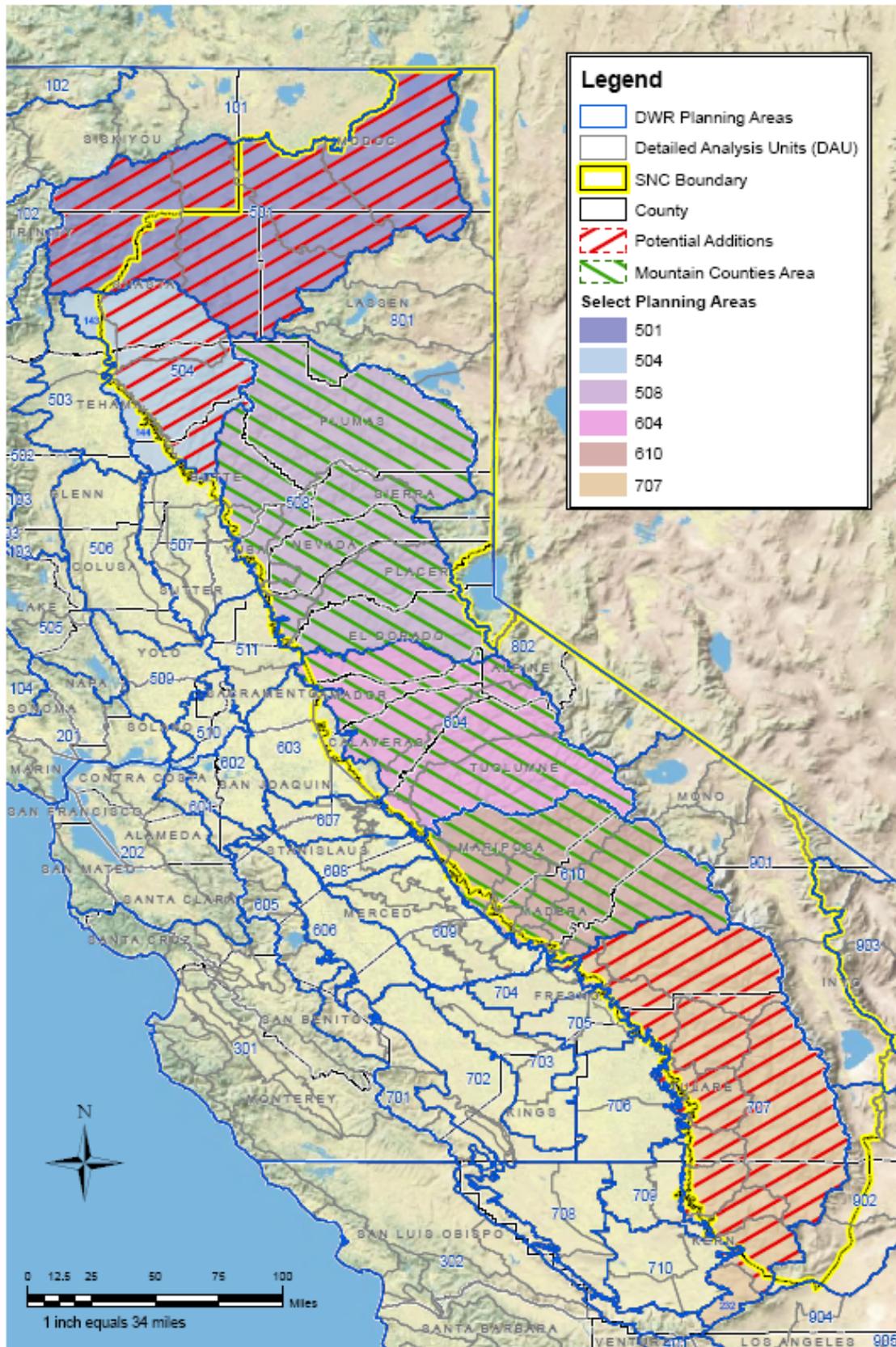


Figure 2 Map showing Mountain Counties Area, the Sierra Nevada Region, and existing DAUs and PAs. Map courtesy of North Central Region office.