



## Water Resource Mediation

Water is increasingly at the center of contentious disputes both in the U.S. and abroad. The nature of the high-profile conflicts range from clashes over water supplies and water quality, to flood control and conservation. The examples are endless. Environmentalists, growers and cities battle each other for their fair share of limited water allocations. Parties debate the appropriate level and types of regulation to put in place to protect water quality. Government leaders strive to adopt broadly supportable conservation mandates to help stretch already over-burdened water supplies. The issues are highly contentious, and parties often find themselves engaged in a zero-sum, you-win-I-lose type of discussion. The challenge for government leaders at all levels is to figure out how to understand, integrate and account for the various perspectives and uncertainties and to do so at a time when climate change, rapid urbanization and other factors will only further exacerbate already difficult policy debates.

CONCUR brings a wealth of experience to this contentious policy area, from helping environmental, urban and agricultural representatives forge ground-breaking statewide conservation policy in California, to helping international business and government leaders build agreements for wise water use policies around the globe. CONCUR's successful approach over the past 20 years has been grounded in several key strategies: framing issues in a way that brings relevant parties to the table; identifying and building on stakeholders' common interests; working with participants to map areas of agreement and disagreement; and putting in place carefully structured dialogues to spotlight and resolve those critical uncertainties preventing parties from reaching agreement. CONCUR puts a premium on teaming with other experts, from biologists and resource economists to agricultural irrigation engineers, to help bring well-informed approaches to policy dialogues. Our work has centered on all levels of government, from local cities to international trans-boundary disputes.

### Selected Projects

CALFED: California Bay-Delta Program: The CALFED project, one of the largest environmental planning initiatives ever undertaken in North America, aims to resolve California's long-standing water wars by building a series of inter-related agreements around water supply reliability, water quality and ecosystem restoration, water use efficiency, and long-term finance strategies. CONCUR worked closely with the program for more than a decade to provide strategic planning, process design, joint fact-finding services and agreement-focused facilitation. Successes included a ground-breaking agreement among agricultural and urban interests that relies on locally-inspired water use efficiency actions to meet specific regional and/or statewide objectives related to timing and flows, quality and quantity. CONCUR also helped design and execute a grant program that resulted in the Program awarding millions of dollars to support water use efficiency efforts across the state. Additionally, CONCUR organized and facilitated independent review processes on water conservation potential, water use measurement and long-term financing.

Clean Estuary Partnership to Develop Total Maximum Daily Loads and Other Water Quality Goals: CONCUR served as part of the Program Coordination team to assist the San Francisco Water Board, industry dischargers, and environmental groups in creating measures to improve water quality in the San Francisco Bay. CONCUR used its collaboration expertise to put in place a dialogue that ensured there were effective strategies for folding stakeholder views into both framing and resolving the issues at hand. Achieving project goals required undertaking studies to reduce uncertainties as well as verify assumptions. Key TMDLs addressed included Mercury, PCBs, Chlorinated Pesticides, Copper, Nickel, PDBEs, PAHs, and Selenium.

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# CONCUR, Inc.

Santa Clara County Water Resources Protection Collaborative: CONCUR facilitated a multi-year collaborative dialogue focused on developing a comprehensive watershed management plan to protect the basin in Santa Clara County, one of the fastest growing counties in California. As lead facilitator, CONCUR assisted the collaboration with prioritizing and establishing criteria for evaluating watershed action. The Collaboration led to the development of a comprehensive watershed management plan integrating habitat and water quality protection enhancement, water rights and water supply reliability, flood management and regulatory compliance. CONCUR led the group in ratifying a landmark Memorandum of Consensus for Mutual Cooperation to Jointly Develop and Implement Water and Watershed Resource Protection Measures, Guidelines and Standards in Santa Clara County, Guidelines and Standards for Land Use Near Streams.

Developing a Reliable Plan to Conserve Water in the Imperial Valley: CONCUR served as an integral part of a team working to develop a comprehensive plan to conserve an unprecedented 300,000 acre-feet of water for transfer to San Diego and other water-thirsty areas in California. CONCUR's work focused on designing and executing a public involvement process to inform plan development. The effort centered on strategic planning and facilitation of a monthly grower work group, but CONCUR also spearheaded public outreach efforts that included publishing a bi-monthly newsletter, conducting public workshops and field visits, and maintaining a project website.

Headwaters Forest Water Quality Issues: CONCUR successfully carried out a series of assignments over an 18-month period that resolved logging-related water quality issues in five Humboldt County watersheds. In addition to conducting conflict assessment, organizing stakeholders, initiating a convening committee, and facilitating work groups, CONCUR recruited, convened and facilitated an Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP). The ISRP examined the relationship between timber harvesting and sedimentation, identified potential corrective measures, and evaluated the sufficiency of the Habitat Conservation Plan. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Board relied on the ISRP's findings to establish Watershed Wide Waste Discharge Requirements for the 5 watersheds.

UN CEO Water Mandate Initiative: CONCUR facilitated the inaugural meeting of the CEO Water Mandate, a United Nations-sponsored initiative that brings together several dozen business leaders and the broader international community to identify shared strategies for addressing the emerging global water crisis. Facilitation of the initiative led to the unanimous endorsement of the initiative's near-term priorities and governance and funding structure. CONCUR's role focused on strategic planning and meeting facilitation.

For a complete list of projects please visit our website at [www.concurinc.com](http://www.concurinc.com)

## About CONCUR, Inc.

CONCUR, Inc. provides services in agreement-focused mediation and facilitation, joint fact-finding, conflict assessment, environmental policy analysis, strategic planning, and environmental mediation training. Our staff has a unique dual expertise in both the process and substance of environmental decision-making. We are rigorously trained in the art and science of negotiation and dispute resolution, as well as in environmental planning and policy analysis. This dual expertise is the foundation of CONCUR's philosophy: to integrate different disciplines that strengthen our problem-solving capability so that we can provide clients the highest quality professional services.

For further information about our services please visit our web site at [www.concurinc.com](http://www.concurinc.com) or contact us at:

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