

There's plenty in the water bond for the San Gabriel Valley: Opinion



Gov. Jerry Brown receives applause from lawmakers as he signs a measure to place a \$7.5 billion water plan on the November ballot, Wednesday, Aug. 13, 2014, in Sacramento, Calif. The measure replaces an existing water bond that was approved by a previous Legislature but was widely considered to costly and unlikely to be approved by voters.(AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)



By Chris Holden 8/20/14

The California Legislature voted last week to approve a \$7.5 billion water bond whose fate will be decided by voters in November. It took months, some might say years, of wrangling and horse trading before all sides came together to work out a successful measure to replace one that was initially proposed back in 2009.

So, what's in it for the San Gabriel Valley? Plenty.

The San Gabriel Valley already has one of the most advanced groundwater cleanup and management programs in the world. This bond contains \$900 million in new funding for further cleanup programs. Local agencies would be able to compete for tens of millions of dollars to continue cleanup of the SGV groundwater basin in order to make our valley more self-sufficient and less dependent on outside water sources.

The bond measure also calls for \$725 million in new funding for water recycling that would enable cities to reuse more runoff water and recycled water for landscaping, city property, etc. This saves fresh water for actual drinking.

The San Gabriel Mountains produce a tremendous amount of runoff during rainstorms. The \$200 million for new storm water capture would enable our communities to catch this fresh water and put it to productive use including drinking, landscaping and storage.

The San Gabriel Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy gain a combined \$60 million in new funds through the bonds. This money is allocated for waterway restoration, habitat restoration and land preservation along the Los Angeles and San Gabriel rivers. There is also \$100 million to fund grants to pay for water conservation and water efficiency programs.

With this bond, we make a big investment in ensuring safe, accessible water for generations to come. It is good for the state and good for the San Gabriel Valley.

Assemblyman Chris Holden, D-Pasadena, is the assistant majority floor leader of the California Assembly and represents the 41st District.