

**Sacramento Valley Environmental Water Caucus (SVEWC)
Guiding Principles
Adopted at the October 11, 2003 Plenary Meeting**

Organizations and collaborations that work to advance different goals and strategies are best guided when they have agreed in writing on their principles. Yet principles are not fully defined until they are tested. The individual words may mean different things to the diverse supporters of the principle. With this in mind, the SVEWC has adopted principles but wishes to continue the dialog on them with the belief that they will be improved upon in the years to come and edited for improved meaning at future meetings.

The list of principles below were adopted by consensus at the October 11, 2003 Plenary Meeting with the understanding that they are not perfectly worded and will all benefit from improvement. Changes to these and new additions can be considered and adopted at any Plenary Meeting.

You are welcome to help advance the understanding and clarification of adopted and proposed principles by participating in the svewc-principles email listserv and discussion forum. To do so, sign up at <http://www.svewc.org/principles.html>.

Note: These are not in any prioritized order

1. **Guaranteed Water.** Ground and surface water essential to habitat and environmental needs shall be secured in perpetuity.
2. **Precautionary Principle.** Precautionary measures shall be taken to reduce or eliminate harm to human health or the environment. The burden of proof that an action will not harm the environment is on the proponent.
3. **Collaboration.** SVEWC members support its mission, goals and principles and help each other in their individual environmental efforts so long as these efforts, campaigns, projects and programs do not go against their own principles, goals and strategies.
4. **No Transference of Harm.** A project or program's redirected impacts to the environment shall be avoided, minimized and/or fully mitigated.
5. **Meet or Exceed Applicable Laws and Regulations.** The SVEWC is committed to meeting or exceeding all environmental, cultural, public health and safety laws and regulations.
6. **Beneficiary Pays.** Water users, water polluters and water project proponents should be responsible for paying their fair share of the full environmental costs, including monitoring of projects and programs that would benefit them, both in the water source areas, as well as in the water use locations.
7. **No Water Rights Holders Exempt.** All water rights holders are subject to the public trust and the doctrine of reasonable use.
8. **Least Cost First.** After fully accounting for long-term "external costs" to the environment, society, recreation, the economy and biodiversity, the and most environmentally-beneficial and

cost-effective water supply, pollution control, restoration and flood control projects and programs shall be chosen..

9. **Science.** Independently peer-reviewed, transparent, quality assured, and easily-accessible monitoring data and scientific research should be developed and used to create ecologically sustainable water management and effective restoration projects, programs and policies with a focus on subwatersheds and on making the best use of the existing information.

10. **Flexibility, Disclosure and Interaction.** The SVEWC operates under the principles of high flexibility, high disclosure, and high personal interaction.