

H.R. 23: “Gaining Responsibility on Water”

H.R. 23, the “Gaining Responsibility on Water Act” or GROW Act, introduced by Rep. David Valadao (R-CA), addresses underlying federal policy, regulatory and administrative failures that have contributed to the mismanagement of water supplies across the West. The GROW Act includes both short and long-term provisions aimed at restoring water reliability and certainty to cities and farms in California and across the West. The bill includes seven titles that provide solutions to expand water storage, improve infrastructure, protect privately-held water rights, and create more abundant and reliable water resources to benefit both communities and the environment. The GROW Act gives federal agencies the tools they need to help safeguard communities from the arduous effects of future droughts.

EXPANDING WATER STORAGE

The GROW Act requires the federal government to expedite and complete consideration of feasibility studies for water storage projects some of which have been wasting away in bureaucratic purgatory for over ten years

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE: “ONE-STOP-SHOP” PERMITTING

The GROW Act establishes the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) as the lead coordinating agency for the permitting process for new or expanded surface storage facilities in order to streamline agency permit requirements that often impose unnecessary costs and burdens when constructing new water infrastructure

ENSURING WATER RELIABILITY

The GROW Act updates the Central Valley Project Improvement Act to ensure water resources are reliable and available to fulfill supply promises

PROTECTING WATER RIGHTS

The GROW Act prohibits past abuses of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture that required private entities to relinquish their water rights to the federal government as a permit condition to continue operating on federal lands

SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT AND FISH

The GROW Act provides reasonable flows for habitat restoration of fish and wildlife in the Central Valley and ensures compliance with requirements of the Endangered Species Act

