

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2728 (Soria)

As Amended March 19, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to make certain data on fish hatchery production, release, and escapement available on the statewide integrated water data platform by August 1, 2027

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires DWR to make datasets from the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) related to fish hatchery production, release, and escapement available on the statewide integrated water data platform by August 1, 2027.
- 2) Requires DWR to make datasets from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Forest Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration related to fish hatchery production, release, and escapement available on the statewide integrated water data platform by August 1, 2027.

COMMENTS

AB 1755 (Dodd) in 2016 enacted the Open and Transparent Water Data Act that requires California state agencies to create, operate, and maintain a statewide integrated water data platform to support sustainable water planning, support business management, advance water equity, and protect vulnerable communities, species and individuals. AB 1755 was an acknowledgement that effective water management in California at all levels was being hindered by a lack of high quality data and information. Since the passage of AB 1755, state agencies have made a great deal of progress in developing publicly available, open access data platforms, though more work remains to be done. State agencies are making the data specified under the Open and Transparent Water Data Act available on two data portals: (1) the California Open Data Portal hosted by the Government Operations Agency and (2) the California Natural Resources Agency Open Data Platform.

Fish release: This term refers to the number of fish raised at fish hatcheries that are then released into rivers or estuaries to bolster fish populations. In 2023, for example, DFW reported that it had released 23 million fall-run Chinook salmon raised at DFW-managed hatcheries into the wild. This bill requires that data on fish releases is included on the statewide integrated water data platform.

Fish escapement: This term refers to the number of anadromous fish (e.g., steelhead and salmon) that escape the ocean fishery and successfully return to spawn on inland rivers and streams. DFW monitors fish escapement for certain salmon runs and this bill requires that this data is included on the statewide integrated water data platform.

According to the Author

The author argues that "water and ecological data is crucial to improving management of the state's water resources," but that key data on fisheries is either not available, inconsistent, or difficult to find. The author contends that this bill will provide "the public and water managers

with additional ecological information necessary to improve the management of California's natural resources by including data hatchery production, release and escapement in the State's compiled water and wildlife information resources."

Arguments in Support

None on file.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill has the following fiscal impact:

- 1) DWR is likely to incur some ongoing costs, potentially in excess of \$150,000, to make available and maintain the required datasets on its statewide integrated water data platform.

For its part, DWR estimates annual General Fund costs of approximately \$1 million for the first three years (for staffing and software resources) followed by ongoing annual costs of approximately \$778,000 for ongoing implementation. DWR notes staff must undertake statewide coordination for the publication of available data from all major California hatcheries, including those managed by USFWS; ensure documentation and publication are made available in a machine-readable format; and update and maintain the data infrastructure and repository.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year in the 2027-28 fiscal year and ongoing.

- 2) Minor and absorbable costs to DFW. DFW notes it already publishes the information the bill requires DWR to make available on its platform.
- 3) Minor and absorbable costs to the State Water Resources Control Board.

VOTES**ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 13-0-0**

YES: Papan, Jeff Gonzalez, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bennett, Boerner, Caloza, Gallagher, Hart, Muratsuchi, Rogers

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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