

# Water Governance & Power Dynamics: Special Districts in the San Joaquin Valley

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## Community Collaborator: Community Water Center

CWC is a non-profit environmental justice organization. Since 2006, their initiatives for accessible and affordable drinking water have been at the forefront of statewide efforts for clean water as a human right.



## About the Team

**Ivan Soto:** Ph.D. student of Interdisciplinary Humanities with a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Humboldt State University.

**Adriana Renteria:** Regional Water Management Coordinator with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and Economics from UC Santa Cruz.

**Erica Fernandez:** Director of Organizing with a B.A. in Urban Studies, a B.A. Iberian and Latin American Cultures and Master's degree in Policy, Organization and Leadership Studies from Stanford University.

## Research Objectives

The goal of this project is to better understand the current state of water-related special districts in California's northern San Joaquin Valley.

To analyze power dynamics in water governance, this research considers: levels of contestation in elections; vacancies; race, ethnicity, and gender dynamics of board members.

## Keywords & Concepts

### Water Governance:

Administrative system that influences drinking and non-drinking water use and management. Often governed by five directors on a board.

### Special Districts:

Local government agencies formed and governed by local residents that provide essential services to millions of Californian residents. Their services include, but are not limited to: water, cemeteries, fire protection, mosquito abatement, and healthcare.



Water



Health



Justice

## Community Organizing & Advocacy Work

After generating data, the project team will develop fact sheets to disseminate information with key communities. Because Latinx and low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by California's drinking water crisis,\* public presentations and *platicas* will help recruit water board candidates from these communities to prioritize community drinking water needs.

## Securing long-term, safe, & affordable water

Overall, this project seeks to shift representation in water-related special district boards to adequately represent rural communities of color.



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**Clean water is a human right, not a privilege.**