

**Position Title: California Water Justice Policy and Planning Specialist.** This position will provide statewide leadership in water justice policy and planning, with a focus on water quality, quantity, and access for disadvantaged communities. It will be housed in UC Berkeley's Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management (ESPM).

**Position Description:** The California Water Justice Policy and Planning Specialist requires a doctoral degree in community or human development, public health, law, sociology, political science, environmental science, geography, or other related field with a documented program of applied research on environmental justice issues related to water. The Specialist will collaborate with campus and county-based academics and will have programmatic responsibilities to ANR's Healthy Families and Communities Strategic Initiative (SI), Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) SI, and/or Water Quality, Quantity and Security SI.

**Justification:** Among small, rural, socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, degraded infrastructure and a lack of technical and economic resources threaten water supplies and the quality of drinking water. The financial, operational and maintenance challenges of providing safe drinking water are compounded by drought and declining water quality. Historical and present day industrial and agricultural activities have contaminated ground and surface water sources, threatening individual and community health and limiting opportunities for social and economic development in affected communities. Further, communities that lack access to affordable and safe drinking water are largely low income and disproportionately Latino. Such inequities in water access and sovereignty are increasing across California, with an estimated 1 million Californians lacking access to safe drinking water. While ANR has widespread capacity in the technical aspects of water management, achieving our Strategic Vision requires increased policy and planning capacity to address the water-related needs and challenges of the disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in urban and rural California regions. Indeed, UC partnership and input is direly needed to support public agencies, community-based organizations and coalitions working on water justice issues by providing technical assistance, carrying out research projects, and facilitating capacity-building on issues, techniques, and policy. The current policy and regulatory climate makes this position particularly timely. California's implementation of both AB685, the Human Right to Water Act, and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act would benefit from research and policy guidance on how the state will adequately engage communities in addressing these issues. In filling this ANR gap, this position addresses two of the Water SI's main bullet points: *1) Degradation of water quality will become more important as a major public issue and 2) legal and regulatory decisions will have significant impacts on water use and quality among all sectors.* Furthermore, the SFS SI highlights that, "research and extension programs on water use efficiency and quality in urban contexts are equally important [to other noted water-related priorities] and should generate benefits to several of the ANR Strategic Vision initiatives, most notably to healthy families and communities." As such, this position would create positive synergies across all three of these ANR strategic initiatives, *improving water quality and access for disadvantaged communities throughout California.*

**Extension:** The successful candidate will be expected to collaborate with state and local government agencies (CA Department of Water Resources, CA Water Commission, Local Water Districts, Cal-EPA, CA Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and CA Department of Public Health) as well as community-based organizations (e.g. Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, the Pacific Institute, Community Water Center, and local water coalitions) to develop a successful solutions-focused water justice extension program. The candidate will bring his/her own expertise as well as that of other UC academics to bear on policy and planning work related to water quality and access in CA communities. They will engage in "public policy formulation by diverse stakeholders at many jurisdictional levels" (SFS SI) and develop "actionable information and a better understanding of trade-offs, costs, benefits and outcomes among key stakeholders (Water SI)." This position will be well situated to facilitate community-engagement in implementation of relevant California legislation, and may also inform and collaborate with community-led efforts to build resilience and advance adaptation-planning priorities such as infrastructure improvements.

**Research:** The research agenda for this position will coalesce around the intersection of water quality, exposure to water pollution and community health with a general focus on applied issues related to water access and water governance. A more targeted research agenda might include better understanding of

community-based resilience to the water-related impacts of climate change, barriers disadvantaged communities face in accessing quality drinking water, environmental and human health effects of emerging contaminants from point and diffuse pollution in the aquatic environment, waste water challenges and solutions, operationalizing the Human Right to Water, and democratic water governance. The successful candidate will understand often competing agricultural, environmental and urban demands for water supply and quality, will conduct applied research, and will leverage, analyze and synthesize existing data and resources being produced in our land grant institutions. The candidate will also find creative ways to bridge research to policy gaps, developing and translating scholarship to inform local, regional, and state water policy. Potential publication outlets include: *Water Policy*, *Water Resources Research*, *Society and Natural Resources*, *Environmental Science and Policy*, *Environmental Planning and Management*, *Environmental Policy and Planning*, *Rural Sociology*, *Environmental Health Perspectives*, *Environmental Health*, *Environmental Science and Technology*, *American Journal of Public Health*, and *California Agriculture*.

**ANR Network:** The Specialist will be expected to work closely with an emerging cluster of water-related hires within ESPM. Notably, we expect strong synergies with our CE Specialist in Water Resources and Climate Change Adaptation (Grantham) as well as our natural resource sociologist (Mascharenhas) who works on water regime governance. Other key faculty that support this position include Carlson (Fish Ecologist), Ruhi (Freshwater Ecologist), D'Odorico (Wildland Watershed Hydrologist) and Morello-Frosch (Environmental Health and Justice). The emerging cluster has the potential to provide a critical mass for joint collaborative projects and the pursuit of large, cross-cutting grants. Additionally, the Specialist will collaborate with ESPM's two social science Specialists: Getz (farmworker livelihoods) and Sowerwine (urban agriculture and food security). ANR as a whole will benefit greatly from this position – which is so intricately linked to food systems and food security – from production to consumption. The Specialist will be essential to coalescing work across ANR statewide programs, campuses and counties. We envision collaboration with the California Institute for Water Resources (Parker), SAREP's Farmworker Well-Being initiative (Feenstra), the Nutrition Policy Institute (Hecht, Ritchie, Strohlic), UC Davis Human Ecology Department (Gupta, Hibel, Guyer, Guarnizo), UCD Center for Regional Change (London), UCD Center for Watershed Sciences (Harter, Lund), and Food Systems, Community Development, Nutrition and 4-H work at the county level (e.g. Wei-Ting Chen, Rob Bennaton, Julia Van Soelen Kim, Natalie Price, Katie Johnson). This position is a high priority for ANR's California Communities and Food Systems Program Team and Research to Policy Program Team.

**Network External to ANR:** On the Berkeley campus, the Specialist might affiliate or collaborate with the Berkeley Water Center (Isha Ray), Berkeley Food Institute (Ann Thrupp), Geography Department (Laurel Larsen), the College of Engineering (Evan Variano, Ashok Gadgil, David Sedlak), and the School of Public Health. The successful candidate will also be expected to collaborate with state and local government agencies (e.g. CA Department of Water Resources, CA Water Commission, State Water Resources Control Board, Regional Water Control Boards, Local Water Districts) as well as community-based organizations (e.g. Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, California Rural Legal Assistance, the Water Policy Center of the CA Public Policy Institute, the Pacific Institute, Community Water Center, and local water and agriculture coalitions) to develop a successful water justice policy and planning research and extension program.

**Support:** UC Berkeley's Department of ESPM will provide basic support for the position (e.g. office space, supplies, administrative support, internet, phone).

**Other Support:** The Specialist should obtain extramural funds through federal, state, and private entities.

**Location:** The Specialist will be housed in UCB's Department of ESPM, allowing the individual to engage with CNR faculty and many other faculty across campus.

**Developed and Proposed by:** This position has been proposed by UC Berkeley's Department of ESPM. Input has been received from the ANR California Communities and Food Systems Program Team, the ANR Water Quality, Quantity and Security SI, the ANR Sustainable Food Systems SI, UC SAREP, the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW), the California State Water Board, the Resources Legacy Fund, the Environmental Health Investigations Branch of CA Department of Public Health, and the Community Water Center.

