



REPLENISH — *Big Bear* —

What is the Replenish Big Bear Program?

Our local communities depend on groundwater, which is currently supplied only by rain and snow across the Big Bear Valley. For decades, water used indoors has been discharged as wastewater, then treated locally and sent off the mountain to Lucerne Valley.

Replenish Big Bear is a multi-benefit Program designed to support a healthy watershed where ground and surface water can be restored, and recycled water can be put to good use. Within the Program there are multiple planned projects and future opportunities, each managed and funded by different agencies for different purposes. Together, these projects make up the Replenish Big Bear Program and have the potential to strengthen groundwater sustainability, improve habitat, and optimize the use of local infrastructure.

Planned Projects

LEAD - BIG BEAR AREA REGIONAL WASTEWATER AGENCY (BBARWA)

Wastewater Treatment Upgrades Project

BBARWA's Project includes multiple treatment process upgrades using the best available technology to produce over 700 million gallons, or 2,200 acre-feet (AFY) per year of purified water – this is referred to as Program water. These upgrades, including but not limited to, ultrafiltration, reverse osmosis, an advanced oxidation process, and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection, will produce purified water that must meet or exceed all state and federal water quality standards. A new pipeline will deliver the Program water to Stanfield Marsh/Big Bear Lake, providing a new and consistent inflow to be managed by the Big Bear Municipal Water District (BBMWD). Additional upgrades include the installation of 2 megawatts of solar panels on BBARWA property to reduce energy costs and improve valley wide redundancy for emergency power. To optimize costs, the treatment system will be designed to treat average flows. Peak flows that exceed plant capacity will continue to be sent to Lucerne Valley.

LEADS - CITY OF BIG BEAR LAKE, DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER (BBLDWP)

AND BIG BEAR CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT (BBCCSD)

Sand Canyon Groundwater Recharge Project

Some of the Program Water will be stored in Big Bear Lake and can be used for groundwater recharge in coordination with BBMWD. This project will include construction of a new pump station and pipeline to percolate the blended water at Sand Canyon. BBLDWP and BBCCSD hope to minimize costs by utilizing existing infrastructure owned by Big Bear Mountain Resorts. The water recharged at Sand Canyon can later be captured as clean drinkable (aka potable) water by existing BBLDWP wells in the area. BBLDWP will distribute water to BBCCSD through existing interties between their water systems.*

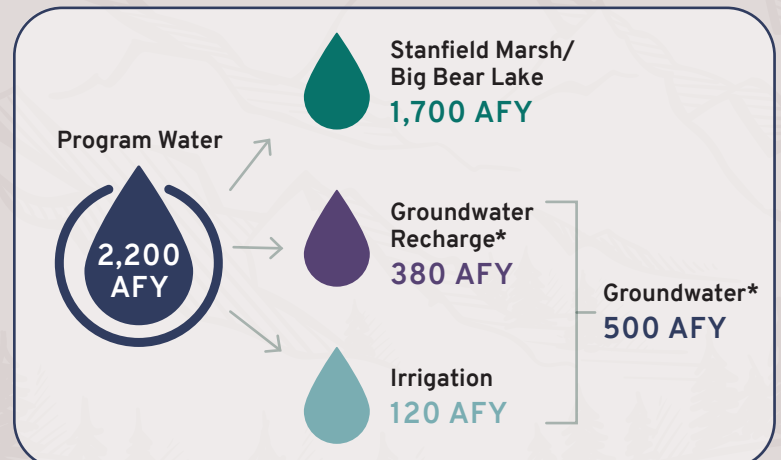
LEAD - BIG BEAR MOUNTAIN RESORTS

Bear Mountain Golf Course Irrigation

Big Bear Mountain Resorts uses groundwater to irrigate the Bear Mountain Golf Course. Using existing infrastructure, the Resorts could use Program water stored in the Lake to irrigate the golf course instead of using groundwater. As a result, more water would stay in the ground for community drinking water use.

BBCCSD

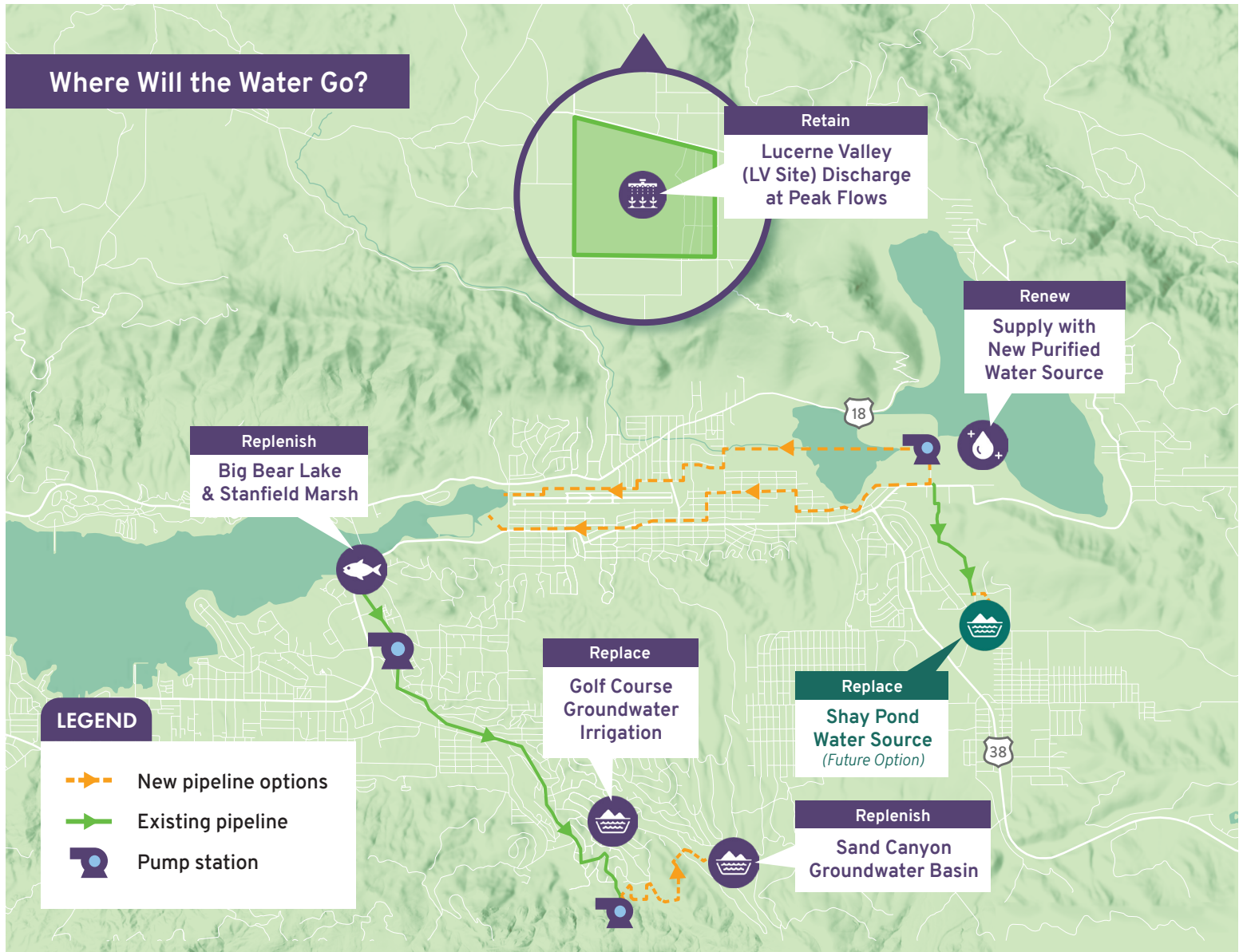
*The BBCCSD Board is also considering, with greater scrutiny, a potential project option for groundwater recharge at the previously proposed Greenspot site in Erwin Lake. If implemented, this project would redirect some of the flow from Stanfield Marsh/Big Bear Lake to Greenspot for increased groundwater recharge.



Future Opportunities

Shay Pond

Currently, potable groundwater is put into Shay Pond to support habitat for the endangered Unarmored Threespine Stickleback fish. In the future, a pipeline extension from BBARWA could deliver Program water to Shay Pond, sustaining ecological requirements and keeping more potable water available for the community.



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Current as of August 2025

PROGRAM TEAM

The Program Team is the Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency (BBARWA), the Big Bear Municipal Water District (BBMWD), the City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power, and the Big Bear City Community Services District (BBCCSD). All the agencies have been part of the Program since the inception.

