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Mr. Howitt is professor emeritus in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, member of the faculty of the Center for Watershed Sciences at the University of California-Davis, where he taught since 1975. He is also a principal economist at ERA Economics and is the Steyer Fellow at Public Policy Institute of California's Water Policy Center. He also is a fellow of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association.

Mr. Howitt's research interests are in disaggregated economic modeling, market mechanisms and dynamic stochastic methods applied to water resources. He has co-authored three books on California water, and recently completed a report on economic impacts of the 2014 and 2015 drought for the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the Governor's Drought Task Force.