



MWD

METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

8-6

September 30, 1997

To: Board of Directors (Water Planning and Resources Committee--Action)
From: General Manager JR Woodvaska
Submitted by: Debra C. Man, Chief Debra C. Man
Planning and Resources
Subject: Approve Principles for Completion of the Friant-Kern Water Transfer Program.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Approve the Principles of Agreement between the Friant Water Users Authority, Central Valley Water Coalition, Arvin-Edison Water Storage District, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California concerning the Friant-Kern Water Transfer Program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the June 1996 Board meeting, the General Manager was given the authority to complete the regulatory process and to implement the Friant-Kern Water Transfer Program. Subsequently on October 28, Arvin-Edison and Metropolitan filed an application with the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to transfer water pursuant to the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA). Concerns regarding the program arose from members of the Friant Water Users Authority and the Central Valley Water Coalition during the subsequent NEPA public review period for the application. Ensuing discussions were held between the parties which facilitated an understanding of their respective positions and provided an opportunity to resolve the outstanding differences. As a result of these discussions, Principles of Agreement were developed that provide a clear understanding of the issues involved and established the criteria through which water transfer programs will be supported in the San Joaquin Valley.

In order to fulfill these Principles of Agreement, the Friant-Kern Water Transfer Program has been modified. The modified program will continue to allow Metropolitan to meet its dry year requirements. At the same time, the concerns of the Friant Water Users Authority and the Central Valley Water Coalition have been resolved and they are now able to join Arvin-Edison and Metropolitan in support of the program.

DETAILED REPORT

Metropolitan's Integrated Resources Plan identified the need for 200,000 to 300,000 acre-feet of water transfers by 2010. To avoid potential supply shortages and to ensure reliability, staff has been pursuing water transfer/banking programs within several geographic regions in the Central Valley. One of these regions, served by the Friant unit of the CVP (located along the easterly edge of the San Joaquin Valley), is projected to supply a significant portion of these dry year supplies. At the present time, approximately two-thirds of the 2010 dry year needs will be met with the implementation of Friant-Kern Transfer Program in conjunction with the existing Semitropic Program.

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The Principles of Agreement cover seven basic areas of water transfer policy and require that all future programs must result in: (1) Net water benefit to the Southern San Joaquin Valley and Metropolitan; (2) No expansion of existing Friant Division place of use; (3) Access to a new water supply for Metropolitan; (4) No adverse water supply or cost impacts to Southern San Joaquin Valley water interests; (5) Permanent benefits to Arvin-Edison; (6) No land fallowing for the primary purpose of transferring water outside of the Southern San Joaquin Valley, and (7) No adverse environmental impacts. To meet these basic criteria, a modified water transfer program has been developed. The modified program involves the exchange of CVP water with other water agencies located within the Central Valley prior to transferring water supplies to Metropolitan. This modified program will enable Metropolitan to meet its water transfer goals and at the same time alleviate the concerns of the Friant Water Users Association and the Central Valley Water Coalition. A final agreement amongst appropriate parties to implement these principles will be negotiated and presented to your Board for approval.

All required environmental documentation for the program has been completed. With Reclamation approval of the transfer/exchange arrangements involved in the modified program, all required implementation measures will be in-place. To expedite the storage and return capabilities of the program, a phased implementation process is being undertaken. This phased approach will enable Arvin-Edison to immediately bank water for Metropolitan and provide the funding for development of additional return facilities.

As outlined above, the agreement provides a new source of water to Metropolitan at a cost-effective rate that is within the approved program budgetary objectives. The modified program also provides clear benefits to the San Joaquin Valley, to Arvin-Edison, and to Metropolitan. It is anticipated that the Metropolitan/Arvin-Edison agreement will be completed in October 1997 and that the program will begin to function in the forth coming 1997/1998 water year.

DR:jpa

Attachment(s)

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