

• Water Resource Management September 2005 Activity Report

Summary

The following is a summary of Water Resource Management Group key activities for the month of September 2005.

Detailed Report

Planning

Pacific Institute Report on Conservation - Metropolitan staff is currently reviewing *California Water 2030: An Efficient Future*, a report by the Pacific Institute outlining a "High Efficiency Scenario" for water use in California. The report is a reaction to the California Department of Water Resources' draft California Water Plan (B-160). It claims DWR's water use projections, "Have never included a vision of a truly water-efficient future." The Pacific Institute report concludes that by 2030, total water use could be reduced by 20 percent from today's levels.

The report acknowledges the "High-Efficiency Scenario" is a possibility, not a prediction. The report discusses many actions for water agencies to adopt. Metropolitan has already implemented many of the actions. The report also lists other state actions to be taken in the following categories:

- Eliminate pricing policies that subsidize the inefficient use of water.
- Promote the use of water-efficient technologies in urban and agricultural sectors.
- Support water use transfers while protecting rural communities.
- Expand educational programs on water use and water efficiency.

Staff will continue review of the report and may report additional information, if necessary.

Colorado River

Palo Verde Irrigation District Fallowing Program – Consistent with the business plan, the program is being implemented through the processing of interim and long-term land fallowing agreements. Combined, these programs are expected to provide Metropolitan over 85,000 acre-feet per year in calendar years 2005 and 2006. Processing of long-term landowner agreements continues with 92 percent of enrolled acres having entered or closed escrow. The remaining long-term agreements are expected to enter into escrow in the near future, and all escrows are expected to close by year-end, with the exception of two escrows dealing with federal lands that will require additional time to close. Under the long-term agreements, Metropolitan made a fallowing call for 12,000 acres per year for the two contract years extending from August 1, 2006 through July 31, 2008. We anticipate this will result in 55,000 acre-feet of saved water per year made available to Metropolitan during calendar year 2007.

State Water Project

Tejon Ranch Property – At the September meeting of the Water Planning, Quality and Resources Committee, a request was made to determine who holds title to the land that the California Aqueduct crosses near the Edmonston Pumping Plant. The California Department of Water Resources holds title to the land for the existing aqueduct and pumping plant facilities. DWR has acquired additional parcels from Tejon Ranch for construction of the Tehachapi East Afterbay facility and mitigation lands for that facility. It is also Metropolitan's understanding that Tejon Ranch is pursuing easements from DWR regarding Caltrans and minor State Water Project utility access to develop its property.

Board Report (Water Resource Management September 2005 Activity Report)

Conservation

Incentive Rate Review - In September, staff had a third meeting with the member agencies on the conservation incentive review. The meeting produced consensus on a framework for the incentive involving a revised avoided cost study and its application to several parts of a comprehensive incentive and building code-based approach to conservation. Parts of this framework were presented to the Water Quality, Planning and Resource Committee in August. In October, staff has scheduled the final meeting of the incentive review working group to discuss two remaining issues. Results of the review are scheduled to be brought to the Board by the end of 2005.

AB 2717 Task Force Status - The AB2717 Taskforce Report is in draft form for public comment. AB2717 (Laird, 2004) sponsored by the San Diego County Water Authority, established a Taskforce to make recommendations for improvements to landscape efficiency in California. The Taskforce (including a Metropolitan representative) met over 35 times as the Taskforce and in work groups to develop 40 recommendations in a draft report released September 19, 2005. Public meetings to take comment on the draft report were held on September 26 in Sacramento and September 28 in Los Angeles. Under the legislation, final recommendations are due to the Governor and legislature by December 31, 2005. A current draft of the Taskforce Report is available at www.cuwcc.org.

Regional Resources

United States Bureau of Reclamation Grants – In August, the USBR notified Metropolitan that two water conservation proposals were selected to receive grant funding totaling \$100,000 under the Water Conservation Field Services Program. USBR will provide \$50,000 to conduct marketing analyses to better understand market drivers, barriers and motivation for participating in rebate programs for residential and commercial sectors. As Metropolitan's conservation programs evolve into other areas, research findings will be used to improve current programs and ensure prudent approaches to future program development and implementation. Information will be used to develop research-based recommendations for future programs and improvements. Additionally, USBR will provide \$50,000 to complete conversion of Metropolitan's professional and residential landscape irrigation efficiency training to web-based instruction. The next step is to execute federal assistance agreements for both projects.

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