



- Colorado River Management Report

Summary

This Report provides a summary of the activities related to the Colorado River during November.

Detailed Report

Metropolitan Implements Coachella Reimbursement Agreement

Following board approval in November, Metropolitan and Coachella Valley Water District executed an agreement whereby Coachella reduced its use of Colorado River water by 8,000 acre-feet for 2009 in exchange for payments equaling \$66 per acre-foot of rescheduled water. Metropolitan has revised its water delivery schedule to include this additional supply. While this amount of water will not affect the quantity of Colorado River water this year, it will increase the amount of water Metropolitan stores in Lake Mead by 8,000 acre-feet. That supply will be available for delivery next year.

Metropolitan Submits First Payment for Operation of Yuma Desalting Plant

In November, Metropolitan provided the Bureau of Reclamation with \$3.3 million to obtain necessary energy, chemical, and labor contracts to begin operation of the Yuma Desalting Plant. Under the current schedule, the Desalting Plant would begin operation in May of 2010. As part of a binational agreement to protect the environment in Mexico, Reclamation has begun delivering additional brackish water to the Cienega de Santa Clara wetlands in Mexico. The United States has committed to provide 10,000 acre-feet of additional flow to the wetlands either before or during the pilot operation of the Desalting Plant. Mexico and environmental groups have committed to develop and provide 10,000 acre-feet of water each to the Cienega wetlands.

Palo Verde Valley Community Improvement Fund Ready to Provide Grants

For the last several years, the Palo Verde Valley Community Improvement Fund has been developing a process whereby funds can be distributed to the community to provide economic development for the area. These steps included developing a business plan, obtaining non-profit status permits, hiring an executive director, and finally, in November, approving a manual that provides criteria for distributing loans and grants for the community. When Metropolitan approved the Palo Verde Land Management and Crop Rotation Program in 2003, it also provided \$6 million to the community to offset any potential impacts associated with the water transfer. A volunteer board was established to oversee how the money would be distributed to the Palo Verde Valley. Staff participates on that board as a non-voting member and has helped them get through the necessary steps to be able to fund programs. With the approval of the loan operations manual, a formal mechanism exists to provide loans and grants to the community. Projects providing the highest economic growth and development for the region will be given priority for funding. Metropolitan is not involved in any decisions regarding how the money will be spent.

First Phase of Baja Desalination Feasibility Study Nearly Complete

Earlier this year, Metropolitan, along with Southern Nevada Water Authority, Central Arizona Project, and San Diego County Water Authority agreed to provide a total of \$100,000 to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of partnering with Mexico to build and operate a seawater desalination facility near Rosarito Beach in Baja California. The study began during the summer, and staffs from the agencies were given a briefing in November.