

**Colorado River Citizens Forum
Imperial Irrigation District Board Room
El Centro, CA
December 17, 2014
*Tentative Meeting Notes**

Board Members in attendance:

Kevin Eatherly, Yuma Area Agricultural Council
Roberta McDermott, US Natural Resources Conservation Service, Retired
Bruce Kuhn, Imperial Irrigation District
Cary Meister, Conservation Chair, Yuma Audubon
Glenna Barrett, So. Low Desert Resource Conservation & Development Council
Ronda Aguerro, Quechan Indian Tribe
Tom Davis, Yuma County Water User's Association
Tomas Sanchez, James Davey & Associates
Yazmin Arrellano Torres, City of Brawley
John Hernandez, Our Roots Multi-Cultural Center
Alex Steenstra, Northern Arizona University, Yuma

Board Members Absent:

Chuck Cullom, Central Arizona Project

USIBWC Staff in attendance:

Anna Morales, Area Operations Manager, Yuma Office

MXIBWC Staff in attendance:

Juan Rios Moreno, CILA-Mexicali

Members of the public in attendance:

Chris Thomson, Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD)
David Hamner, CVWD
Tina Mozelewski, Arizona Game and Fish Department
Carol Hann, El Centro resident
Darrin Simon
Orson Bevins, Quechan Tribe
Max J. Castillo, Castillo Construction Co.
David Bradshaw, Imperial Irrigation District
Eric Urban, CVWD
Dan Ruiz, CVWD
Raul Aguirre, CVWD
Juan Leal, Yuma County
John Huey
Andy Horne, Imperial County
Tomas Oliva
Daniel Bunk, Bureau of Reclamation
William I. DuBois

Welcome and Introductions

Anna Morales opened meeting and introduced first speaker.

Imperial Irrigation District Equitable Distribution Plan – Tina Shields, Interim Water Department Manager/Colorado River Resources Manager, Imperial Irrigation District

Presentation available at: http://www.ibwc.gov/Files/CF_CO_IV_Equitable_Distribution_121714.pdf

Mrs. Shields provided a brief background on the state's entitlement for California's 4.4 million acre-feet apportionment of Colorado River water with the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA).

Senior water rights are:

1. Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID)
2. Yuma Project
3. Imperial Irrigation District (IID)
4. Metropolitan Water District (MWD)

Under the QSA, IID agreed to implement water conservation programs, including the following program from 2003 to 2017 and conservation program from 2008 to 2047. Objective is to conserve water by improving efficiency in the delivery system and on the farms. Farmers do very well on their part and are very efficient.

IID's water supply and service area comprises of 3,100,000 acre-feet of annual Colorado River consumptive use entitlement.

All American Canal (AAC) connects Imperial Valley to the Colorado River. Canal is 82 miles long, 15,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) capacity, 23 miles lined in 2010 which conserves 67,700 acre-feet per year. Delivers water to Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) via Coachella Main Canal.

Irrigation and Drainage system comprises of 148 miles of main canals, 1,442 miles of laterals and 1,457 miles of surface drains.

Permanent crops make up less than 4% of the total acreage, garden crops account for nearly 19% of total acreage and field crops account for over 77% of total acreage. Total acreage of crops at IID is 457,695.

IID's annual water entitlement is 3.1 million acre-feet (maf). From 2003 to 2013 IID had overruns of 263,435 acre-feet (af) which has to be paid back and an under use of 884,961 af which is not credited to IID for the overruns.

IID's consumptive use and reductions are comprised of:

- CVWD water conservation and transfer agreement of 103,000 acre-feet/year.
- San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) water conservation and transfer agreement of 200,000 AF/yr
- AAC Lining project 67,700 AF/yr of conserved seepage water transferred to SDCWA & San Luis Rey parties. Construction was completed in 2010.
- IID miscellaneous PPRs 11,500 AF/yr
- MWD water conservation and transfer agreement of 105,500 AF/yr, an extension of the 1988 agreement.
- Salton Sea mitigation following 800,00 af (2003-2017).

Equitable Distribution History:

- In 2006, IID conducted an evaluation of where water user demand exceeds supply.
- Plan was developed and authorized by IID Board of Directors utilizing a straight line method for years that trigger a supply/demand imbalance (SDI)

- Through 2012, the equitable distribution plan (EDP) utilized a historical based methodology to predict SDI
- In 2013, EDP was revised to facilitate timely implementation as an annual system of apportionment by eliminating the probability analysis SDI trigger and the discretionary nature of the apportionment issuance.

EDP Agricultural apportionment:

- In May 2013, IID issued a mid-year apportionment and implemented a pilot program and utilized a straight line methodology to issue a pro-rated 3.7 af/ac apportionment.
- In 2014, IID modified the apportionment methodology to address grower concerns and implemented a hybrid straight line/historical use apportionment that ranged from 2.86 -7.86 af.
- 2015 will utilize the same apportionment.

2014-2015 Hybrid apportionment:

- 50% of a field's historical use calculated using the 2003-2012 ten-year average, excluding the high and low years.
- Total water available to agriculture lands, less certain administrative reserves and the water attributed to the historical use component, divided equally among the eligible agricultural acreage.
- Apportionments range from 2.86 af/ac to 7.86 af/ac.

Eligible agricultural acreage are cropland, greater than 5 acres in size, connected to the IID delivery system and current on water availability & water delivery charges. There are 453,000 eligible agricultural acres.

Farm Unit under the Water Card (Certificate of Ownership) process - an agricultural water user can aggregate some or all of the fields (leased or owned) by the water user. The purpose of a Farm Unit is to allow an agricultural water user to order water on any field within the farm unit as long as there is a remaining water balance for the farm unit greater than the water order.

The apportionment and any transfers of water apportioned to a field within farm units or through the Agricultural Water Clearinghouse are only applicable to the relevant calendar year and do not create any rights to that apportionment in future years.

Agricultural Water Clearinghouse (AWC):

- The AWC provides the mechanism for balancing and adjusting users' apportionment after the initial acceptance.
- No charge for use
- Water must be paid up-front when any apportionment is transferred, not when delivered.
- Transferee to receive a credit for the pre-payment of the obligation when the apportionment is either used or transferred to another user (via the AWC).
- Water from the AWC is used after any other water available in the Farm Unit.

AWC Monthly Process:

- The 20th of the month is the deadline for offers/request
- Requests are prepared
- AWC Board reviews requests and approves before the end of the month.
- Water Users are notified
- Accepted offers transferred
- Water user pay obligation within 5 business days of notification
- Apportionment transferred from AWC once payment is processed
- If by 20th of the month, requests approved but unpaid are cancelled and corrections are made to accepted offers.

- Water from AWC does not have to be used the month it is requested. It can be purchased in advance of when it will be needed.

On November 4, 2014, the IID Board declared a 2014 Apportionment Take-or-Pay Relief Amnesty Period:

- A 15-day period from November 17th through December 1st, which all offers of water received by the AWC (up to 7% of water user apportionment) will be accepted by IID, thereby relieving the water users of payment for that water on the take-or-pay basis.

2014 Overrun Payback Program:

- Payback obligations will be calculated based on the negative account balance of each farm unit that exceeds its apportionment
- The cost for IID's 2014 overrun payback program will reflect IIDS's actual conservation costs for the relevant payback and/or to offset any excess 2014 conservation utilized to reduce or eliminate a 2014 overrun. Current IID conservation costs range from \$175/af to \$285/af

2014 End of year procedures:

- No denial of water delivery services in 2014
- All farm units that deplete their apportionments and need additional water are required to go through the AWC.

2014 Year end EDP Processes:

- In November, AWC processed all offers to return/transfer water.
- All offers remaining in the AWC after the November distribution were considered for take-or-pay relief along with all the Clearinghouse Notice of Transfer (CNT) submitted November 17 – December 1; IID to accept all offers within the 7% limitation.
- Weekly mailings to all accounts with negative account balances began last week.

EDP Weblinks:

- IID website: www.iid.com
- EDP website: <http://www.iid.com/index.aspx?page=141>
- EDP forms: www.iid.com/edpforms
- AWC status reports: <http://iid.com/index.aspx?page=669>

Question and Answers (Q&A):

Q: Are there charges to facilitate these services?

A: No additional fees

Q: Does the overrun have to be paid back?

A: If IID runs over conservation, will sell conserved water to keep them whole. Will not deny water to any users. Farmers are very efficient.

Imperial Irrigation District Farm Unit Fallowing Program – David Bradshaw, Assistant Water Department Manager, Planning & Technical Services, Imperial Irrigation District

Presentation available at: http://www.ibwc.gov/Files/CF_CO_Irr_Dist_Fallow_121714.pdf

Purpose:

- Fulfill the annual water transfer delivery schedule to the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) and the Salton Sea mitigation delivery schedule associated with this transfer
- Manage IID's annual 3.1 million acre-foot Colorado River consumptive use cap
- Pay back previous years' overuse or inadvertent overruns of Colorado River water

Fallowing Schedule:

- On-Farm fallowing 2003-2016
- Salton Sea mitigation fallowing 2003-2017

Farm Unit Fallowing Program:

- Approved by Board March 25, 2014
- Farm Units are given a fallowing target based on potentially eligible acreage
- Farm Unit Manager can voluntarily request more or less than target
- Payment Rate \$175/AF

Farm Unit Fallowing Eligibility Criteria:

- Previous 3-year irrigation history for commercial crop production with EDP allocation payment cap
- Whole fields with defined boundaries - Minimum 20 acre partial field allowed to fulfill remaining balance of fallowed water target
- Multiple fields and/or shared head gates must have verifiable water records
- Charges for delivered water and water availability subject to IID's Regulation #11 must not be delinquent.
- Each field must have current and valid water card
- 3 out of 5 year participation limit for fallowed land (37 months allowed)
- Fields with more than 37 months fallowing in previous 5 years are eligible to receive farm unit payment, but not eligible to fallow
- Each proposed field must remain zoned agriculture for the contracted fallowing period
- Any Fallowing Party who has been involved in the breach of a previous Program may be deemed ineligible

Program Compliance & Verification:

- TruePoint crop code revised to reflect Fallowing Program (FP) participation, effectively eliminates ability to order water on FP fields
- Delivery gates locked (where possible) or physical block installed/verified for all FP fields
- Quarterly field inspections/photo verifications by IID staff
- Semi-annual field and date validation (5% of FP acreage) by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Temporary Land Conversion Fallowing Program (TLCFP):

- The TLCFP was approved by the IID Board of Directors on May 8, 2012
- TLCFP fallowing contracts covenant that the property will be returned to agricultural production after the term of the program/project
- Participation preserves landowner's future right to water service and maintains a history of agricultural water use
- TLCFP receives credit for 5.1 AF per acre less water used for operational and dust control purposes, not to exceed the annual apportionment volume the land would have received as agricultural land

Program	AF*	Acres	\$ Million	Fields
2003-2004 FP	38,641	5,764	1.8	69
2004-2005 FP	67,273	12,127	3.4	118
2005-2006 FP	69,764	11,676	3.2	105
2006-2007 FP	96,395	17,984	5.3	169
2007-2008 FP	89,512	16,172	6.2	150
2008-2009 FP	66,406	12,779	5.4	120
2009-2010 FP**	99,360	17,854	7.9	191

*In-Valley Volumes

**Includes 1 and 2 year program

Program	In-Valley AF	Acres	\$ Million	Fields
2010-2011 FP**	90,344	16,651	6.9	175
2011-2012 FP	29,784	5,796	2.1	62
2012 TLCFP	5,288	1,386	--	11
2012-13 9 Month FP	8,977	2,024	1.0	24
2012-2013 WFL FP	17,786	3,201	--	31
2012-2013 FP	161,603	28,659	19.4	300
2013 TLCFP	30,230	6,859	--	70
2013 CY WFL FP	5,079	536	--	13
2013 CY FP	9,442	1,291	1.0	16
2013-2014 WFL FP	958	424	--	4
2013-2014 FP	194,020	34,008	22.8	379
2014 CY WFL FP^	29,260	6,606	2.1	67
2014 CY FP^	37,468	6,364	4.3	76
2014-2015 FP^	182,196	32,915	31.8	390
2014 TLCFP	ND	ND	--	ND

ND - Not Determined

^Estimated

** Includes 1 and 2 year programs

Programs Summary from December 1, 2003 to June 30, 2015 (provisional):

- \$124.6 million (paid to participants)
- 248,046 total fallowed acres
- 1,364,508 acre-feet water yield (in-valley)
- 1,479,311 acre-feet water yield (at-river)
- As of 11/12/2014, TLCFP at 34,722 AF (in-valley)

Fallowing Program Details can be found at <http://www.iid.com/fallowingprograms>

Question and Answers (Q&A):

Q: Has there been a need to use water for dust control?

A: No, not yet.

Q: For the solar panels acres, is there any water needed for the operations?

A: For clearing and construction, 20 af for 1000 acres.

Q: Is Brock Reservoir on line this year?

A: Yes

Q: Are solar fields only leased for 3-5 years?

A: No, they can go longer.

Q: What happens to Salton Sea when fallowing stops?

A: Despite IID's ongoing mitigation, habitat continues to decline. The 15-year mitigations\ was intended to allow time for the State of California to have an implementation plan by then, but the State has no plan as of yet. IID attempting to get State to comply.

Colorado River Basin State of the System – Daniel Bunk, Supervisory Hydrologist, Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region

Presentation available at: http://www.ibwc.gov/Files/CF_CO_Reclamation_Basin_Update_121714.pdf

Overview:

- 16.5 million acre-feet (maf) of Colorado River water allocated annually
 - 7.5 maf each to Upper and Lower Basins
 - 1.5 maf to Mexico
- 13 to 14.5 maf of consumptive use on average annually (includes Upper Basin, Lower Basin and Mexico)
- Operations and water deliveries governed by the “Law of the River”
- 60 maf of storage in the basin – of this total storage, approximately 50.2 maf of combined storage in Lake Powell (24.3) and Lake Mead (25.9 maf).
- 14.9 maf average annual inflow in Upper Basin over the past 100 years
- 1.3 maf average annual inflow in Lower Basin
- Inflows are highly variable year-to-year

State of the System:

- As of December 15, 2014:
 - Lake Powell 48% full or 11.7 maf at elevation 3,600 ft; Lake Mead 40% full or 10.5 maf at elevation 1,086 ft; total system storage 50% full or 29.7 maf.
- Inflow into Powell has been below average 12 of the past 15 years (2000-2014)
- The period from 2000-2014 was the driest 15-year period in over 100 years of historical record
- 2011 was the wettest year; 2002, 2012 and 2013 were the driest years on record.

Projected system conditions:

- Annual Operating Plan (AOP) on the current year's operations and the upcoming year's projected operations to be published this month.
- Under the 2007 Interim Guidelines:
 - August projections are used as the basis for decision for Lake Powell and Lake Meads *annual* operations for the coming year; April projections are also important due to potential adjustments to Lake Powell's annual operation at the higher reservoir levels
- 2015 AOP available at: <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/aop/AOP15.pdf>
- Current status and projected monthly operation available at: <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/24mo.pdf>
- Operational tiers for water/calendar year 2015 are determined with the August 2014 24-month study. January 1, 2015 projection for Lake Powell elevation is 3,596.62 ft; Lake Mead 1,083.37 ft.

- As of December 16, 2014 with 115 of 116 sites reporting, the basinwide snow water equivalent is 83% of median.
- End of water year 2015 projections (December 24-month study most probable inflow scenario) Lake Powell projected to be elevation 3,606.17 ft, 12.35 maf in storage or 51% of capacity; Lake Mead projected to be 1,075.32 ft, 9.63 maf in storage or 37% of capacity
- Percent of traces with Lower Basin Shortage through 2019 (projections from the October 24-month study): 25% in 2016; 53% in 2017; 62% in 2018; 61% in 2019

New Era of Limits:

- Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study
 - ✓ Completed in 2012 – object was to assess future water supply and demand imbalances over the next 50 years
 - ✓ A *Moving Forward* process initiated in May 2013.
 - Work Groups Led by multi stakeholders
 - The Agricultural Conservation, Production, and Water Transfers Workgroup will collect information and prepare a report that quantifies agricultural conservation and transfers of Colorado River water to date and plans for future conservation and transfers.
 - Environmental/Recreational Flows Workgroup will build on the Study's assessment of environmental and recreational flows and look for potential solutions that protect or improve ecological and recreational resources while supporting other management goals and decisions.
 - The Municipal & Industrial Conservation and Reuse Workgroup will collect information from municipalities relying on Colorado River water and prepare a report that quantifies each conservation and reuse savings from 1980 to date. Then they will assess projected future water savings and prepare a report documenting this information.
 - State leads the water banking, water supply augmentation and watershed management
 - Reclamation leads the Climate science, data & tool development, Tribal water
 - *Moving Forward* Phase 1 Report is scheduled to be published soon
 - ✓ More information <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/crbstudy.html>
- The federal government is working with water agencies to develop a 5-year pilot program beginning in 2015 to help ease drought conditions
 - ✓ Memorandum of Understanding was signed last week
 - ✓ Strategies may include voluntary reductions in water use to help protect against declining Lake Mead elevations
- System Conservation Pilot Program, was entered into on July 30, 2014
 - ✓ Includes \$11million to fund new efforts resulting in water savings in Lakes Powell and Mead that benefit all users of the Colorado River system during the ongoing drought

Questions and Answer (Q&A):

Q: Are there new users coming in?

A: Not in the lower basin.

Q: Does the weather pattern have an effect on the elevation at Lake Powell?

A: With recent rain events, hasn't affected the elevation much. Snowmelt runoff would be seen possibly in late July.

Suggested Future Agenda Items

1. Status or update on *Moving Forward* Phase I report – Reclamation

2. Update on the Yuma Mesa fallowing program – Perri Benemelis, Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRDR)
3. Update on the Restoration areas of Mittry Lake and Betty's Kitchen – John MacDonald, Bureau of Land Management

If there are other issues/projects you would like to hear, please email the USBWC at anna.morales@ibwc.gov or sally.spener@ibwc.gov

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for March 11, 2015 from 4-6pm in Yuma, AZ location TBD.

*Meeting notes are tentative and summarize in draft the contents and discussion of Citizens Forum Meetings. While these notes are intended to provide a general overview of Citizens Forum Meetings, they may not necessarily be accurate or complete, and may not be representative of USIBWC policy or positions.