



IMPERIAL IRWMP

Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

Water Forum Meeting Notes

October 21, 2010, 9:00 –11:30 AM

Participants: See the attached sign in sheet.

Summary of Action Items

1. Prepare draft PMT letter of support for IID action for early delivery of mitigation water to the Salton Sea; circulate to Forum and Farm Bureau for comment; finalize and send to IID Board of Directors, Imperial County Board of Supervisors and USBR. (Zidar)
2. Forum members to review Water Supply Technical Memorandum and provide questions to Tina Shields (tshields@iid.com) by November 10, 2010, to be addressed at next Forum meeting.
3. Forum members to provide review and comments on the Demand Technical Memorandum by November 10, to Matt Zidar (mzidar@geiconsultants.com) for further discussion at next Demand Management Work Group; finalize document.
4. Provide information on operation of Brock Reservoir at an upcoming Forum Meeting. (Shields)
5. Provide longer-term chart showing IID's historical use of Colorado River water. (Shields)
6. Provide direction, clarify assignment and provide schedules to Projects and Demand Management work groups for review of RMS; make findings and recommendations. (Zidar)

Summary of Decisions

- The Forum consensus decisions was that: 1) the RWMG be placed in abeyance until the IRWMP is ready to be adopted; 2) the composition of the RWMG will be revisited by the Forum prior to activation, 3) the Forum decision process continue to be through Stakeholder consensus as defined in the Charter, but that a simple majority vote by the Stakeholders be used when consensus cannot be obtained; and 4) cards for each Stakeholder group be used during the vote count.

Meeting Notes

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

Dale Schafer welcomed everyone, and then proceeded to introductions and agenda review.

Current Events- Stakeholder News

Tina Shields reported on the status of the 35,000 AF of 2010 QSA Salton Sea mitigation water deliveries and 41,250 AF of additional Colorado River water currently being delivered to the Salton Sea for storage purposes. This additional 41,250 AF of storage water will be used in 2011 and the first half of 2012 to

meet QSA environmental mitigation water requirements. The water will be diverted as a part of IID's 2010 Colorado River consumptive use entitlement, as a means to both address the uncertainty caused by the QSA litigation and facilitate the long-term viability of the QSA agreements and water transfers. IID's efforts, if successful, will reduce environmental mitigation costs by an estimated \$6.3 million dollars during the 2011-2012 fiscal years. Discussion ensued and recent media coverage as well as Metropolitan Water District (MWD) resistance to IID's efforts was noted. The US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has communicated their desire to facilitate a discussion between the California water agencies in order to work towards a consensus position within the state, although ultimately Reclamation may be required to make a determination in order to finalize the year end water accounting records. Andy Horne noted County support for the IID position as indicated in the Board of Supervisor's resolution.

Dale requested a show of hands in support of the IID efforts. There was general support from the Forum for IID's position. It was proposed that a draft letter from the Program Management Team be prepared on the Water Forum's behalf to convey the Water Forum's position, and that the draft be circulated to the Forum prior to sending to the IID Board, Board of Supervisors and USBR. Mark McBroom, Farm Bureau representative, stated that he would be neutral until the Farm Bureau board could take action. John Pierre Menvielle requested that the Farm Bureau place this on its board agenda as an item for discussion next month. Mark McBroom stated that he would do so.

Action: Prepare draft PMT letter for circulation to Forum and Farm Bureau for comment and then forward to IID Board, Board of Supervisors and Reclamation. (Zidar)

Andy Horne asked about the status of the Warren H. Brock Reservoir operation. Tina clarified that Brock Reservoir is being test filled but is not yet operational. This project is funded by MWD, Southern Nevada Water Authority, and Central Arizona Project through the Central Arizona Water Conservation District. IID is not a partner in the funding but will be responsible for the coordinated operation of the facility. The off-stream storage reservoir provides operational flexibility to capture water when there is a disparity between water that is ordered and what is delivered to users in the Lower Colorado River Region, in particular during storm events. Water conserved at Brock Reservoir will consist mainly of unused or rejected agriculture water orders that would otherwise flow to Mexico as excess flows (meaning this water is not considered a part of Mexico's 1.5 million acre-foot annual Colorado River water entitlement). The conserved water in Brock Reservoir will be used by IID to supplement Reclamation's releases from Hoover Dam intended to satisfy IID's daily water order. Additional information was requested regarding the project and the volume of water to be managed.

Action: Provide additional information on the operations of Brock Reservoir at the next Forum Meeting.

Matt Zidar reported that the Planning Grant was submitted. The due date was September 28, 2010.

To date, the resolution of support for the IRWMP goals and objectives and the Charter has been acted on by IID, County of Imperial and City of Imperial. Cities of Westmorland, Holtville and El Centro have scheduled or are scheduling action.

Revisit Water Forum Charter

Dale Schafer reviewed the Water Forum member categories of stakeholders and interested parties, and presented the updated stakeholder list. Dale explained that, at the prior Water Forum meeting, consensus was not achieved regarding composition of the RWMG. The Charter Work Group recommendation was not formally acted on; and an alternative RWMG composition was proposed, which added a community-based member and a special district (water-related) member to the work group recommendation.

When consensus was not obtained, the Forum was faced with a catch 22 situation: consensus was not forthcoming, Forum voting procedures were not defined in the Charter, and there was no RWMG in place to take action. In the interest of time, the proposed revision to the RWMG was put to a vote of the Forum membership. A vote of 10 to eight was counted in favor of the alternative nine-member RWMG membership. This RWMG nine-member alternative is in the Charter. After the meeting, concerns were expressed regarding use of a voting process not defined in the Charter, which Forum members voted, and, consequently, the validity of the result.

Dale explained that, for these reasons, the Project Management Team (PMT) discussed ways to empower the Forum to better resolve conflicts when consensus is not achieved. Marlene Best presented the PMT proposal for moving forward. Marlene and Tina Shields explained that the purpose of this approach is to get on with substantive discussion on how to manage water, conserve financial resources, and develop the IRWMP so it can be completed and funding can be obtained from the state.

The recommendation was that: 1) the RWMG be placed in abeyance until the IRWMP is ready to be adopted; 2) the composition of the RWMG will be revisited by the Forum prior to activation, 3) the Forum decision process continue to be through Stakeholder consensus as defined in the Charter, but that a simple majority vote by the Stakeholders be used when consensus cannot be obtained; and 4) cards for each Stakeholder group be used during the vote count.

Luis Olmedo wanted to make certain that the RWMG composition in the Charter (result of Forum membership vote the September 9, 2010, meeting) would include representatives of the community-based groups and special districts. The revised composition acted on by Forum members was in the Charter forwarded to the Stakeholders with the request for a resolution of support. There was discussion and the process for activation and formation the RWMG was confirmed. The Forum will revisit the composition prior to activation and appointment of members.

Decision: The Forum consensus decisions was that: 1) the RWMG be placed in abeyance until the IRWMP is ready to be adopted; 2) the composition of the RWMG will be revisited by the Forum prior to activation, 3) the Forum decision process continue to be through Stakeholder consensus as defined in the Charter, but that a simple majority vote by the Stakeholders be used when consensus cannot be obtained; and 4) cards for each Stakeholder group be used during the vote count.

Information/Discussion – Water Balance (supply/demand) Presentations

Supply: “What’s going on the Colorado River and in the Imperial Region?” - Tina Shields

Tina made a presentation on available Colorado River supplies for the Imperial Region. She summarized information presented in *Draft IID Plan*, Appendix C: Technical Memorandum (TM) 2.1- Document Existing Colorado River Water Supplies for the Imperial Irrigation District (July 24, 2009). This is a final document. It is recommended that the Forum members review the Supply TM and submit any questions to Tina Shields (tshields@iid.com). Questions will be addressed at the November 2010 Forum meeting. Some of the main points:

- 3.1 Million Acre-Feet (MAF) annual cap on IID entitlement for use on lands served by the All-American Canal in the Imperial Valley resolved historical conflicts on the Colorado River for the term of the QSA.
- Only conserved water (on-farm or systems improvement) is transferred under the agreements.
- In general, if not consumptively used, a contractor’s unused entitlement (outside of conserved and transferred water) is subject to use by junior right holders (i.e., MWD). Water not conserved, transferred, or diverted on an annual basis by a contractor is called an ‘underrun’ and these are lost to the contractor if they cannot be stored.
- Colorado River water use is accounted on an annual (calendar year) basis; for each calendar year any overuse must be paid back in subsequent years; while underuse is lost to the right holder.
- All Colorado River water available to Lower Colorado River Region users is fully appropriated; there are no additional permanent annual supplies of Colorado River water available for new contractors.
- IID has years with underruns, but historical uses for agriculture vary annually and can increase, and even exceed, the full entitlement at any time if there are strong crop markets, changes to crop rotation, or multiple cropping.
- If IID diverts more than its 3.1 MAF cap (including transferred water), these overruns must be paid back.
- The goal is to make best and most effective and efficient use of the available supply.
- Detailed accounting on both the USBR and IID web sites.

Action: Provide longer-term chart showing IID’s historical use of Colorado River water.

Matt noted that the Supply TM is in final form. It is not being circulated for comments, but is intended to inform the Forum regarding the availability of Colorado River water supplies to the region. The purpose of the document is to define baseline or existing conditions, to shape assumptions for the IRWMP, and to support comparison of project alternatives and future scenarios to present conditions. It may also be used by the cities that are required to adopt 2010 Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) consistent with state law. It was noted that existing UWMPs have inconsistent interpretations, as do Water Supply Assessments¹ prepared to support project reviews regarding opportunities and constraints related to use and availability of the imported Colorado River water, and that the IRWMP is a chance to create a

¹ Pursuant to state law, Water Supply Assessments are required of a project applicant in order to document the water sources for a project, identify impacts to current users, and provide information to land use and water agencies during development review.

common understanding of volume of the available water resources. The Supply TM does not include evaluation of groundwater supplies, which will need to be part of the IRWMP analysis.

Questions: What are historic flows to the Salton Sea? What were the historical diversions from the Colorado River before the 3.1 MAF cap?

These and any other written questions received by November 10 will be addressed at the next Forum.

Action: Forum members to review Supply TM and provide questions to Tina Shields (tshields@iid.com) by November 10, 2010.

Current/Forecasted Demand: “Who needs what now and in the future?” - Matt Zidar

Matt presented information from the updated *Draft IID Plan* Technical Memorandum 2.2- Historical and Forecasted Municipal, Commercial, and Industrial Water Demand (August 24, 2010). The purpose of this TM is to document baseline water demands and to forecast potential future demands. This is an important first step in the planning process, to compare the available supply to current and future demands. The difference between available supply and forecasted demands defines the volume of water that needs be developed or managed. The water can be *developed* through investments in capital projects to expand the available supply. Alternately, the existing supply can be *managed* to apportion water for the future demands. Management of the existing supply to meet future demands could include additional conservation by historical uses (agriculture) to meet new demand, or a mechanism to apportion or allocate the available supply (e.g.; transfers or exchanges within the region).

The Demand TM can be used by Imperial Cities that are required to prepare 2010 UWMPs. At minimum, the IRWMP and UWMPs should rely on consistent forecasts of future demands. This will help expedite and streamline future land use decisions.

The Demand TM is a draft document that is to be reviewed. Forum members were requested to review the TM and provide any comments and/or questions to Matt Zidar (mzidar@geiconsultants.com). The comments will be considered in cooperation with the Demand Management Work Group and used to prepare a final demand forecast.

Action: Forum members to provide comments and/or question on the Demand TM by November 10 to Matt Zidar (mzidar@geiconsultants.com) for consideration by the Demand Management Work Group and to finalize the document.

Question: Anisa Divine asked if wetlands mitigation is for impacts to IID drains or the Salton Sea. Matt stated that the wetlands IID created as mitigation under the QSA were to mitigate drain impacts only as covered in the draft Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) for the QSA. As discussed above, water delivered to the Salton Sea is for mitigating impacts of the QSA. This is one of the reasons why we have discussed mitigation banking concepts to resolve impacts on the drains from such conservation activity as recycling/reclaiming wastewater. As a result of legislation adopted in support of the QSA, the state of California assumed responsibility for Salton Sea restoration activities and relieved IID of any additional financial responsibility.

Question: Charlene Wardlow commented that projects are being held up due to lack of water. Tina stated that IID adopted an Interim Water Supply Policy (IWSP) in 2009 for new non-agricultural projects and designated a supply of 25,000 acre-feet for this purpose. IID has issued only one contract under the IWSP, so currently 24,200 AF remain available for new projects. Discussion ensued.

Question: Tom Sephton asked if projects in the pipeline (i.e., being considered now & in the future) will have environmental impacts on the Salton Sea, and how these should be addressed. Discussion ensued. Impacts of current projects to the Salton Sea need to be considered by the lead agency conducting the environmental review and preparing the environmental documents, which are then circulated to responsible agencies (e.g.; California Department of Water Resources (CDWR), California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and the public for review and comment on how the impacts were analyzed and addressed and if appropriate what mitigations are to be included.

Resources Management Strategies, Preliminary Screening

Matt Zidar informed the Forum that the discussion of the Resources Management Strategies (RMS) was kicked off at the work groups on October 20, 2010. CDWR requires that the IRWMP review the RMS in the California Water Plan 2009. The outcome will assist in the prioritization of strategies in the IRWMP that will then be used to configure and integrate projects as appropriate. The work will also help to prioritize IRWMP goals and objectives, establish project evaluation criteria, and institute a regional approach to integrating projects.

Projects Work Group formed two subcommittees: Water Supply RMS and Operational Flexibility/ Water Transfer RMS. Demand Management Work Group is lead by Lorena Ospina, GEI Consultants, Inc. Next meeting dates are listed below (meeting notice, agenda, advance material and location will be emailed):

- Demand Management Work Group- November 17, 10:00- noon.
- Projects Work Group- November 17, 1:30- 3:30 PM

Matt Zidar, Lorena Ospina, and Joseph Long from GEI Consultants, Inc. will be reaching out to the DACs and other agencies to further identify their water supply, water quality and stormwater/flood control needs.

Dale Schafer informed the Forum that once work groups have been formed and assignments started, participant enrollment will close. At this time, please inform the Forum if you are interested in participating on either the Projects Work Group or the Demand Management Work Group. No additional responses occurred at the Forum; however interested parties may inform Anisa Divine (ajdivine@iid.com) before the next work group meeting.

Action: Provide further direction, clarify assignment and provide schedules to Projects Work Group and Demand Management Work Group to review the RMS and make findings and recommendations.

Meeting Adjourned – Dale Schafer

Next Meeting - Thursday, November 18, 2010; 9:30-11:30 AM; PMT to discuss conflicting schedules of March 2011, meeting date

Imperial IRWMP Website - <http://imperialirwmp.org/>