



IMPERIAL IRWMP

Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mission

The mission of Imperial Water Forum is to preserve and enhance the economic and environmental health and well-being for the Imperial Region through the regional stewardship and comprehensive management of water resources in a practical, cost effective and responsible manner.

Goals

Water Supply

Diversify the regional water supply portfolio to ensure a long-term, verifiable, reliable and sustainable supply to meet current and future agricultural, municipal, commercial, industrial and environmental demands.

Objectives

1. Meet 100% of future demands without adverse impact to existing users that are not mitigated.
2. Implement projects or programs that will provide a firm, verifiable, and sustainable supply of 50 to 100 thousand acre-feet per year (KAFY) for municipal, commercial or industrial demands by 2025.
3. Ensure equitable and appropriate cost sharing among water users who would receive benefits from any proposed water management project.
4. Protect surface water rights.
 - a. Optimize and sustain use of Colorado River entitlements through development of groundwater banking and storage projects.
 - b. Implement water conservation measures that demonstrate reasonable beneficial use of the available supplies and are consistent with established industry standards¹, and state and federal requirements.
5. Integrate resources management strategies that diversify the regional water supply portfolio through projects such as desalination of brackish groundwater or drain water, reclaimed waste

¹ Water conservation measures include Efficient Water Management Practices recognized by the Agricultural Water Conservation Council; and Demand Management Measures and Best Management Practices as defined by the California Urban Water Conservation Council; or those related actions defined by federal or state law.

water, and stormwater reuse; or through coordinated land use and water management policies. Promote economic development that is consistent with existing agreements on use and management of the Colorado River water supply and is consistent with County and Cities general plans and other local ordinances and regulations.

6. Protect correlative groundwater rights and currently designated sole source aquifers from further overdraft, and optimize the use of other groundwater where feasible.

Water Quality

Protect water quality for beneficial uses consistent with regional community interests and the RWQCB Basin Plan through cooperation with stakeholders, local and state agencies.

Objectives

1. Maintain or improve the quality of incoming Colorado River water.
2. Support disadvantaged and other communities in meeting wastewater disposal and permit requirements.
 - a. Define local and regional opportunities, evaluate economies of scale and where cost effective, develop capital facilities for wastewater reuse/reclamation.
 - b. Match water quality to appropriate uses and supply treated wastewater to extend use of Colorado River supplies.
3. Support disadvantaged and other communities in meeting drinking water standards.
 - a. Define local and regional opportunities, evaluate economies of scale and where cost effective, develop capital facilities.
4. Comply with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) established by the Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 7) for the Imperial Region, and implement established Best Management Practices or other measures to minimize water quality impacts from stormwater.
5. Preserve and, where and when technology allows, improve quality of groundwater resources in Imperial Region.

Flood Protection and Stormwater Management

Protect life and property from flooding and develop regional and local flood protection and storm water management strategies.

Objectives

1. Assess regional flood control and local storm water management needs through a collaborative effort to develop policies and cost effective physical solutions.
 - a. Address vector control and safety concerns related to overflow ponds.

- b. Encourage local agencies to maintain and enforce FEMA floodway and flood plain maps and regulations adopted by Imperial County in 1984 so Imperial Region communities are eligible for federal flood insurance.
2. Document and define technical and policy approaches for flood and storm water management that can be integrated with other water management actions to meet multiple objectives and provide multiple benefits.
3. Evaluate and define local and regional projects that prevent or minimize flooding and damage to public and private facilities and property.

Environmental Protection and Enhancement

Protect and enhance aquatic ecosystems and wildlife habitat consistent with municipal, commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses.

Objectives

1. Recognize and mitigate impacts to IID drains, small natural floodways, and the New or Alamo rivers that could result from reduced flows as a result of development or reclaimed water use
2. Investigate and develop regional mitigation banking program to provide cost-effective environmental mitigation for proposed projects that reduce IID drain flow or have other adverse impacts.
3. Identify opportunities for open spaces, trails, parks and other recreational projects in the Imperial Region that can be incorporated with water supply, water quality or flood protection projects, consistent with public use and property rights.
4. Discourage or prohibit residential and commercial developments in FEMA designated floodways outside the irrigated areas to prevent damage and diversions to other developed properties.

Regional Policy Goals

Develop regional policies, in accordance with and respecting the individual agencies' jurisdiction and authorities, by engaging the water and land use agencies and other interested parties in a cooperative, regional approach.

Objectives

1. Streamline permitting process and integrate land use and water supply planning requirements where appropriate.
2. Define cost-effective projects and equitable cost sharing agreements with those entities that would receive benefits from proposed water management projects of all types.
3. Develop consistent policy across all water and land use agencies: Imperial County, Cities, IID, federal lands.

4. Projects relying on and overlying the Ocotillo-Coyote Wells Groundwater Basin which was designated a sole source aquifer by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1996² shall be based on safe yield considerations and resource constraints to protect correlative rights of overlying users
5. Recognize and mitigate impacts of proposed projects on disadvantaged communities to ensure environmental justice.

² 61 FR 47752, September 10, 1996; or see <ftp://ftp.co.imperial.ca.us/icpds/eir/usg/final/17revisions-sect3.pdf>