

Westlands Water District Water Transfers 2011

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Westlands Water District

- The District was formed in 1952 and encompasses an area of over 600,000 acres of agricultural farmland on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley
- Canal water deliveries began in 1968
- Irrigation water is received from northern California via the Delta Mendota and San Luis Canals
- The District has over 1,000 miles of underground pipelines to deliver water to the farms to over 600 family farms
- Annual CVP allocation of 1,195,383 AF



Westlands Water Supply Issues

- WWD CVP Allocation prior to 2009
 - Between 1968 and 1990, 100% 21 out of 22 years (1976-77)
- Since 1990, 100% allocation three times out of 22 years
 - CVPIA – 800,000 AF to environment
 - Bay Delta Accord Clean Water Act
 - 2008 Biological Opinions
 - USFWS Jeopardy Opinion
 - Reasonable and Prudent Alternative restricted pump operations
- Current projected average year (45%) vs. pre-1990 (70%+)

Important Role Water Transfers Play in Supplementing WWD Water Supply

- Transfer partners:
 - SLDMWA districts
 - CVP north of the delta districts
 - San Joaquin River tributaries districts
 - State Water Project districts
 - Friant districts
 - Kings River districts

Water Transfer Issues

- Negotiating acceptable terms and conditions
 - Water supply and conveyance
- Delta conveyance capacity
 - SWP and CVP allocation?
 - Can we convey during July thru September timeframe
- Timely review and approval from multiple agencies
 - NEPA and CEQA compliance
 - USBR Criteria Checklist for Transfer Proposals
 - Facilities, 20% check, how is water available, power, Public Notice, etc.
 - Third party impacts – DWR review and approval
 - SWRCB Place of Use permit – If needed
 - Advance payment and schedule with Project operator(s)

CVP Allocation for Ag Water Service Contractors South of the Delta 2007-10

- Drought of 2007 -10

- 2007 – 50%
- 2008 – 40%
- 2009 – 10%
- 2010 – 45%

State Drought Water Bank 2009

- Why DWB in 2009?
 - 0% initial allocation for south of the delta CVP Ag Water Service Contractors
 - Governor declares drought emergency in California
 - Early 2009 DWR facilitated DWB

State Drought Water Bank 2009

- What worked –
 - 76,600 AF of water was transferred
 - DWB provided water to SWP and CVP contractors as well as other agencies not served by SWP or CVP

State Drought Water Bank 2009

- What needs work –
 - Program was slow to develop
 - CEQA compliance was addressed through emergency declaration by the Governor – later sued by NGOs and agreed to settle out of court
 - Sellers were mistrustful of DWR - negativity from last drought bank in early 90's still lingered
 - Price of water – about \$400 per AF thru the meter about broke the bank for Ag contractors
 - More up front planning needed to identify sellers and buyers as well as address environmental compliance
 - Disconnect between State and feds – emergency declared by State but no specific action taken by feds

Suggestions on How to Facilitate Water Transfers and Prepare for the Next Drought

- Keep accelerated transfers for SLDMWA in place
- Complete environmental documents that will provide 10-year coverage for transfers within CVP place of use – provides environmental compliance document as well as identifies willing buy and seller
- Work with State Water Resources Control Board to implement a long-term Consolidated Place of Use
- Extend conveyance window for transfers at the State and federal pumps
 - Currently, June thru September
 - Extend from June thru November
- Identify other joint fishery water/supply actions (Yuba Accord) that can be implemented when conveyance capacity is available at the pumps – e.g. San Joaquin River tributaries fish flow requirements

