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
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