



650 Capitol Mall, 5th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
916.445.5511 FAX 916.445.7297
<http://calwater.ca.gov>

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING ON INTEGRATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER PLANNING

Agenda Item: 6

Meeting Date: October 9, 2003

Summary: The Authority will be briefed on the California Water Plan Update, the Federal planning effort known as Water 2025, and on the relationship of these efforts to the Authority and implementation of the Bay-Delta Program. Because all three efforts have recognized the importance of regional water management planning, there will be information on the benefits and challenges of regional planning and how regions can be encouraged to undertake such an effort. The Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee recommendations to the Authority on these issues are included in this meeting packet.

Recommended Action: Informational only. No action to be taken.

Background

The Department of Water Resources' Water Plan Update is a strategic plan for State policy/decision makers to guide management and development of water throughout California. Refer to www.WaterPlan.water.ca.gov for draft chapters of the 2003 Update and details on the plan development process. The U.S. Department of Interior's Water 2025 presents six principles, five realities, and four key tools for preventing water crises and conflicts in the west (see Attachment 1, Water 2025 Materials). For more details, refer to www.usbr.gov for the report entitled "Water 2025: Preventing Crises and Conflict in the West."

The California Bay-Delta Program has a mission to develop and implement a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta. In addition to developing ecosystem restoration goals, the Program has water supply reliability goals for water transfers, storage, conveyance, water use efficiency, and is actively implementing actions to achieve these goals.

While there are several areas where the efforts differ, there are many similarities. The California Water Plan Update, the Federal Water 2025 Strategy, and the Bay-Delta Program all call for coordinated and integrated planning for determining future projects, approaches, or strategies for addressing future water management needs.

All three processes call for partnering and relying on local and regional cooperation, coordination, planning, and actions. Authority staff has heard from interests throughout the Solution Area who have said that, although regions have incentives to do integrated resource water management planning, there are challenges and barriers that must be overcome.

The discussion on the Water Plan Update will focus on goals, schedule and content of Update 2003, coordination with the Program and regions, and the need for solid data for decision-making on water management projects/actions. The Water 2025 presentation will provide an overview and describe links to the Program. The Bay-Delta Program discussion will address the similarities and differences between the Program and these other efforts.

Because all three efforts focus on support for regional water management planning, there will be information presented on the benefits and challenges of regional planning and how regions can be encouraged to undertake such an effort. Some of the challenges identified by the regions include the need to clearly understand how a regional plan will be used and how it can benefit a region, the complexity and time involved in developing a plan, and resources a region might need to develop such a plan. Regions have generally identified some of the assistance they need to address these challenges including financial support, coordination of data with the Authority and the Water Plan, and guidance on developing regional plans so they are most useful to the State and Federal governments as well as to the regions. As regional planning develops, the emerging role of the regions can complement the role of the Authority and other State and Federal agencies as the Authority measures overall performance of the Bay-Delta Program implementation and regional projects at achieving statewide and local water management needs.

The BDPAC reviewed the three planning processes and other related issues and is forwarding its recommendations to the Authority and implementing agencies. Agenda Item 8 includes the staff recommended resolution and other related materials that will be presented during the meeting.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1 - Water 2025: Preventing Crises and Conflict in the West
Attachment 2 - Water 2025: Information

Contact

Cindy Darling
Regional Coordinator

Phone: (916) 798-9809

Water 2025:

Preventing Crises and Conflict in the West

◆ **Water is the lifeblood of the American West and the foundation of its economy. It is also the scarcest resource in some of the fastest growing areas of the country**

◆ **Water 2025** is intended to focus attention on the reality that explosive population growth in western urban areas, the emerging need for water for environmental and recreational uses, and the national importance of the domestic production of food and fiber from western farms and ranches is driving major conflicts between these competing uses of water.

◆ **In some areas of the West, existing water supplies are, or will be, inadequate to meet the demands for water for people, cities, farms, and the environment even under normal water supply conditions.**

◆ **Water 2025** recognizes that states, tribes, and local governments should have a leading role in meeting these challenges, and that the Department of the Interior should focus its attention and resources on areas where scarce federal dollars can provide the greatest benefits to the West and the rest of the Nation.

◆ **Water 2025** provides the basis for a public discussion in advance of water crises and sets forth a framework to focus on meeting water supply challenges in the future. This framework includes:

- **Six Principles** to guide Interior in addressing water problems.
- **Five Realities** that drive water crises.
- **Four Key Tools** to help proactively manage scarce water resources.

◆ **Six Principles**

- Recognize and respect state, tribal, and federal water rights, contracts, and interstate compacts or decrees of the United States Supreme Court that allocate the right to use water.
- Maintain and modernize existing water facilities so they will continue to provide water and power.
- Enhance water conservation, use efficiency, and resource monitoring to allow existing water supplies to be used more effectively.
- Use collaborative approaches and market based transfers to minimize conflicts.
- Improve water treatment technology, such as desalination, to help increase water supply.
- Existing water supply infrastructure can provide additional benefits for existing and emerging needs for water.

◆ **Five Realities**

- Explosive population growth in areas of the West where water is already scarce.
- Water shortages occur frequently in the West.
- Over-allocated watersheds can cause crisis and conflict.
- Water facilities are aging.
- Crisis management is not effective in dealing with water conflicts.

◆ **Four Key Tools**

- Conservation, Efficiency, and Markets
- Collaboration
- Improved Technology
- Remove Institutional Barriers and Increase Interagency Cooperation

◆ **Water 2025 will:**

- Facilitate a more forward-looking focus on water-starved areas of the country;
- Help to stretch or increase water supplies to satisfy the demands of growing populations, protect environmental needs, and strengthen regional, tribal and local economies;
- Provide added environmental benefits to many watersheds, rivers, and streams;
- Minimize water crises in critical watersheds by improving the environment and addressing the effects of drought on important economies; and,
- Provide a balanced, practical approach to water management for the next century.



Water 2025:
Preventing Crises and Conflict in the West
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is “Water 2025: Preventing Crises and Conflict in the West,” being announced at this time?

A: In 2001 Secretary Norton asked the Bureau of Reclamation to prepare an assessment of where existing water supplies are likely to be inadequate to meet water demands for farms, ranches, cities, recreation and the environment over the next 25 years. Secretary Norton also asked the Bureau of Reclamation to look at current conditions in the West and identify the likely areas where the next crises over water may occur. Water 2025 provides a basis for public discussion of the realities that face the west, so that decisions can be made at the appropriate level in advance of a water supply crisis.

Q. Does Water 2025 propose changes to federal or state environmental laws?

A. No.

Q. Will Water 2025 be used to take water away from agriculture?

A No. Water 2025 seeks to encourage voluntary water transfers through water banks or other willing buyer/willing seller measures. In fact, one of the goals of Water 2025 is to develop means by which agricultural producers can rent or lease their water in times of drought to municipalities or other users, and still have the ability to farm in most years.

Q: Could water marketing threaten the water rights held by irrigators and others?

No. Voluntary water transfers between willing sellers and willing buyers have been used successfully throughout the West for more than half a century.

Through state laws, water marketing provides a means to preserve irrigated agriculture, including small farms, and protecting water rights, while meeting other critical water supply requirements.

Q. Will Water 2025 transfer control over water from states to the federal government?

A. No. Water 2025 can only work if it is implemented in accordance with state law.

Q. How much will Water 2025 cost?

A. In collaboration with local stakeholders, Interior will concentrate existing federal financial and technical resources on western watersheds with a potential for conflict over water by 2025 and in critical research and development. The President has requested \$11 million for the Bureau of Reclamation’s budget for a Western Water Initiative in FY 2004, reflecting the Administration’s commitment to focus on the challenges later outlined more fully in Water 2025.

Q. How can technology help?

A. Water 2025 will seek to reduce the cost of water desalination and advanced water treatment through improved interagency coordination of research and focused investment in areas most needing planning support. Water 2025 also will facilitate the installation and implementation of new water management technologies by modernizing existing water storage and delivery systems, improving the efficient and effective management of vital water resources in the West.

Q: Will Water 2025 result in “winners” and “losers?”

A: The only way anyone can lose with Water 2025 is if actions are not taken to address future conflicts over water. Water 2025 is intended to focus attention on the reality that explosive population growth in western urban areas, the emerging need for water for environmental and recreational uses, and the national importance of the domestic production of food and fiber from western farms and ranches is driving major conflicts between these competing uses of water.

Q. What criteria were used to develop the Water Supply Crises by 2025 Illustration?

A. The Illustration used technical input and professional judgment to produce a straight forward analysis to generate public discussion of the realities facing the West.

Q. Does Water 2025 attempt to address population growth in the West?

A. No. Choices regarding growth are made by state and local governments.

Q: In the end, what do you hope to achieve with Water 2025?

A. We want to accomplish two things: First, Water 2025 recognizes the need for a vigorous public discussion over water issues. Doing nothing will have significant negative consequences, and the public must be able to make an educated choice about their future. Second, Water 2025 is a commitment to moving forward in strategically using the appropriate tools that will help minimize or prevent future water conflict and crises in the West.

♦ Visit our Website at www.doi.gov/water2025

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