Introduction

The following discusses how this Proposal assists in meeting the Program Preferences described in the 2014 IRWM Drought Guidelines, identifies specific Program Preferences and the Projects that will meet the preferences. Also described in this attachment are issues related to the Human Right to Water Policy. Projects in this Proposal are numbered as follows:

1. Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District (RRBWSD)/Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) Banking Program 2014 Drought Relief Project (CLWA-1)
2. Semitropic Water Storage District (SWSD) Extraction and Conveyance Improvements for Return of Stored (Banked) Water to Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) (CLWA-2)
3. Valencia Water Reclamation Plant Ultra-Violet (UV) Disinfection System Facilities (SCVSD-1)

The Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) IRWM Region and the Project proponents are committed to the Human Right to Water Policy. The USCR IRWM Regional Water Management Group, in collaboration with the Region's stakeholders, identified objectives specifically relating to increasing water supply and reliability to meet the needs of customers during all types of hydrologic years, to improve water quality by consistently meeting Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), and providing for the effective treatment of all water sources. As defined in its IRWM Plan, the Region is already considering the human right to water because it uses human rights principles:

1. Governs by non-discrimination and equality
2. Includes meaningful public participation
3. Requires accountability of Project proponents

The USCR IRWM Region has been specifically addressing the goal of the Human Right to Water by doing the following:

1. Addressing drinking water contamination
2. Improving drinking water infrastructure needed to maintain/improve water quality
3. Improving infrastructure needed to ensure adequate drinking water supply

All three of the proposed Projects either enhance the water supply reliability / improve the water quality of the USCR Region and, therefore the Projects all address the Human Right to Water Policy goals.

RRBWSD/CLWA Banking Program 2014 Drought Relief Project (CLWA-1)

Include Regional Projects/Programs. Implementation of this Project provides an additional 7,500 acre-feet per year (AFY) of drought supply, which increases local supply reliability on a regional basis. It is a collaborative Project on an interregional scale, involving cooperation with RRBWSD, a water agency in the Tulare Lake Basin of Kern County IRWM Region. The Project also increases the conjunctive use of the RRBWSD Banking Program's aquifer to help to better manage groundwater supplies for RRBWSD's agricultural users in its service area and the Irvine Ranch Water District which is another project partner though not requesting grant funding.

Effectively Integrate Water Management within Hydrologic Region. The IRWM Plan benefits from participation from all land use planning entities within the Upper Santa Clara watershed. Augmenting the water supply will contribute to the protection and enhancement of the Santa Clarita River (SCR) watershed which is valuable natural resource identified in regional land use planning. The Project will also assist the RRBWSD in managing the groundwater levels in its service area.

Effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions. Current drought conditions have drastically reduced water supplies available to meet system demands across the state. As a result, many agencies are simultaneously calling upon dry-year supplies from banking programs such as the RRBWSD Banking Program, creating intense demand on extraction capacity. Implementation of this Project will help ease this conflict by enabling greater access to previously banked dry year supplies for agencies participating in the RRBWSD Banking Program.

Contribute to attainment of one or more objectives of CALFED. This Project addresses the first three objectives (Water Quality, Ecosystem Quality, and Water Supply) by enhancing conjunctive use of groundwater resources to offset the demand on imported water from the Delta during dry periods, which in turn improves both ecosystem and water quality in the Bay-Delta.

Address Critical Water Supply/Quality Needs of DACs within the Region. While there are no DACs in the IRWM Region that meet the State's strict definition, the Project addresses the Human Right to Water Policy by providing a reliable dry-year water supply in a non-discriminatory way to all customers in the Santa Clarita Valley (SCV).

Effectively Integrate Water Management with Land Use Planning. Augmenting the water supply will contribute to the protection and enhancement of the Santa Clarita River (SCR) watershed which is valuable natural resource identified in regional land use planning.

Part of an IRWM Plan that Helps the Region Reduce Reliance on the Delta for Water Supplies. The USCR IRWM Plan aims to reduce overall water demands and enhance water supply reliability in an effort to reduce reliance on imported Delta water supplies. The Project permits the enhanced use of water banked during wet years to reduce demand on Delta supplies during dry years. This Project is being implemented to contribute to meeting these Plan goals.

Address Statewide Priorities of:

a. Drought preparedness: This Project directly addresses drought preparedness by facilitating access to an additional 7,500 AFY of CLWA's banked water supplies to meet dry year demands, thereby increasing overall supply reliability.

b. Use and reuse water more efficiently: This Project improves conjunctive management of groundwater and imported water to increase reliability and efficient use of these resources.

c. Climate change response actions: Implementation of this Project helps improve conjunctive management of groundwater and imported water by increasing reliability and access to these supplies. Conjunctive use is an efficient method for managing supplies that are available during wet periods, and reduces direct, immediate demands on Delta supplies in dry periods, thereby avoiding related higher energy requirements and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

d. Expand environmental stewardship: Conjunctive use, enhanced through this Project, helps balance demands between surface and groundwater supplies, thereby reducing stresses on any one system at a given time. The Project will provide benefits to Pacific Flyway habitat in the San Joaquin Valley.

e. Practice integrated flood management: N/A

f. Protect surface water and groundwater quality: N/A

g. Improve tribal water and natural resources: N/A

h. Ensure equitable distribution of benefits: This Project will enhance the reliability of existing supplies, and increase water supply for the benefit of every person within the USCR Region. The mission of the CLWA is to provide high quality water at a reasonable cost. This Project will help ensure fulfillment of this mission, and address the Human Right to Water Policy.

Assuming implementation of this Project, the certainty of achieving claimed benefits is high.

SWSD Extraction and Conveyance Improvements for Return of Stored (Banked) Water to CLWA (CLWA-2)

Include Regional Projects/Programs. Implementation of this Project facilitates access to 5,000 AFY of CLWA's banked supplies to meet dry-year demands, which increases local supply reliability on a region-wide basis. It is a collaborative Project on an interregional scale, involving coordination with a water agency in the Poso Creek IRWM Region (Semitropic Water Storage District (SWSD)). The Project also increases the conjunctive use of the SWSD Banking Program's aquifer and helps to better manage groundwater supplies for SWSD's agricultural users in their service area.

Effectively Integrate Water Management within Hydrologic Region. This Project effectively works in concert with the CLWA-1 Project by integrating numerous water management strategies to increase the reliability of CLWA's potable water system and facilitates access to banked supplies, helps to ensure adequate supplies during drought years, improves local water system reliability, and enhances the interregional groundwater banking program.

Effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions. Current drought conditions have drastically reduced water supplies available to meet system demands across the state. As a result, many agencies are simultaneously calling upon dry-year supplies from banking programs such as the SWSD, creating intense demand on extraction capacity. Implementation of this Project will help ease this conflict by enabling greater access to banked dry year supplies in the SWSD banking program.

Contribute to attainment of one or more objectives of CALFED. This Project addresses three CALFED objectives (Water Quality, Ecosystem Quality, and Water Supply) by enhancing conjunctive use of groundwater resources to offset the demand on imported water from the Delta during dry periods, in turn improving ecosystem and water quality in the Delta.

Address Critical Water Supply/Quality Needs of DACs within the Region. While there are no DACs in the IRWM Region that meet the State's strict definition, the Project does address the Human Right to Water Policy by providing a reliable dry-year water supply in a non-discriminatory way to all customers in the USCR Region.

Effectively Integrate Water Management with Land Use Planning. The IRWM Plan benefits from participation from all land use planning entities within the Upper Santa Clara watershed. Augmenting water supply will contribute to the protection and enhancement of the SCR watershed which is valuable natural resource identified in regional land use planning.

Part of an IRWM Plan that Helps the Region Reduce Reliance on the Delta for Water Supplies. The USCR IRWM Plan aims to reduce overall water demands and enhance water supply reliability in an effort to reduce reliance on imported Delta water supplies. The Project permits the enhanced use of water banked during wet years to reduce demand on Delta supplies during dry years. This Project is being implemented to contribute to meeting these Plan goals.

Address Statewide Priorities of:

a. Drought preparedness: This Project directly addresses drought preparedness by facilitating access to 5,000 AFY of CLWA's banked water supplies to meet dry year demands, thereby increasing overall supply reliability.
b. Use and reuse water more efficiently: This Project improves conjunctive management of groundwater and imported water to increase reliability and efficient use of these resources.
c. Climate change response actions: This Project helps improve conjunctive management of groundwater and imported water by increasing reliability and access to these supplies. Conjunctive use is an efficient method for managing supplies that are available during wet periods and reduces direct, immediate demands on Delta supplies during dry periods, thereby helping the Region adapt to climate change and avoid related higher energy requirements and associated greenhouse gas emissions.
d. Expand environmental stewardship: Conjunctive use, enhanced through this Project, helps balance demands between surface and groundwater supplies, thereby reducing stresses on any one system at a given time. In particular, the Project provides environmental benefits to the Kern County National Wildlife Refuge, the Pacific Flyway and other undeveloped land that the Project is located on (See Attachment 3 for a more detailed discussion).
e. Practice integrated flood management: N/A
f. Protect surface water and groundwater quality: N/A
g. Improve tribal water and natural resources: N/A
h. Ensure equitable distribution of benefits: This Project will enhance the reliability of existing supplies, and increase water supply for the benefit of every person within the USCR Region. The mission of the CLWA is to provide high quality water at a reasonable cost. This Project will help ensure fulfillment of this mission, and address the Human Right to Water Policy. Additionally, the recharging of the groundwater basin will raise groundwater levels, which will reduce groundwater pumping costs to farmers in the Kern County area.

Assuming implementation of this Project, the certainty of achieving claimed benefits is high.

Valencia Water Reclamation Plant UV Disinfection Facilities (SCVSD-1)

Include Regional Projects/Programs. The Project will reduce chloride concentrations in treated wastewater by up to 7 mg/L, which will help meet the chloride TMDL, established to protect salt-sensitive crops grown in the lower SCR watershed. This Project will thereby provide water quality benefits in the Santa Clara River in the USCR IRWM Region, which flows into the Watersheds Coalition of Ventura County (WCVC) IRWM Region.

Effectively Integrate Water Management within Hydrologic Region. Drinking water supply, wastewater treatment and water resource protection are all interconnected with this Project. Chloride levels in drinking water, including imported SWP supplies, contribute to chloride concentrations in wastewater effluent. Implementation of UV disinfection facilities will reduce effluent chloride concentrations, which will improve water quality in the SCR and in turn enhance watershed health. The Project will reduce the size of the Microfiltration/Reverse Osmosis facilities and associated brine generation, saving more water to be discharged into the Santa Clara River where it can recharge local groundwater basins.

Effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions. For over 15 years, elevated chloride levels in the SCR and their potential impacts on salt-sensitive agricultural crops grown downstream have been a source of conflict within the USCR watershed, and the lower SCR watershed where the WCVC IRWM Region is located. Implementation of this Project is critical in reducing chloride levels in the SCR, helping to attain the chloride TMDL and resolving related interregional conflict.

Contribute to attainment of one or more objectives of CALFED. N/A

Address Critical Water Supply/Quality Needs of DACs within the Region. While there are no DACs in the IRWM Region that meet the State's strict definition, the Project does address the Human Right to Water Policy by providing a reliable dry-year water supply in a non-discriminatory way to all customers in the USCR Region.

Effectively Integrate Water Management with Land Use Planning. SCR is designated a "Significant Ecological Area" within the joint City of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County land use plan, meaning that it belongs to ecologically important land and water systems that are important to the conservation of biological diversity. SCR is also defined in the joint land use plan as a significant scenic resource for the Region. Water quality improvements resulting from this Project will contribute to the protection and enhancement of this valuable natural resource identified in regional land use planning.

Part of an IRWM Plan that Helps the Region Reduce Reliance on the Delta for Water Supplies. While the Valencia UV Project provides some water supply benefit to the USCR IRWM Region, the USCR IRWM Plan aims to reduce overall water demands and enhance local water supply reliability in an effort to reduce reliance on imported Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta water supplies during dry periods.

Address Statewide Priorities of:

a. Drought preparedness: This Project helps to maintain efficient groundwater basin management by reducing chloride concentrations in the Valencia WRP effluent, thus improving the quality of surface water in the SCR that eventually recharges the local groundwater basin.

b. Use and reuse water more efficiently: N/A

c. Climate change response actions: By improving water quality, this Project contributes to improved health of the SCR and thereby increases resilience of the riparian system to climate change impacts. Climate change may also reduce agricultural productivity, which can be exacerbated by high chloride levels. This Project will help reduce impacts on salt-sensitive crops and agricultural productivity by reducing chloride levels in the Valencia WRP effluent.

d. Expand environmental stewardship: This Project helps improve water quality in the SCR, thereby improving the health of the riparian system and SCR watershed.

e. Practice integrated flood management: N/A

f. Protect surface water and groundwater quality: This Project is one component of salt and nutrient management planning in the USCR Region. It will reduce chloride concentrations in WRP effluent by up to 7 mg/L, thereby improving water quality in the SCR surface water and eventually local groundwater as surface water recharges the basin.

g. Improve tribal water and natural resources: There are no tribal lands identified within the Region.

h. Ensure equitable distribution of benefits: Water quality improvements will benefit the entire SCR watershed, including DACs dependent on agriculture in the lower watershed in Ventura County.

Assuming implementation of this Project, the certainty of achieving claimed benefits is high.