
IRWM Plan – Reduce Delta Water Dependence**IRWM Plan – Reduce Delta Water Dependence**

Attachment 13 consists of the following items:

- ✓ **IRWM Plan – Reduce Delta Water Dependence.** Attachment 13 summarizes the portion of the Upper Santa Margarita Watershed (USMW) IRWM Plan that addresses how implementation of the IRWM Plan will help reduce dependence on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for water supply.

Adopted 2007 IRWM Plan

The adopted 2007 USMW IRWM Plan acknowledges the Region’s reliance on imported water, both from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Colorado River; the need to reduce this reliance and how implementation of the Plan will help meet this need. The following are examples from the 2007 IRWM Plan that document this statement.

Reliance on Imported Supply

(From Section 2.3 Water Supply Sources: p. 2-15): Imported water is the largest supply source in the upper watershed with well over fifty percent of demands met through imported water.

(From Section 3.1 Planning Objectives for the Region: p. 3-2): Water purveyors in the watershed rely heavily on imported water supplies from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Currently, Rancho California Water District (RCWD) obtains approximately 70% of imported water from northern California and the Colorado River. Similarly, Eastern Municipal Water District obtains 75% of its water supply from imported sources through MWD, Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District 85% and Western Municipal Water District obtains over 90% of its supplies from imported sources through MWD.

Need to Reduce Reliance on Imported Supply

(From Section 3.1 Planning Objectives for the Region: p. 3-2 – 3-3): Although imported water has historically been an economical and reliable source of good-quality water, water districts in the watershed and throughout southern California understand the need to reduce dependency on imported water to address several the following concerns:

- Imported water supplies are susceptible to interruption during catastrophic conditions such as earthquakes or other conditions that may impact conveyance facilities.
- The availability of imported water supplies is a function of weather patterns in northern California and in the upper Colorado River basin. It has been documented that the Colorado River basin is experiencing the driest conditions in 500 years and some believe that previous water allocations of this resource are no longer sustainable. Furthermore, a trend in the reduction in the Sierra Nevada snow pack may also impact water supply from the Bay-Delta in northern California.

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- Environmental protection goals and mandates may impact the ability to divert water from the Bay-Delta to southern California, a conditioned experience in June 2007, when State Water Project pumps had to be shut down to protect Delta smelt populations
- Climate change may further strain water resources availability
- The cost of imported water is expected to increase in the future as new storage and conveyance facilities are needed
- Population and economic growth in the region will exert additional pressures on available water resources

How Plan Will Help Reduce Reliance on Imported Supply

The Plan developed several objectives to meet through its implementation. If the Plan is implemented then progress towards these objectives will be achieved. The first objective is to “Develop a More Reliable and Diverse Portfolio of Water Supplies.” Sub-objectives that provide specific methods by which this goal of reducing reliance on imported supplies through supply diversification can be achieved.

(From Section 3.1 Planning Objectives for the Region: p. 3-3):

- Continue to implement water conservation efforts to reduce water consumption for the region
- Continue to develop cost-effective, local water supplies such as groundwater, surface water, and recycled water in order to reduce dependency on imported water
- Manage drought response to increase water supply reliability through implementation of water districts’ urban water management plans, drought management plans, and water facilities master plans
- Construct, operate and maintain an efficient water supply infrastructure, including water conveyance, treatment, storage and distribution
- Consider climate change in the evaluation of future water supply options

Goal 9 of the Plan is to “Maximize Implementation of Water Resources Projects.” This Goal provides a realistic means by which projects can use the Plan process to get projects implemented that will help meet all of the Plan goals – including reduction of reliance on Delta Water supplies.

(From Section 3.1 Planning Objectives for the Region: p. 3-8): It is important to keep in mind a realistic implementation potential for the projects and actions identified in the IRWMP. In addition to addressing the objectives described above, proposed projects need to be realistic in terms of their financial and funding feasibility, and regulatory and public approval. To accomplish this objective, the following sub-objectives were established:

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- Identify and support projects with long-term regional benefits
- Prioritize projects that have the greatest likelihood of rapid, successful implementation
- Seek outside funding from federal, state, and regional grants, loans, and other programs

In addition to the previously cited objectives and sub-objectives, the IRWM Plan also included regional planning targets for water supply.

(From Section 3.5 Planning Targets: p. 3-11 – 3-12):

- Water agencies in the region will develop over 114,000 acre-feet per year of additional local supply by 2030
- Imported water dependency will be reduced by 25 percent from conservation and local supply development by 2030
- Diversity of supplies will include:
 - Expanded groundwater
 - New brackish desalination of groundwater
 - New recycled water, including demineralization to improve water quality
 - Conjunctive use storage (surface and groundwater)
 - Water transfers

Implementation of projects included in the Plan and consistent with the objectives, sub-objectives and planning targets provided above would substantially reduce demand for imported and therefore Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta supplies, even with potential population increases in the Region. One of the main strategies identified in the Plan to accomplish this is presented below.

(From Section 4.2 Upper Santa Margarita Watershed Region Strategies Integrated to Meet Planning Objectives and Planning Targets: p. 4-9):

Objective WS-2: Continue to develop cost-effective, local water supplies such as groundwater, surface water, and recycled water in order to reduce dependency on imported water

Strategy WS-2a Imported Water Strategy: The region relies on imported water from MWD for the majority of its supplies. MWD provides both treated and untreated water from northern California via the SWP and Colorado River. The reliability of both supply sources is susceptible to long-term droughts and water quality issues. Water imported from northern California must be pumped through the environmentally sensitive Bay-Delta. In recent years, native fish populations in the Delta have been decreasing, which has limited the amount of water that can be pumped to southern California. Deteriorating levees, climate change, and flood and earthquake risks also raise concerns about the future of Delta exports. In addition, MWD water rates are projected to steadily increase due to implementation of its integrated plan and capital improvement program. To prepare itself for potential imported water reduction, the upper

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watershed region must focus on developing a local supply portfolio. The upper watershed region also must improve its management and use of imported water supplies to reduce future costs. Potential projects that address imported water use include Vail Lake Stabilization and Conjunctive Use, Recycled/Raw Water Project Phases 1 and 2, and Murrieta-Temecula Groundwater Recharge Feasibility Study.

Subsequent (2014) IRWM Plan

Since the adoption of the 2007 IRWM Plan, there has been a commitment to implement projects in the Region that will reduce the dependence on imported delta supply. In 2012, the USMW IRWM Region committed to updating its 2007 IRWM Plan by providing local funding to increase regional self sufficiency. In the recent proposal to update its IRWM Plan, the USMW IRWM Region committed \$260,198 in local contributions and in-kind services for that purpose.

As part of the development of the 2014 IRWM Plan Update, the goals, objectives and targets were recently reviewed and modified. Although not yet adopted, the RWMG and Regional Stakeholders have already agreed on measurable objectives (with performance measures to track progress) that will further emphasize the region’s commitment to reducing its reliance on Delta supplies. The main goal that states this intent is: **Increase diversification of water supply portfolio**. The associated objectives and performance measures will both help to reduce the Region’s reliance on Delta water supplies:

- Reduce regional potable water consumption
 - Urban Water Management Plan reporting and water use reductions plans
 - Agricultural Water Management Plan reporting
- Increase local supply development
 - Urban Water Management Plan reporting
 - Agricultural Water Management Plans
 - Annual Watermaster Reports

Round 2, Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation Grant Application

In this application for Proposition 84 IRWM Implementation Grant, Round 2 funding, the USMW IRWM Region estimates that the total cost of implementing the two projects (the Native Botanical Garden Project and the Recycled Water and Plant Material Conversion Project for HOA Common Areas) that will help reduce reliance on Delta supplies projects is \$745,566. Of that amount, \$354,104 will come from local sources. By applying for grant funding under the Round 2 Proposition, 84 Implementation Grant Application, the USMW IRWM Region is committing to providing local funding to encourage and increase regional self-sufficiency.