BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

JUL 28 1976

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, PN, MP, LC, UC, SW, UM, LM

From: Commissioner

Subject: Water Resources--Use and Management

By our faxogram dated January 13, 1975, you were requested to comment on a proposed departmental policy statement "Water Resources: Use and Management" as published in the Federal Register on December 27, 1974. That statement was subsequently revised and on August 21, 1975, Deputy Assistant Secretary Waldon - Land and Water Resources signed the revised notice which was published in the Federal Register on August 27, 1975, for review and comment. By our memorandum of September 22, 1975, we requested comments on the revised policy notice. The general consensus of the comments received is that the Bureau of Reclamation is essentially complying with the Department's goal of adequately managing those natural resources for which it is responsible.

We informally advised the Assistant Secretary's office that, with our policy and practice of examining each water and land resources development project very carefully to assure water conservation and water quality protection in all of our natural resources allocation programs, it is unlikely that a policy statement is necessary. In view of our normal planning report and environmental impact statement processes, an additional water management procedures report would appear to be duplicative.

The Assistant Secretary - Land and Water Resources has agreed that the Bureau, as required under existing law and under established procedures, is accomplishing those actions necessary to achieve beneficial use of its water resources. In view of that, the Assistant Secretary does not plan to publish guidelines to implement the policy. However, in our continuing effort to conserve and manage the water and land resources for which we are responsible, we must continue to observe certain policy guidelines, including the following:

1. The quantity of water allocated to a particular purpose should be no more than can be put to beneficial use for that intended purpose, taking into account good sound water management practices.

2. ıReturn flows from resource development should be properly managed optimum use of that resource.

3. Water rights should be applied for under State procedures as a matter of comity and cooperation with the affected States pursuant to section 8 of the 1902 Reclamation Act.

4. All viable alternatives should be considered before making a specific allocation of the water resources.

5. Interested State, local, and other Federal agencies are to be fully informed of proposed resource development programs and the various alternatives considered before making the resource allocations.

Sgd G. G. STAMM