

Public Consultation Process
Methods to Replace or Recover the Bypass Flow including the YDP

Public Meeting Yuma, AZ
October 5, 2005, 9-11 AM

Comments from the Public

- Forbearance – two key issues.
 - Some users need to agree not to use the water.
 - Following that, others must not exercise rights to that water.
- Advanced irrigation methods.
 - Has one of the same issues as forbearance – others must not exercise rights to water “forefeared” if there’s to be a positive system impact.
- Snow pack enhancement.
 - Effectiveness is uncertain and this presents some unique legal issues.
- Water rights are not an issue in the Yuma area like the 4.4 Plan is in California.
- Tribal interests in central Arizona are not so much using water as they are leasing it to cities.
- Representative of City of Yuma stated that some farmers fear that if they save water that water will permanently move to M&I use.
- Wellton Mohawk stated that it seems there are two categories of alternatives:
 - Zero-sum: e.g. vegetation management
 - Augmentation: e.g. snowpack enhancement
- Wellton also said that Reclamation needs to expedite one of two things:
 - Controlling urban growth – tie growth to available water supply.
 - Implement water augmentation methods.
- Conservation is a tough sell in the Yuma area.

Questions asked by the Public

- Q. Has anyone looked at long-term impacts of the sample alternatives in your presentation?
- A. No, not for all these alternatives. Short and long term impacts will be part of the consideration process.

- Q.** Does Reclamation have a preference for zero-sum alternatives?

 - A. Reclamation does not have any pre-conceptions in this public consultation process. We are open to considering any alternative.
- Q.** What about unregulated development and pumping of groundwater in the Yuma area? How will this impact available water supply in the future?

 - Q.** Reclamation is aware of this issue and will complete to analyze as necessary.
- Q.** Where is the YDP sludge disposed and what's its composition?

 - A. Sludge would travel to a specially designed disposal site 22 miles from the plant. The sludge is mainly calcium carbonate.
- Q.** What inter-basin exchanges will be considered in this public process?

 - A. All potential appropriate exchanges Reclamation is aware will be considered.
- Q.** Is Mexico aware of possibility of creating potable water from the YDP to potentially address their needs?

 - A. Not officially, although informal dialogue has occurred.
- Q.** Does the YDP/Ciénega Workgroup report support running the plant?

 - A. Yes, at least at 1/3 capacity.
- Q.** Why can't the irrigation districts work toward on-farm conservation? Is it because they are afraid to lose their full allotment?

 - A. On farm conservation and any impact on allotments is an issue that will be considered.
- Q.** Is the forbearance program limited to the local Yuma area?

 - A. No, the Workgroup discussed forbearance in the entire Upper Basin, Lower Basin and also in Mexico.
- Q.** What is the cost of the Workgroup's recommendations?

 - A. The Work Group itself did not estimate the cost of its recommendations.
- Q.** What are the lowest cost alternatives of those you have mentioned today and who benefits financially?

- A. Of the alternatives presented today, added storage is probably the least expensive based on what we know now, but each alternative has not been cost estimated. Cost will be a factor as alternatives to replace or recover the bypass flow are considered.
- Q.** What is cost of forbearance? Aren't there ongoing costs?
 - A. Costs of the Palo Verde program were provided as an example. Yes, there are ongoing costs.
- Q.** What were the recommendations of the YDP/Cienega Work Group?
 - A. Reclamation provided a discussion of the recommendations. Overall it is a set of interconnected recommendations and a suite of suggested actions. That group's report is available to the public on the Central Arizona Project's website.
- Q.** Given the current Federal budget situation, is the Federal government going to put up \$30M to start the plant and another \$30M per year to operate it?
 - A. Cost is definitely a consideration and Congress would have to appropriate such expenditures.
- Q.** Has the State of Arizona position changed that all the Arizona water has to remain in this state?
 - A. It has changed some and if forbearance is part of solution, they don't want to be the only state to participate.
- Q.** What are the next steps of this process?
 - A. Taking public comments and alternatives to replace or recover the bypass flow until November 15th. Based on public input and existing studies, Reclamation will consolidate all alternatives for replacing and recovering the bypass flow and initiate appropriate analyses.
- Q.** Will the presentation used by Reclamation at this public meeting be posted on the website?
 - A. Yes, it will be posted at:
<http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/bypass.html>
- Q.** Will the YDP/Cienega Work Group alternatives and recommendations be one of those considered by Reclamation?
 - A. Yes.