

**Yuma Area Office
Yuma, Arizona**

Media Contact: Jack Simes, 928-343-8334
jsimes@lc.usbr.gov

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Public Input Sought on Proposed Drop 2 Reservoir Project Environmental Assessment

On July 12 and 13, 2005, the Yuma Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will host open houses to provide information and to seek public input on an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Drop 2 Reservoir Project, a component of the Lower Colorado River Water Storage Program.

Project Summary

The proposed project is one of many potential actions that may be taken to maximize beneficial use of Colorado River water in the United States. Specific objectives of the proposed project include: providing additional operational flexibility in the Lower Colorado River system for the Imperial Irrigation District, Coachella Valley Water District, and other Colorado system users; and providing additional storage capacity needed to reduce currently non-storable flows of the Colorado River below Parker Dam.

Project Location

The proposed Drop 2 Reservoir Project would be located on an approximately 621-acre site formerly used for the Brock Ranch Experimental Research Station in Imperial County, California. The proposed reservoir site is north of the All-American Canal and Interstate Highway 8, west of the Coachella Canal, approximately 30 miles southeast of the City of El Centro, California and 25 miles west of the City of Yuma, Arizona. The 8,000 acre-foot reservoir would receive water from a connection to the Coachella Canal to the east, via an approximately 5 to 7 mile long inlet canal (depending on alignment selected) and thereby the project would also affect lands to the east of the proposed reservoir site. Water released from the reservoir would be returned to the All-American Canal directly to the south, via an approximately 3,500 foot long outlet channel.

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Open House Details

The open house dates, locations, times, and schedules are:

- Tuesday, July 12, Imperial Irrigation District, 1285 Broadway Street, El Centro, California, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a presentation about the project from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 13, Yuma Crossing State Historic Park, 201 North Fourth Avenue, Yuma, Arizona, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a presentation about the project from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

A period for oral comments and questions will be held from 6:30 p.m. until completion on both days.

All open house facilities are physically accessible to people with disabilities.

During these open houses, Reclamation representatives will be available to provide information and respond to questions about the Drop 2 Reservoir Project and proposed alternatives. Attendees will be able to view information about the proposed reservoir, its interconnection to the existing All-American and Coachella Canal systems, and existing site conditions in the area that would be affected by the proposed project (e.g., land uses, biological and cultural resources).

The open house will provide an opportunity for agencies and the public to comment on the scope of the issues to be addressed in the EA. The EA, a National Environmental Policy Act compliance document, which is being prepared for the proposed project is meant to integrate consideration of environmental values into planning and decision making. A Draft EA is anticipated to be available for public review and comment in late Fall 2005. Final design, project approval, and ultimate construction would not be complete until approximately Fall 2008.

Those unable to attend one of the open houses should send their written comments by July 29, 2005, by mail to Mr. Rex Wahl, Bureau of Reclamation, Yuma Area Office, 7301 Calle Agua Salada, Yuma, Arizona 85364; or by fax to Mr. Rex Wahl, Bureau of Reclamation, at 928-343-8320. To give Reclamation the opportunity to effectively consider comments within the Draft EA, comments should be provided no later than July 29, 2005.

Si desea atender la junta y necesita un interprete en Español, por favor llame a Sra. Jessica Meneses al 928-343-8298.

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Reclamation is the largest wholesale water supplier and the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the United States, with operations and facilities in the 17 Western States. Its facilities also

provide substantial flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. Visit our website at <http://www.usbr.gov>.

Fact Sheet: Drop 2 Reservoir Project Environmental Assessment

Project Summary and Objectives

The proposed project is one of many potential actions that may be taken to maximize beneficial use of Colorado River water in the United States. Specific objectives of the proposed project include:

- Providing additional operational flexibility in the Lower Colorado River system for the Imperial Irrigation District, Coachella Valley Water District, and other Colorado River system users; and
- Providing additional storage capacity to reduce non-storable flows of the Colorado River below Parker Dam.

Project Location

The proposed reservoir site would be located on an approximately 621-acre site in Imperial County, California. The proposed reservoir site is north of the All-American Canal and Interstate Highway 8, west of the Coachella Canal, approximately 30 miles southeast of the City of El Centro, California, and 25 miles west of the City of Yuma, Arizona.



Project Components

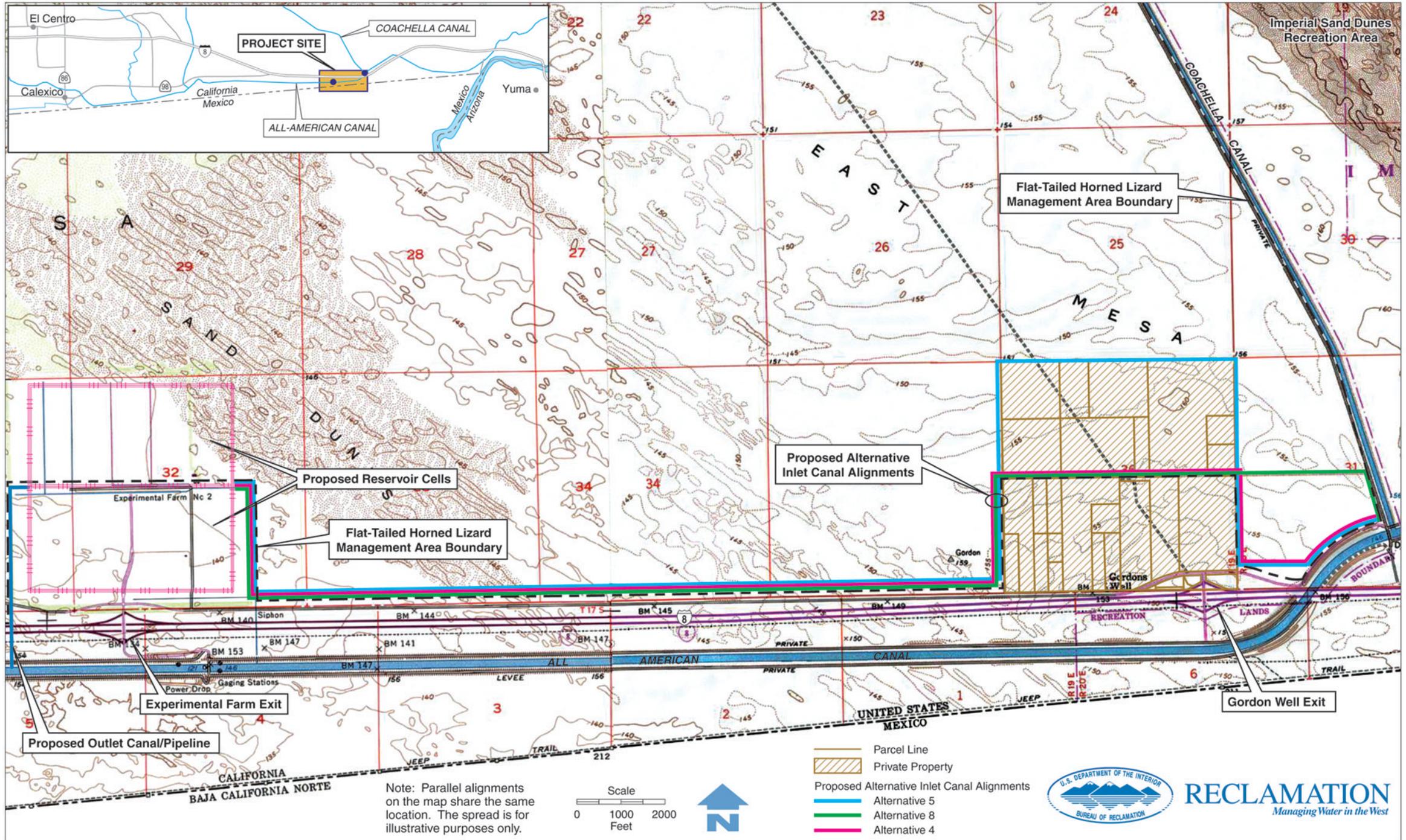
The Project has four primary physical components, the reservoir itself (which maybe composed of two "cells"), an inlet canal, an outlet canal, and a location for storage of silt periodically removed from the reservoir. Project operations would be relatively simple: a new inlet canal would convey water from the existing Coachella Canal Turnout to a new storage reservoir and as needed, water would be returned to the All-American Canal via a new outlet canal. Both the inlet and outlet canals would be designed to use gravity flow. To maintain capacity, silt would have to be periodically removed from the bottom of the reservoir.

- *Reservoir* - Two 4,000-acre-feet capacity reservoir cells (an acre-foot is approximately 326,000 gallons, enough water to support between 1 to 2 households for one year). The reservoir cells would be formed by excavating below the existing ground surface elevation and the displaced soil used to construct earthen embankments. The approximate depth of the reservoir would be 20 feet. The reservoir would occupy approximately 621 acres.
- *Inlet Canal* - A canal from 5 to 7 miles in length depending on alignment. The inlet canal would be approximately 19 feet wide at the bottom (2:1 side slopes), a water depth of 14 feet. The canal is ca. 43 ft wide at the water line (top). The canal would be lined with un-reinforced concrete and a high-density polyethylene geo-membrane liner. Twenty-foot wide access roads would be located on the top of each canal embankment. Overall width of the canal structure would be 120 feet including beams and fence. Inlet canal capacity would be 1,700 cubic feet per second (cfs).
- *Outlet Canal* - A canal approximately 3,500 feet in length connecting the reservoir to the All-American Canal near Drop 2. The outlet canal would be approximately 17 feet wide, with an approximate water depth of 13 feet. The outlet canal would be lined with un-reinforced concrete and a high-density polyethylene geo-membrane liner, though a portion of the canal would be transitioned to pipeline to cross under Interstate 8. Outlet canal capacity would be 1,700 cfs.
- *Other improvements* - Other improvements, such as construction of a new Coachella Canal Turnout on the All- American Canal, are also proposed as part of the project.

Existing Conditions and Land Uses

- The proposed project site is largely federal lands and may involve private lands depending on the inlet canal alternative selected. The reservoir site itself is on Reclamation withdrawn land.
- The reservoir site was formerly used for agricultural operations as part of the Brock Ranch Experimental Research Station.
- The reservoir site is outside of the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Area.
- The inlet canal may abut or lie within a portion of County of Imperial road right-of-way.
- Inlet canal Alternative 5 would be located entirely on Reclamation withdrawn lands. The other two alternatives involve withdrawn land and private lands.
- All inlet canal alternatives cross the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Area.

Drop 2 Reservoir Project, Site Location



How to Provide Input

Drop 2 Reservoir Project Environmental Assessment

We would like to hear from you!

There are many ways to provide input,
You may:

1. Provide verbal comments at either of the open houses
2. Choose to attend an open house and provide written comments at that time
3. Provide written comments via email to

RWAHL@lc.usbr.gov or ClementM@saic.com

On or before July 29, 2005

4. Provide written comments via fax
Attn: Mr. Rex Wahl, Bureau of Reclamation
928-343-8320

On or before July 29, 2005

5. Provide written comments via US Mail addressed to

Mr. Rex Wahl
United States Bureau of Reclamation-Yuma Area Office
7301 Calle Agua Salada
Yuma, AZ 85364

On or before July 29, 2005

If you choose to provide written comments, please also provide the following information that will allow us to contact you if necessary:

Name
Representation
Address
City, State, and Zip Code
Phone Number
Email Address

After reviewing public comments on the proposed project, Reclamation will analyze the effects of the project and its alternatives on resources in the project area and prepare a Draft EA per the directives of the National Environmental Policy Act. Reclamation will provide notice when the Draft EA is available for public review. A Draft EA is anticipated in late Fall 2005.

Potential Issues Already Identified by Reclamation

- **Reclamation**
 - Construction and operation could disrupt access to existing recreational opportunities
 - The proposed reservoir will not be conducive to, nor designed for, public recreation
- **Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard**
 - Construction of the inlet canal would occur within the boundaries of the Flat-Tailed Horn Lizard East Mesa Management Area
- **Land Use**
 - Depending on alignment, the inlet canal could cross private property
 - Depending of alignment, in the inlet canal could cross highway right-of way
- **Air Quality**
 - The proposed project site is within an area in violation of national and state standards for particulate matter and ozone, a condition further exacerbated by project construction activities