

M&I Shortage Policy - Central Valley Project

POSITION #3: Criteria for the “Extraordinary Water Conservation Measures” as the term is used in the Urban Reliability Policy

BACKGROUND:

- C Reclamation agreed to develop a CVP-wide M&I Water Shortage Policy that provided a minimum level of water supply to M&I Contractors. This policy would be incorporated in their existing contracts provided they agree to comply with the provisions of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act of October 30, 1992 (CVPIA).
- C One of the CVPIA provisions to be included in their water service contract is the Contractor’s implementation of a water conservation plan deemed to meet the then most current water conservation criteria established by Reclamation.
- C CVPIA Section 3405(e) requires the Secretary establish criteria for evaluating the adequacy of all water conservation plans (plans) developed by project contractors, including those plans required by section 210 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982. CVPIA further required the criteria be established to evaluate plans by April 30, 1993, reviewed at least every 3 years, and revised if necessary. The criteria was revised in September 1996 and again in 1999.
- C CVPIA states the purpose of the criteria is to promote the highest level of water use efficiency reasonably achievable by project contractors using best available cost-effective technology and best management practices.
- C The CVPIA Administrative Proposal for Urban Water Supply Reliability dated June 9, 1997 (Urban Reliability Policy), identified two minimum levels of water supply for M&I Contractors. One level will show the minimum level of reliability to be 75 percent of historic use adjusted for growth and **adjusted for quantities of water associated with the implementation of any extraordinary water conservation action and/or practice**. The second level will reflect a public health and safety level.
- C Reclamation believes implementation of conservation measures should be an integral part of water management planning by any water agency or contractor. The Urban Reliability Policy recognized implementation of water conservation actions consistent with the Contractor’s water management plan could reduce the amount of water the Contractor delivers. However, implementing good water management programs deemed to meet the water management criteria is a prerequisite for receiving the urban reliability.
- C Reclamation agrees the Contractor should not be penalized in a drought years for *extraordinary* water conservation practices. Reclamation modified the Administrative Proposal to support the concept that historical use should be adjusted for water conservation and/or reclamation practices that were **above and beyond** the generally accepted water conservation and/or reclamation standards or practices.
- C Footnote 7 of the Urban Reliability Policy states that an extraordinary water conservation action or practice is considered to be any conservation action or practice implemented by an urban contractor that is more stringent than that required by Reclamation’s “Criteria for Evaluating the Adequacy of All Water Conservation Plans” dated September 30 , 1996, as amended, supplemented, or replaced. This criteria was revised in 1999 and is now referred to as the “Standard Criteria for Evaluating Water Management Plans.”
- C Extraordinary water conservation are those measures above and beyond the practices and actions identified in the Contractor’s water management plan that has been deemed to be adequate based upon Reclamation’s water conservation criteria. Reclamation will also refer to the Contractor’s

annual update that is submitted to document implementation of the best management practices as specified in the water management plan. Growth may increase the historic use but water conservation practices should not adjust the quantity unless those practices are considered by Reclamation as extraordinary water conservation practices. Reclamation will determine what is a normal water conservation practices as identified in the Contractors water management plan, and what is an extraordinary water conservation practice.

ISSUES:

- C ***Should Contractors receive dry year allocation credit for conserved water?***
Reclamation believes that the implementation of conservation practices should be implemented as a matter of good water management and thus are a prerequisite of receiving the urban reliability. Reclamation, however, agrees extraordinary water conservation measures above those required in the water conservation criteria, could be considered a credit for purposes of shortage allocations.

- C ***What is meant by the term “extraordinary water conservation action or practice?”***
Extraordinary water conservation are those measures that are above and beyond the practices and actions identified in the Contractor’s water management plan that are deemed adequate based upon Reclamation’s most current criteria established consistent with Section 3405(e) of CVPIA. This is currently referred to in 1999 as the “Standard Criteria for Evaluating Water Management Plans.”

The Standard Criteria for Evaluating Water Management Plans is a dynamic process. They are updated every three years to include state of the art water management practices. Thus a water conservation measure that may be considered extraordinary in the year 2000, may not be considered extraordinary in the year 2008 and thus would not receive a credit towards historic use in the year 2008.

- C ***What is the baseline and what is the metric to measure extraordinary water conservation measures in the contractor’s service area?*** The contractors are seeking a baseline and metric for what is considered extraordinary water conservation.

The baseline begins with what is required to implement the Contractor’s water management plan for Reclamation. Activities in addition to those best management practices specified in the plan or the expedition of practices specified in the plan will be considered extraordinary conservation measures. Since implementation of best management practices is specific to conditions at each District, there will be no one metric applied to evaluate extraordinary practices. Reclamation will review on a case-by-case basis.

- C ***What is an example of an extraordinary water conservation measure?*** An example of an extraordinary water conservation measure is when an M&I Contractor uses reclaimed water to irrigate a park or golf course especially if it is not a cost effective practice. This may be considered an extraordinary water conservation measure in the year 2000 but may not be considered extraordinary in the year 2005. It may be a best management practice in 2005.

ADMINISTRATION POSITION:

- C The baseline begins with what is required to implement the Contractor’s water management plan for Reclamation.
- C Measures in addition to those best management practices specified in the plan or the expedition of practices specified in the plan will be considered extraordinary conservation measures.
- C Water management plans and best management practices are dynamic and are updated every three years. A measure that is considered an extraordinary water conservation measure in the year

2000 may not be considered extraordinary in the year 2008 and will not be used to adjust the historic use in the year 2008.

- C Since implementation of best management practices is specific to conditions at each District, there will be no one metric applied to evaluate extraordinary practices. Reclamation will review on a case-by-case basis.

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