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### **Interior's WaterSMART Program Funds Studies of Water Supplies and River Environments in California's Los Angeles and Sacramento-San Joaquin River Basins**

*California River Basin Studies to receive \$1.67 million in federal funds*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced today that Interior's Bureau of Reclamation is providing \$1.67 million in funding for comprehensive water studies in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River and Los Angeles Basins in California. The funding is part of \$2.4 million in funding for comprehensive water studies in five western river basins.

The federal funding comes through the Department of the Interior's WaterSMART Basin Study Program. WaterSMART provides leadership and tools to states and local communities to address current and potential imbalances between water supply and demand and to work toward sustainable solutions. In addition to the federal funding, \$3.9 million will be provided by non-federal partners for a total of \$6.3 million.

"WaterSMART is a perfect example of the value of strong partnerships bringing Interior together with local water and conservation managers to create sustainable water supplies in the West," Secretary Salazar said. "Rivers are the lifeblood of our communities. As we work together to study the complex river basins in California, we can explore options to help guide water management and administration for the future."

In addition to the California basin projects, the three other selected projects are the Pecos River Basin in New Mexico; the Republican River Basin in Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska; and the Upper Washita River Basin in Oklahoma.

**The Los Angeles River Basin Study**, which will receive more than \$620,000 in WaterSMART (federal) funding and \$1.4 million in non-federal funding, covers approximately 1,900 square miles in which close to 10 million people live. Los Angeles County accounts for the largest water demand of any urbanized county in California.

By the year 2025, it is estimated that the area will experience a water supply shortage of 800,000 acre-feet per year. The study will identify alternatives, conduct trade-off analyses and develop recommendations to help bridge the gap between current and future projections for water supply and water demand, taking into account climate change and population growth projections.

Reflecting the importance of this basin study to the area, the nonfederal partners include the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, West Basin Municipal Water District, Three Valleys Municipal Water District, Foothill Municipal Water District, Crescenta Valley Water District, Water Replenishment District of Southern California, Arroyo Seco Foundation, and Heal the Bay.

This basin study also includes the area of the recently announced Los Angeles River restoration project—part of the multi-agency Federal Urban Waters Initiative, which focuses on the interrelationships of the quality of life and economies of urban communities with the rivers that connect them.

**The Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins**, located in California's Central Valley, are the main sources of water supplies for urban, agricultural and environmental water uses throughout the area. This study will receive \$1.05 million in federal funding and a total of \$1.48 million in non-federal funding from the California Department of Water Resources, El Dorado County Water Management Agency, Stockton East Water District, Madera County Resource Management Agency, and California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.

The study area will include the Sacramento River Basin, San Joaquin River Basin, Tulare Lake Basin and a small portion of the upper Trinity River Basin. The Sacramento and San Joaquin basins together cover approximately 49 million acres—including extensive areas of national forests, parks and wildlife refuges, more than 7 million acres of irrigated agricultural lands and many rapidly growing urban areas. The study will assess the potential impacts of changing climatic conditions on water supplies and demands and investigate imbalances and potential changes to agricultural productivity, water quality, hydropower potential, as well as economic and environmental conditions.

"The collaboration that takes place during the development of a basin study is a fundamental goal of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors initiative," Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Michael L. Connor added. "Through America's Great Outdoors, we are developing lasting conservation solutions that are supported by the American people. In the case of two of the basin studies, the findings will be woven into the Department of the Interior's River Initiative as part of the 50-state America's Great Outdoors conservation and recreation agenda."

The Los Angeles Basin and Sacramento-San Joaquin Basin have projects within their boundaries that were identified in the November 2011 America's Great Outdoors [50-State Report](#) as priorities for action in California. The Los Angeles Basin study includes the area in which trail and river improvements to the Los Angeles and San Gabriel River basins were identified as one of two top priority projects in the state. Trail and river improvements will be made as an integral part of the steps for creating sustainable water supplies and maximizing yields from these rivers.

The America's Great Outdoors 50-state report also identified the San Joaquin River Restoration Program as one of California's priorities. This basin study will be useful to the restoration program by comprehensively assessing potential climate change impacts to the structural and non-structural features of both the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project. Where impacts are identified, the study will develop portfolios of adaptive strategies in concert with California's Department of Water Resources and other local agency partners and stakeholders.

Basin studies are comprehensive water studies that define options for meeting future water demands in river basins in the western United States where imbalances in water supply and demand exist or are projected to exist. Each study consists of four key segments:

- State-of-the-art projections of future supply and demand in the river basin;
- An analysis of how the basin's existing water and power operations and infrastructure will perform in the face of changing water realities;
- Development of options to improve operations and infrastructure to supply adequate water in the future; and
- Analysis of the options identified to arrive at findings and recommendations about how to optimize operations and infrastructure in a basin to supply adequate water in the future.

The non-federal partners in a basin study must contribute at least 50 percent of the total study cost in non-federal funding or in-kind services. Basin studies are not financial assistance and Reclamation's share of the study costs may be used only to support work done by Reclamation or its contractors.

The WaterSMART Program addresses increasing water supply challenges, including chronic water shortages due to population growth, climate variability and change and growing competition for finite water supplies. Through the basin studies program, Reclamation will work cooperatively with state and local partners in the 17 western states to evaluate future water supply and demand imbalances, assess the risks and impacts of climate change on water resources and develop potential mitigation and adaptation strategies to meet future demands.

For specific information on the WaterSMART Basin Studies, please visit [www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/bsp](http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/bsp). For information on the WaterSMART Program, please visit [www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/](http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/).

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