

Water Challenges



The Federal government's existing water policies and programs simply aren't built for 21st century pressures on water supplies. Population growth. Climate change. Rising energy demands. Environmental needs. Aging infrastructure. Risks to drinking water supplies. Those are just some of the challenges.

*Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior
February 22, 2010*

The Nation continues to face increasing water resource challenges. Aging water infrastructure, rapid population growth, depletion of groundwater resources, impaired water quality associated with particular land uses and land covers, water needed for human and environmental uses, and climate variability and change all play a role in determining the amount of fresh water available at any given place and time.

Water shortage and water use conflicts have become more commonplace in many areas of the United States, even in normal water years. As competition for water resources grows, the need for information and tools to aid water resource managers also grows. Water issues and challenges are increasing across the Nation, but particularly in the West and Southeast due to prolonged drought. Drought and increased demands are exacerbating the challenges facing traditional water management approaches, which no longer meet today's needs.



The Administration places a priority upon ensuring clean and safe water supplies and restoring and protecting ecosystems. To do so, Federal agencies must work together and with State and local governments, Tribes, industry, and the agriculture sector. These integrated efforts lead to improved strategies and results that better protect this vital resource. For example, in the Chesapeake Bay, the Environmental Protection Agency, Departments of Agriculture and the Interior, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and State and local governments are working together in an unprecedented fashion to reduce pollution and clean up the Nation's largest estuary. In Appalachia, EPA, Interior, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are aligning and accelerating efforts to reduce the impacts of surface coal mining on aquatic resources. The Administration is committed to continuing such integration across Federal agencies and stakeholders to address the myriad of water resource challenges facing the Nation.

Solving these issues is made more complex by the governance of freshwater, which involves numerous jurisdictions and a complex array of laws and ownership and insufficient knowledge about water quantity and quality. The Department of the Interior is committed to provide a sustainable water supply for the 21st century as clearly demonstrated in its WaterSMART program; negotiation, settlement and implementation of Indian water rights settlement claims; pursuit of workable solutions to regional issues such as in the California Bay-Delta; and other water conservation efforts in areas all over the Country, like the Yakima River Basin pictured on the next page.



WATERSMART SUSTAIN AND MANAGE AMERICA'S RESOURCES FOR TOMORROW

With an understanding of the need for a more cohesive and coherent approach to water management, on February 22, 2010, Secretary Salazar issued a Secretarial Order establishing a new water sustainability strategy for the United States, including identifying adaptive measures needed to address water issues related to a changing climate and future demands. The Secretarial Order is the implementing framework for Interior's WaterSMART program, a strategy to sustain and manage America's water resources for tomorrow.

The WaterSMART Secretarial Order has several parts, all of which are focused on improving water conservation and helping water and resource managers make wise decisions about water use, including:

- A national framework to integrate and coordinate water sustainability efforts of the Department and its Federal, State, and private partners. WaterSMART expands the Bureau of Reclamation's various grant programs and its studies of entire river basins. WaterSMART will also give a big boost to the U.S. Geological Survey's National Water Census, which will be conducted for the first time in over 30 years.
- A WaterSMART Clearinghouse web site that will be a resource to provide leadership and assistance in coordinating and integrating water conservation and sustainable water strategies. The clearinghouse will also bring stakeholders together to identify best practices in water conservation, incentives, and the most cost-effective technologies.
- The development and application of transparent criteria through the WaterSMART Clearinghouse that identify and support energy projects and actions that promotes sustainable water strategies. Through WaterSMART, Interior will identify the water footprint of various energy technologies to better understand these developing technologies.

CHARTING NEW WATERS

A Call to Action to Address U.S. Freshwater Challenges Issued in September 2010 by the Johnson Foundation Freshwater Summit

Beginning in 2008, the Johnson Foundation Freshwater Forum brought together over 100 experts from diverse disciplines to determine what it would take to achieve a sustainable and resilient freshwater system and on June 9, 2010 convened leaders from business, agriculture, government, academia, foundations and non-governmental organizations at a Summit. The results of the Summit are chronicled in a report.

This report calls for "... adequate and sustained funding for full implementation of key activities mandated in the SECURE Water Act of 2009, including the Water Availability and Use Assessment to be conducted as part of the Department of the Interior's WaterSMART initiative and the National Water Census, as well as the U.S. Geological Survey's National Streamflow Information Program and streamgaging network, and the creation of a National Groundwater Resources Monitoring Program and Brackish Groundwater Assessment."

WATER CHALLENGES

(dollars in millions)

	2011 President's Request	2012	Change
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION			
WaterSMART Grants ^{1/}	27.0	18.5	-8.5
Basin Studies	6.0	6.0	0
Cooperative Watershed Management.....	0	0.3	+0.3
Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse	29.0	29.0	0
Water Conservation Field Services.....	7.9	5.1	-2.7
Total, Reclamation.....	69.9	58.9	-11.0
	2010 Enacted/ 2011 CR	2012	Change
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY			
Water Availability and Use Assessments			
Geographic Analysis and Monitoring.....	0	0.5	+0.5
National Cooperative Geologic Mapping.....	0	0.5	+0.5
Ground Water Resources.....	1.6	2.7	+1.1
Hydrologic Networks and Analysis.....	0.4	6.8	+6.4
Fisheries: Aquatic and Endangered Resources..	0	0.5	+0.5
Total, USGS	1.9	10.9	+9.0

^{1/} Formerly known as Challenge Grants.

- A water footprint reduction program that facilities and water-consuming operations can implement to assure that Interior exceeds the goal established by President Obama to reduce overall consumption of potable water by 26 percent by 2020 and industrial, landscaping, and agricultural water by 20 percent by 2020.



2012 BUDGET SUMMARY

Interior's 2012 budget request includes a total of \$69.8 million for the WaterSMART program, including \$58.9 million for Reclamation and \$10.9 million for USGS.

Bureau of Reclamation – Reclamation is the largest supplier and manager of water in the 17 western States. It maintains 476 dams and 348 reservoirs with the capacity to store 245 million acre-feet of water. These facilities deliver water to one in every five western farmers for about ten million acres of irrigated land and provide water to over 31 million people for municipal, rural, and industrial uses. Reclamation is also the Nation's second largest producer of hydroelectric power, generating 40 billion kilowatt hours of energy each year from 58 power plants. In addition, Reclamation's facilities provide substantial flood control, as well as many recreation and fish and wildlife benefits. Reclamation has an important role to play in providing leadership and assistance to States, Tribes, and local communities to address these competing demands for water.

Interior's 2012 budget includes \$58.9 million for water sustainability efforts through Reclamation. The 2012 request is \$11.0 million below the 2011 President's request, although this is due in part to the rebasing of the initiative to include the Water Conservation Field Services program, which previously was not part of WaterSMART. Reclamation continues its WaterSMART grants, Basin Studies, and Water Reclamation and Reuse programs. Interior will establish a Cooperative Watershed Management program through Reclamation and will incorporate Reclamation's WCFS program into WaterSMART.

Reclamation's budget is project oriented and the detailed project amounts in the 2012 budget are formulated from the 2011 request level. Therefore, comparisons below the account level are against the 2011 President's budget request.

WaterSMART Grants – The 2012 budget request includes \$18.5 million for WaterSMART grants. As a result of making difficult choices in the development of the budget, the request is \$8.5 million below the 2011 President's request, and this reduces the number of grants by close to 60. Reclamation will continue to award competitive cost-share grants based on those projects that exceed the minimum 50 percent non-Federal cost-share requirement and include:

- Sustainable water conservation and efficiency projects that allow users to decrease diversions and to use or transfer the water saved.
- Water marketing projects with willing sellers and buyers, including water banks that transfer water to other uses to meet critical needs for water supplies.
- Projects that improve water management by increasing the use of renewable energy, increasing the operational flexibility, constructing aquifer recharge facilities, making system optimizations and management improvements, or by addressing endangered species and other environmental issues.
- Pilot and demonstration projects that address the technical and economic viability of treating and using brackish groundwater, seawater, impaired waters, or otherwise creating new water supplies within a specific locale.

Reclamation will only fund new water conservation projects that can be completed within two years from the date of funding to encourage near-term impacts on water savings. Reclamation believes that water conservation, the use of water markets, and improved efficiency are crucial elements of any plan to address western water issues. With leveraged water sustainability grants, an important step will be taken towards increasing conservation for a more efficient use of water in the West.

PRIORITY GOAL

To track progress in implementing WaterSMART, the Department established a Priority Goal for water sustainability in 2010. The goal commits Interior to annual targets, including the following for 2012:

Enable capability to increase available water supply for agricultural, municipal, industrial, and environmental uses in the western United States by 490,000 acre feet by the end of 2012 through Reclamation's conservation-related programs such as water reuse and recycling (Title XVI) and WaterSMART grants.

In 2010, Reclamation achieved 99 percent of its goal of 150,000 acre-feet. Thirty-seven projects were competitively selected for funding in 2010 and will contribute toward meeting Reclamation's Priority Performance Goal of 350,000 acre-feet of water savings by the end of 2011 and an estimated 490,000 acre-feet by the end of 2012. Projects selected in 2011 and 2012 will also contribute to achieve these goals.

A number of 2010 WaterSMART grant projects address the connection between water use and energy use. These projects not only achieve water savings, but can lead to significant increases in energy efficiency by decreasing pumping and reducing the amount of water imported across long distances. The Lower Colorado River Authority project in Texas will automate 11 check gate structures, which is expected to save approximately 2,560 acre-feet of water annually, decrease pumping needs, and reduce energy consumption by approximately 132,000 kilowatt-hours per year.

Basin Studies – The Department’s request includes \$6.0 million for Reclamation’s Basin Studies program, which funds Reclamation’s partnerships with State and local entities to initiate comprehensive water supply and demand studies in the West. The 2012 request is level with the 2011 President’s request. The Basin Studies program includes three activities:

- Basin-wide water supply and demand studies include state of the art projections of future water supply and demand on a basin-wide scale, an analysis of how the basin’s existing water and power operations and infrastructure will perform in the face of changing water realities, and recommendations on how to optimize operations and infrastructure in the basin to supply adequate water in the future.
- West-wide risk assessments will provide a constant source of information and baseline data across Reclamation projects to better adapt to risks and impacts from a changing environment and provide key information needed for more in-depth analysis to be performed during future basin studies.
- Establish and participate in Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, which are partnerships between Interior and other Federal agencies, States, Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders, to bring together science and sustainable resource conservation activities to develop real science-based solutions to on-the-ground challenges from a changing environment within an ecological region or “landscape.” This leverages the resources and expertise of the partners and breaks down jurisdictional barriers to focus on natural resource issues that are specific to a particular ecosystem or landscape. In 2012, Reclamation will continue to work with the Fish and Wildlife Service to co-lead the effort to implement the Desert and Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.

In 2010, Interior initiated and funded six river basin studies along with two other studies in eight different river basins to provide an inventory of water supply and demand. These studies also identified the

water needed to support ecosystems and reported on the factors that are causing significant competition over water resources.

Cooperative Watershed Management – In 2012, Reclamation will establish a Cooperative Watershed Management program, as required under the Cooperative Watershed Management Act of 2008. The budget includes \$250,000 to provide financial assistance to establish collaborative watershed groups and to fund projects, including restoration projects.

Title XVI – The Department’s request includes \$29.0 million for the Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse program, a major component of the WaterSMART strategy. The 2012 level for Title XVI is the same as requested in the 2011 President’s budget. Title XVI projects will identify and investigate opportunities to reclaim and reuse wastewater and naturally impaired ground and surface water in the 17 western States and Hawaii. Title XVI also provides authority for project sponsors to receive Federal funding on a cost-shared basis for planning and pre-construction activities. These include feasibility studies and financial capability preparation or environmental compliance, as well as construction of specific water recycling projects. Only congressionally authorized Title XVI projects are eligible to receive funding.

Title XVI projects have the potential to stretch water supplies using both time-tested methodologies and piloting new concepts. Federal investments in Title XVI projects, including all projects funded since 1992, made available an estimated 260,000 acre-feet of water in 2010. The 2012 request includes funding for six ongoing Title XVI projects and includes \$23.6 million for distribution, on a competitive basis, to those authorized projects that best reduce existing diversions; address specific water supply issues in a cost-effective manner; resolve and address environmental and water quality concerns; and meet other program goals. Title XVI authorizes Reclamation to provide financial assistance, on a cost-shared basis, to water agencies for the planning, design, and construction of water recycling and reuse facilities.

Water Conservation Field Services – In 2012, Reclamation’s Water Conservation Field Services program is included in WaterSMART. Funded at \$5.1 million, this program provides small-scale, cost-shared financial assistance at the local level for water conservation planning activities, on-the-ground efficiency improvements, demonstration projects,

and education and training. Applicants must compete for the funding that is capped at \$100,000 per project. As a result of making difficult choices in the development of the budget, the request is \$2.7 million below the 2011 President's budget, and thus reduces the number of projects by at least 27.

U.S. Geological Survey – The USGS provides a broad range of expertise in geography, geology, hydrology, biology, and data integration that is used by States, local communities, and others. Analyses of water quality and quantity at USGS help water and land resource managers develop, regulate, and monitor management practices to ensure the continued availability of water resources for human consumption, agriculture, industry, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat.

The need to quantify, forecast, and secure fresh water sources to meet human, environmental, and wildlife demands now and into the future has been well established. The National Research Council's 2004 Report, *Confronting the Nation's Water Problems: The Role of Research* noted, "The strategic challenge

for the future is to ensure adequate quantity and quality of water to meet human and ecological needs in the face of growing competition among domestic, industrial-commercial, agricultural, and environmental uses." The USGS Science Strategy, *Facing Tomorrow's Challenges – U.S. Geological Survey Science in the Decade 2007-2017*, identifies the need to address this gap in understanding.

**WATERSMART
AVAILABILITY AND USE
ASSESSMENT GOALS**

- Bring existing plans and legislative mandates together in one strategy.
- Integrate existing science efforts across Interior to focus resources on water availability.
- Set forth a strategy to answer the questions: Does the Nation have an adequate quantity of water, with sufficient quality and timing characteristics, to meet both human and ecological needs? Will this water be present to meet both existing and future needs?

**EXAMPLES OF TITLE XVI PROJECTS
IN CALIFORNIA**

The San Jose Area Water Reclamation and Reuse program calls for the planning, design, and construction of demonstration and permanent facilities to reclaim and reuse up to 36,000 acre-feet per year of wastewater treatment plant effluent in the San Jose metropolitan service area. The total program includes construction of 300 miles of pipe over a 150 square mile area involving six cities and provides reclaimed water to the San Jose metropolitan service area.

The Calleguas Municipal Water District recycling project consists of planning, designing, and constructing regional water recycling projects that include wastewater reclamation and reuse, brackish groundwater recovery, and regional salinity management projects. A total of ten specific projects are planned that would result in an estimated annual recycling recovery of 51,470 acre-feet of water to reduce the region's dependence on imported water supplies.

The Congress recognized the need to quantify, forecast, and secure fresh water and thus directed the Secretary of the Interior to establish a National Water Availability and Use Assessment program in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. An assessment of the availability and use of water resources in the U.S. was last completed in 1978 – over 30 years ago. Much has changed since then and it is vital that Interior establish a program to conduct a new and continuing assessment of the Nation's water resources to ensure future water supplies.

The 2012 budget request includes \$10.9 million for the USGS WaterSMART Availability and Use Assessment program. This is a \$9.0 million increase from the 2010 Enacted / 2011 CR level. An interdisciplinary science approach will be used to implement this assessment, which will include:

- Estimating the distribution and abundance of fresh water resources over time.

- Evaluating factors affecting water availability including energy development, changes in agricultural practices, increasing population pressures, and competing priorities for limited water resources.
- Conducting assessments of water use and distribution for human, environmental, and wildlife needs.
- Developing estimates of undeveloped potential water resources such as saline and brackish water and wastewater.
- Collecting data and information needed to forecast likely outcomes of water availability, quality, and aquatic ecosystem health due to changes in land use and cover, natural and engineered infrastructure, and water use.
- Distributing grants to assist State water resource agencies in integrating State water use and availability datasets with Federal databases for a more comprehensive assessment of water availability.

Water Use Evaluations – In order to address water use conditions and integrate that information to provide a comprehensive picture of water availability, water use evaluations will be conducted that will address not only human uses, but also environmental needs for water. These evaluations will assess the use of groundwater and surface water by a variety of sectors including agriculture, municipalities, industry, and electric power generation. The USGS, in collaboration with other bureaus, will provide information that can be used by land managers in developing adaptive management strategies.

Water Availability – To focus its efforts, USGS will conduct water availability studies to define the need for fresh water in comparison with resource avail-



ability. Water availability will be studied comprehensively, including quantity and quality aspects of both surface and groundwater resources. Water uses will be examined for human, environmental, and wildlife needs with special emphasis on impacts to biodiversity and threatened and endangered species.

Surface Water Availability Studies – In 2012, USGS will initiate studies and examine the challenges in high priority river basins such as:

- *Colorado River Basin* – This region has one of the fastest growing populations in the Nation combined with the potential for expanded development of renewable energy and fossil fuels. The river supports fragile ecosystems and provides the backbone for hydroelectric power, irrigation, industry, and recreation throughout the region. River flows have been progressively decreasing since the 1920s, and future projections of consumptive use along the river pit the water supply needs of the upper basin States against those in the lower basin and Mexico.
- *Delaware River Basin* – The basin is the subject of the largest withdrawal of water east of the Mississippi River and provides water to over 15 million people, more than five percent of the Nation’s population. Two Supreme Court decrees and coordination by an interstate river basin commission including the States of Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, are just part of the history of allocating scarce resources in the basin. In the upper portions of the basin, concerns over the effects of new natural gas development and the freshwater requirements for a recently discovered endangered mussel species have added new complexities to managing water resources in the basin.
- *Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Flint River Basin* – Competition for scarce water resources is occurring in the southern region of the country. In this basin, comprising portions of Alabama, Florida, and Georgia, severe drought has exacerbated an ongoing issue driven by increased public water supply demands associated with growth in the Atlanta region and increased agricultural withdrawals in

the southern portion of the basin. This basin is a prime example of where competing demands for water have resulted in litigation between States to determine who gets how much water and when.

Groundwater Availability Studies – The WaterSMART availability and use assessment will require that regional groundwater availability studies be conducted in each of the 30 principal water use aquifers of the U.S. These studies will be linked with surface water studies to improve an understanding of these as a single resource. The focus in the first year will be on two high priority aquifers and will also include a preliminary national assessment of brackish and saline groundwater resources.



As competition for water resources grows for irrigation of crops, for growing cities and communities, for energy production, and for the environment, the need for information and tools to aid water resource and land managers grows. WaterSMART, through the combined efforts of Reclamation in the West and USGS throughout the entire Nation, provides the foundation for a sustainable water strategy.

RESOLVING LAND AND WATER CLAIMS

Today the President has taken another giant step toward fulfilling this Administration's pledge to meet our trust responsibilities, empower tribal governments and help build safer, stronger, and more prosperous tribal communities.... These historic settlements mark a new chapter in our work to strengthen the Nation-to-Nation relationship with Indian Country.

*Secretary Ken Salazar
December 8, 2010*

On December 8, 2010, President Obama signed into law the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 including four Indian water rights settlements. The four settlements contained in the legislation provide permanent water supplies and offer economic security for the Taos Pueblo of New Mexico; Aamodt case pueblos, including the Pojoaque, Tesuque, San Ildefonso, and Nambe Pueblos in New Mexico; the Crow Tribe of Montana; and the White Mountain Apache Tribe in Arizona. The agreements will build and improve reservation water systems, rehabilitate irrigation projects, construct a regional water system, and codify water sharing arrangements between Indian and neighboring communities.

The Act provides various trust funds for the Tribes to manage these systems and settlement funds to develop infrastructure. The primary responsibility for constructing these water systems was given to Reclamation, while the Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for the majority of the trust funds, which includes \$207.2 million in mandatory funding in 2011. These bureaus are working with all parties to quickly implement the settlements.

The 2012 budget request includes \$84.4 million for Indian Land and Water Claim Settlements, including \$32.9 million in the BIA budget and \$51.5 million in the Reclamation budget.



Photo courtesy of the National Congress of American Indians

Bureau of Reclamation – In order to comply with the settlements, Reclamation is requesting \$5.0 million for the White Mountain Apache Tribe; \$8.3 million for the Crow Tribe; \$4.0 million for the Taos Pueblo; and \$9.4 million for the Aamodt case pueblos, for a total of \$26.7 million in 2012 for the initial implementation of these four settlements.

Reclamation is establishing an Indian Water Rights Settlements account to highlight and enhance trans-

parency in handling its settlement funds in alignment with the BIA settlement account. The account will include \$24.8 million for the previously authorized Navajo-Gallup Water Supply project. The Navajo-Gallup project will provide reliable and sustainable municipal, industrial, and domestic water supplies from the San Juan River to 43 Chapters of the Navajo Nation including the Window Rock, Arizona area; the city of Gallup, New Mexico; the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry; and the southwest portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation Reservation.

Bureau of Indian Affairs – The BIA land and water claim settlements account will fund ongoing settlements including:

- *Nez Perce/Snake River Water Rights Settlement* – The budget includes \$9.5 million for the sixth of seven required payments for the Nez Perce/Snake River Water Rights Settlement. The Settlement authorizes the Department to provide the Nez Perce Tribe and the State of Idaho a total of \$170.9 million to be funded over seven years. The \$95.8 million BIA portion of the Settlement funds water supply, habitat restoration, and other purposes.
- *Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Settlement* – The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 authorizes \$60.0 million over five years for the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Settlement. The budget includes \$12.0 million, the third of five payments to satisfy this requirement. The Act also authorizes \$50.0 million over ten years for the Navajo Nation Water Resources Development Trust Fund. The BIA budget request includes \$6.0 million, the third payment to satisfy this requirement.
- *Navajo-Gallup Settlement* – The budget includes \$4.4 million for the San Juan Con-junctive Use Wells and San Juan River Navajo Irrigation Project Rehabilitation which are also part of the Navajo-Gallup Settlement.
- An additional \$1.0 million is included in the BIA for other Indian land and water settlements.

OTHER WATER ISSUES

The Department is engaged in water resource and supply activities across the West in areas such as the Klamath region, the Colorado River, and in California’s Bay-Delta.

Klamath Basin – An agreement to restore the Klamath River Basin, including the potential removal of four dams from the Klamath River was completed in February 2010. The Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement is intended, among other things, to enable the recovery of salmon and other species that have been threatened by low river flows and poor water quality and pollution. The fisheries are critical to the Tribes of the Pacific Northwest. In 2012 the Secretary will make a determination as to whether or not removing the dams is in the public interest and advances restoration of the Klamath river fisheries.

Colorado River – In December 2010, Secretary Salazar and Mexican Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Juan Rafael Elvira Quesada announced the successful completion of an agreement to adjust water deliveries of the Colorado River to areas damaged by a devastating earthquake on April 4, 2010. They also announced a commitment by the two governments to initiate high-priority discussions on a comprehensive, long-term agreement between the U.S. and Mexico on the management of the Colorado River. Reclamation Commissioner Michael Connor said, “Water users and stakeholders up and down the Colorado River have a strong interest in a comprehensive water agreement that would enhance the reliability, certainty, and efficiency of water deliveries. The good faith negotiations that resulted in [this agreement] will help pave the way toward the comprehensive agreement...”.



California Bay-Delta – The California Bay-Delta is the hub of the Nation’s largest water delivery system and one of the most important estuary ecosystems in the Nation. The Bay-Delta provides drinking water to 25 million Californians and sustains about \$400 billion of annual economic activity, including a \$28 billion agricultural industry and a robust set of recreational opportunities. It irrigates more than seven million acres of farmland on which 45 percent of the Nation’s fruits and vegetables are grown. Until recently, it has supported a thriving commercial and recreational fishing industry that normally contributes hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the California economy. It is home to 55 species of fish and 750 species of plants and wildlife.

After years of drought, growing stress on water supplies, and with the Bay-Delta in full environmental collapse, it has become clear to everyone that the status quo for California’s water infrastructure is no longer an option.

Secretary Ken Salazar
December 15, 2010

On December 15, 2010, Secretary Salazar announced support for the essential elements of the California Bay-Delta Conservation Plan. This Plan is coordinated by six Federal agencies and calls for the restoration of tens of thousands of acres of marshes, wetlands, and habitat, and the construction of a new water conveyance system to move water from

north of the California Bay-Delta to water users in the Central Valley and the southern part of the State.

The Plan is one part of a comprehensive commitment to address California water issues. It promotes water conservation and efficiency improvements throughout California, expedites and expands voluntary water transfers in the Central Valley, dedicates



funding for immediate drought relief projects, and makes historic investments in modernizing California’s water infrastructure.

Over the past two years, Interior has invested over \$500 million in major water projects, including the construction of the Delta-Mendota Canal/ California Aqueduct Intertie to relieve conveyance limitations, allow for maintenance and repair activities, and provide the flexibility to respond to Central Valley Project and State Water Project emergency water operations; the Red Bluff Diversion Facility; Contra Costa fish screens; a large number of water reuse and water conservation projects; and seismic safety improvements at Folsom Dam. The 2012 budget for Reclamation includes \$172.9 million for California Bay-Delta, an increase of \$32.6 million over the 2011 President’s request.

Reclamation is requesting \$39.7 million in 2012, \$349,000 below the 2011 President’s budget for its California Bay-Delta Restoration account. The request will support implementation of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan as modified by the Interim Federal Plan. This account focuses on the health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem and improving water management and supplies.

San Joaquin River Restoration – Beginning in late 2009 and continuing through 2010, pursuant to Federal legislation, the Department reinstated flows in a 330-mile stretch of California’s San Joaquin River,

**RECLAMATION RELEASES NEW
BOOK ON COLORADO RIVER
MANAGEMENT**

On December 17, 2010, the Bureau of Reclamation released *The Colorado River Documents 2008*, a new book that discusses the Secretary of the Interior’s management of the Colorado River from 1979 through 2008. The book details the statutes, policies, agreements, and court decisions relating to river operations, environmental matters, Mexican treaty deliveries, water development, water entitlement actions, Native American water settlements, proceedings in *Arizona v. California*, and power generation and distribution issues that have occurred over the past 30 years.

much of which had been dry for over 60 years. The 2012 budget reflects the settlement of the *Natural Resources Defense Council v. Rodgers*. The Settlement includes a provision to establish the San Joaquin River Restoration Fund to implement the two pri-

mary goals of the Settlement: the first, to restore and maintain fish populations and second, to restore and avoid adverse water impacts. Reclamation is requesting \$11.0 million in discretionary funding in 2012, and \$24.1 million in permanent funds.

INITIATING THE YUMA DESALTING PLANT PILOT RUN

In May of 2010, the Bureau of Reclamation and water agencies in the three Lower Colorado River Basin States of Arizona, California, and Nevada began the year-long pilot run of the Yuma Desalting Plant in Arizona to collect performance and cost data as the plant desalts or reclaims irrigation drainage water. Desalted water from the plant is delivered to Mexico as part of an international treaty to provide 1.5 million acre-feet of water annually – allowing more Colorado River water to remain in Lake Mead. The Lower Colorado River Basin is experiencing a lengthy drought and Lake Mead is the largest reservoir in that basin. Six months into the pilot run, operation of the plant has remained 100 percent online without accident and with no substantial equipment malfunctions, processing delays or concerns, presaging a fully successful pilot run that will end in 2011. Over 14,000 acre-feet of water has been produced and returned to the Colorado River during the course of the pilot run.