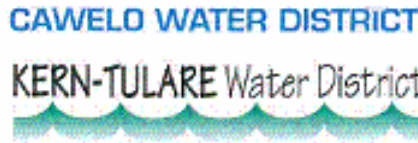


Poso Creek Integrated Regional Water Management Plan Management Group



Poso Creek Integrated Regional Water Management Plan – July 2007

Synopsis

The purpose of the Poso Creek Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (July 2007) is to provide a framework for (1) coordinating groundwater and surface water management activities through *regional* objectives, and (2) implementing the measures necessary to meet those objectives.

While the Plan includes a number of findings, the overriding conclusion is that surface water supplies available to the Region will be significantly reduced in the future (relative to historical conditions) and that there will be a corresponding decline in groundwater levels as groundwater is used to make up the reduction in surface water supplies if actions are not taken. This decline will result in an increase in the use of power and energy resources to pump groundwater, creating both an environmental and economic burden. This economic burden will be felt by all uses that rely in whole or in part on pumped groundwater --- whether agricultural, municipal, or industrial. While the *common groundwater basin* is the reason that all overlying uses will feel the impact, it is also the reason that anything that is done to mitigate declines in water levels, such as projects identified in the Plan, will benefit all uses. As a generalization, the Plan contemplates projects, both structural and non-structural, that will allow the agencies within the Region to maximize the use of their contract water supplies and other supplies that may be available from time to time. In particular, these projects provide the means for coordinating the assets, needs, and operations of the agencies within the Region, with the end result being improved *water supply reliability*.

Each of the Boards of Directors of the districts that make up the Regional Management Group adopted the Plan in its current form, which is represented by the Plan objectives, and the findings and conclusions.

- ✓ The Plan *objectives* include ...
 - Maintain and improve water supply reliability;
 - Maintain groundwater levels at economically viable pumping lifts;
 - Protect the quality of groundwater and enhance where practical;
 - Maintain water supply costs at a level commensurate with the continued viability of the agricultural economy which has developed in the area;
 - Enhance monitoring activities to meet groundwater level and water quality goals;
 - Maintain and/or enhance environmental resources within and outside of the study area; and
 - Enhance flood control in the study area.

- ✓ The *findings and conclusions* include ...
 - The Region has a water supply problem (with the long-term average annual reduction in surface water supplies projected to be on the order of 100,000 acre-feet).
 - By working together, the problem can be mitigated but not eliminated, at least with currently available supplies.
 - The Regional Management Group is the right forum for working together, which includes ...
 - Cawelo Water District
 - Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District
 - Kern-Tulare and Rag Gulch Water Districts
 - North Kern Water Storage District
 - North West Kern RCD
 - Semitropic Water Storage District (lead agency)
 - Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District

- Priority should be given to enhancing conveyance between districts within the Region.
- Both structural and non-structural measures are required.
- Non-structural measures include ...
 - An organizational structure and environmental compliance framework that allows for exchange, transfer, and banking approvals to be in place to take advantage of unregulated and unscheduled water supplies that are available from time to time, often on short notice.
 - The necessary approvals to move water from different sources around within the Region as required to maximize the utility of the Region's assets and thereby maximize water supply and reliability to the Region.
 - A means of maintaining equity as between districts within the Region, in terms of water and/or dollars.
- Structural measures include one or more connections between ...
 - The Calloway and Lerdo canals.
 - North Kern and Shafter-Wasco.
 - Shafter-Wasco and Semitropic.
 - The Calloway and Cross Valley canals.
- ✓ To implement the structural and non-structural measures, grant funds will be pursued to supplement local monies, where specific projects would be proposed and where cost sharing among the members of the Group would have to be developed.

Finally, it is noted that the Plan should be considered to be a *living document*, which will change in response to new information, changed conditions, or other factors.

Add this to the end of the Synopsis, on page 3.

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