

Excerpt From IID Draft Plan Urban Demand Management

6.0 Review of Resources Management Strategies

6.3.2 Demand Management Strategies

6.3.2.2 Urban Water Use Efficiency (Conservation)

Urban water use efficiency improvements are consistent with IID Plan objectives; could serve to reduce current or potential conflicts in the Imperial Region by demonstrating that the MCI users, such as geothermal plants, are willing and able to make the commitment and investment in demand management measures (DMMs) to conserve water; and will be carried forward for further review and development.

Additional programmatic evaluation and design, including economic analysis of costs and benefits, is needed to allow for comparison of costs for implementing DMMS needed for water conservation to other alternatives. Urban water use efficiency achieved through implementation of DMMs is an important water management strategy that has been used throughout California to lower demand, help meet future needs, and cost-effectively stretch existing water supplies. The State is setting aggressive urban water use conservation goals and increasing the emphasis for water conservation for areas like IID that are reliant on imported supplies, even tying funding¹ for projects to implementation of DMMs.

- Potential savings from additional urban water use efficiency practices imposed on existing MCI users was estimated at 10,000 acre feet per year based on 10 percent savings of total MCI use.
- IID Cities have not been as aggressive as other desert communities in implementing DMMs or making investments in urban water conservation. The IID Cities' UWMPs do not fully address the Best Management Practices (BMPs) or DMMs as approved and promoted by the California Urban Water Conservation Council (CUWCC)² and supported by DWR. IID, as a wholesaler, has not been pushing retail water agencies to implement programs either through regulatory requirements, pricing, or by providing economic incentives or support for such programs. Developing additional urban water use efficiency efforts is to be carried forward for further review.
- Urban water use efficiency measures (DMMs) could be undertaken to ensure MCI users are reasonably and beneficially using the water; that MCI users are being held to the same standards as agriculture; and that all practical conservation measures are being implemented.

¹ AB 1420 (Chapter 628, Statutes of 2007 (Laird) requires the terms of, and eligibility for, any water management grant or loan made to an urban water supplier and awarded or administered by DWR, the SWRCB, or the California Bay-Delta Authority, with certain exceptions, to be conditioned on the implementation of the water DMMs described in the urban water management plan.

² The City of Calexico is the only city in the Imperial Region that is a member of the CUWCC.

- Constraints to implementing DMMs include the administrative costs to develop and implement programs since many communities in IID are disadvantaged; lack of regulatory requirements to change; lack of financial incentives to support program implementation; relatively low cost of wholesale water; program costs or rates; political acceptability for changing lifestyles and resistance to making investments in water savings so that future growth can be supported; and concern that conservation would reduce the community's ability to respond to a drought or shortage year, resulting in unnecessary hardships imposed on the community if straight line water conservation quotas are imposed.
- UWMPs are to be updated every five years (in years ending in zero or five) and could be used to achieve consistency between water supply and land use planning, and as such, UWMPs need to be consistent with the IID Plan.

Chapter 7- Demand Management

7.2.3 Urban Demand Management Findings and Conclusions

Since IID is the wholesaler of MCI supplies its role in urban water conservation has not previously been well defined.

Additional urban water conservation should be undertaken to ensure MCI users are reasonably and beneficially using Colorado River water and that these use are being held to the higher standards of efficiency being imposed on agriculture.

Review of existing UWMPs demonstrates that there has been limited implementation of the DMMs in Imperial Cities who are ultimately responsible these programs. Cost is a major constraint since most of these communities are disadvantaged and would require assistance to move forward.

The cities of Brawley, Calexico, and El Centro have a four-step water rationing and reduction plan that will be implemented during a shortage year and are prepared to respond.

IID will get the greatest return on investment by working with the Cities to target urban water use efficiency and conservation from future water uses, while playing a supporting role for water conservation efforts targeted towards existing users.

The IID Cities' UWMPs that were prepared for the 2005 update cycle were written prior to the QSA/Transfer Agreements, and therefore do not recognize the current limitations of the available IID supply. As a result, the currently adopted UWMP may not help IID Cities meet the State requirements related to use of the UWMP during evaluation of new development or proposed projects and when making environmental determinations. New pumps are due in 2010.

7.2.4 Urban Demand Management Recommendations

- UWC 1) IID should plan to have a moderate degree of involvement in the urban water conservation program targeted to existing and future MCI users, assuming a stewardship role, providing support to the municipal purveyors responsible for

developing their urban water conservation program, and by coordinating regional efforts if resources are provided for this purpose.

- UWC 2) Convene an Urban Water Conservation Committee and work with IID Cities to develop and fund a cooperative Urban Water Conservation Program.
- Define urban water conservation regional funding mechanisms and approach
 - Develop a Regional UWMP (near-term action)
 - Develop drought management/contingency and catastrophic supply interruption plans
 - Implement a water conservation public information and outreach campaign
 - Review and track progress in implementing DMMs and implementing local or a regional 2010 UWMP
 - Prepare and annual report to document regional progress
 - Develop an in-school education program in English and Spanish
- UWC 3) IID target future MCI water uses, emphasizing development of standards that would minimize future water demands and ensure measurable savings when agricultural land is converted to MCI uses consistent with existing land use plans.
- Streamline the development review and permitting process and ensure that water conservation best management practices and demand management measures are implemented at the time of project development and approval (See Chapter 10)
 - Work with IID Cities and Imperial County as part of the Imperial IRWMP to specifically consider using the Draft DWR California 2010 Plumbing Code as a standard for new development and development of local ordinances
 - Work with the Cities and Imperial County as part of the Imperial IRWMP to specifically consider using the Draft DWR Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (July 15, 2009) as a standard for new development and development of local ordinances
 - Identify opportunities and define requirements for dual plumbing new development such that raw or recycled water could be provided to large landscapes in lieu of treated water
- UWC 4) IID should encourage the cities to implement a conservation rate structure (increasing block rates)
- UWC 5) IID should encourage the Cities to develop standardized MCI use categories across the IID region to support aggregation of data by use category for purposes of tracking changes in water use; and to develop unit water requirements or duty factors for forecasting future demands and preparing water budgets, UWMPs, and future land use or water supply plans.