



# Central Basin

Municipal Water District

July 19, 2011

**TO:** Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties

**FROM:** Central Basin Municipal Water District

**RE: NOTICE OF PREPARATION FOR A PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

6252 Telegraph Road  
Commerce, CA 90040-2512

Phone: 323.201.5500  
Fax: 323.201.5550  
[www.centralbasin.org](http://www.centralbasin.org)

**Board of Directors**

**Division I**

Edward C. Vasquez

**Division II**

Robert Apodaca

**Division III**

Arturo Chacon

**Division IV**

Rudy C. Montalvo

**Division V**

Phillip D. Hawkins

**General Manager**

Art Aguilar

**Serving the Cities of**

- Artesia
- Bell
- Bellflower
- Bell Gardens
- Carson
- Cerritos
- Commerce
- Compton
- Cudahy
- Downey
- East Los Angeles
- Florence-Graham
- Hawaiian Gardens
- Huntington Park
- La Habra Heights
- Lakewood
- La Mirada
- Lynwood
- Maywood
- Montebello
- Monterey Park
- Norwalk
- Paramount
- Pico Rivera
- Santa Fe Springs
- Signal Hill
- South Gate
- Walnut Park
- Whittier
- Willowbrook
- Vernon

**LEAD AGENCIES:** Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Central Basin Municipal Water District (CBMWD) is the Lead Agency proposing to prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the project identified below. The Plan's purpose, location, description and probable environmental effects are summarized herein.

**PROJECT TITLE:** Central Basin Groundwater Storage Plan: A Blueprint for Future Reliability

**PURPOSE:** CBMWD is preparing a Draft PEIR, pursuant to CEQA, to evaluate the potential environmental effects of implementing the proposed Central Basin Groundwater Storage Plan (Plan) to improve water supply reliability throughout the Los Angeles Central Groundwater Basin (CGB or Basin). This action is needed because of increasing human and environmental demands on existing water supplies, especially during drought years.

**LOCATION:** The study area for this Draft PEIR encompasses the CGB, which covers an area of about 270 square miles in the Los Angeles County Coastal Plain. The CGB is bounded on the northeast and the east by the Elysian, Repetto, Merced, and Puente Hills. The southeast boundary is along Coyote Creek, which is used to separate the CGB from the Orange County Groundwater Basin. The southwest boundary is the Newport-Inglewood fault system and uplift which separates it from the West Coast Basin. The Lead Agency's service area includes 24 cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles, covering a total of 227 square miles and serving over 2 million residents. The study area includes the entire CGB because the California Water Code explicitly authorizes CBMWD to store water in the Basin. Specifically, Water Code Section 71000 provides CBMWD with the statutory authority to "acquire, control, distribute, store, spread, sink, treat, purify, recycle, recapture and salvage any water, including sewage and storm waters, for the beneficial

use or uses of the District, its inhabitants, or the owners of rights to water in the District.”

**DESCRIPTION:** The mission of CBMWD is “[t]o acquire, sell and conserve imported and other water that meets all required standards and to furnish it to our customers in a planned, timely and cost-effective manner that anticipates future needs.” CBMWD, as the Lead Agency, is committed to this mission to provide long-term sustainability and reliability of high quality water to its customers. The Federal and State water quality regulations will also continue to dictate some of the Lead Agency’s long-term planning objectives.

Specifically, the Plan proposes to acquire and store water in the Basin to improve the reliability of CBMWD’s water portfolio. Once fully implemented, the Plan will utilize all or a portion of the empty groundwater storage space in the Basin. This storage generally would serve emergency, operational, and pre-delivery needs for local water agencies. CBMWD will also ensure that the economic benefits of this valuable local asset are distributed equitably throughout its service area.

Local groundwater, recycled water distributed to customers, and imported water are the three current components of CBMWD’s water supply portfolio. The local groundwater and the recycled water components are reliable. The imported water, however, has become significantly less reliable in two ways. First, non-interruptible deliveries of treated water for potable use have come subject to cutbacks. These cutbacks are called shortage “allocations”. In 2009, a 10% shortage allocation was implemented. It was rescinded in April of 2011. Shortage allocations of up to 50% are possible under the current MWD Water Supply and Demand Management Plan.

The second way that imported water has become less reliable is that interruptible replenishment water will be available less frequently in the future. This discounted source of inexpensive replenishment water is sold to the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) by CBMWD. Imported replenishment water is needed to meet the total artificial replenishment needs of the basin and to meet some of the blend requirements for the use of recycled water in the spreading basins.

CBMWD’s proposal would address this reduced reliability with a storage plan that would work by banking water when it is wet and extracting water when it is dry. The source of the banked water could be imported water, recycled water, storm-water, and/or other sources of new water. For example, imported water could be “pre-delivered” into the empty storage space in the basin during wet years. Then in the future, when it is dry, the pre-delivered water would be available to meet potable and replenishment water needs. Pre-delivery also could spread out the CBMWD revenue stream more evenly, enabling sales of potable and replenishment water in dry years when water sales otherwise may not be possible.

Water used to implement the Plan would be acquired using a combination of supply sources. These combinations will be assembled into portfolios that meet the projected

demands under wet, normal and dry conditions. The intent is to identify all practical methods to make CBMWD's water supplies more reliable. The Plan will include a screening process to narrow these sources down to those that best meet the needs of the CBMWD and its customers. The screening process will include factors such as cost, reliability, environmental impact, sustainability, energy use, social justice, public acceptance and other issue identified during the CEQA process.

Water supply sources currently under consideration include:

**Conservation:** This includes water conservation and other water efficiency measures above and beyond the extensive program already implemented by CBWMD as described in the June, 2006 Conservation Master Plan.

**Recycled Water:** Use of recycled water directly on the surface through CBMWD's existing and planned distribution system and/or recharge into the groundwater basin with injection wells. This will include regulatory and treatment issues.

**Irrigation Return Flow Credit:** A portion of the imported water used to irrigate lawns eventually finds its way to the groundwater basin, replenishing it with an artificial source of recharge.

**Gray Water:** Recent regulations for gray water use have been streamlined, making it a potential way to save water, reduce wastewater and save energy.

**Storm-water Capture:** Storm-water capture could be increased beyond the current capture and spreading of flood waters already performed annually by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

**Desalination:** Evaluation of desalination of sea water and brackish water to create a new source of supply, including disposal of concentrates and brines.

**Imported Water:** Imported water includes the Tier 1 and replenishment water already used by CBMWD, as well as the potential for wheeling non-MWD imported water (similar to the ongoing program to wheel water from the Colorado River through the MWD system to San Diego County Water District.)

**Contaminated Groundwater Remediation and Recovery:** Treatment and use of contaminated groundwater that currently does not meet state and federal drinking water standards could constitute a new source of water.

The new water can be stored in and extracted from the basin in a number of ways. The Plan will assess the advantages and disadvantages of each.

To store water in the basin, options include (1) increased use of existing spreading basins, (2) construction of new spreading basins, (3) conversion of existing production wells to injection wells, and (4) the construction of new injection wells. The City of Long

Beach has already set a helpful precedent for conversion of existing wells to Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) wells and set a precedent for construction of new ASR wells.

To extract water from the basin, options include (1) use of existing wells to pump water in excess of the Allowed Pumping Allocation through an amendment to the Central Basin Judgment, (2) use of existing or new wells to pump water through the filing of a new water right, and (3) sale of the stored water to the WRD for replenishment in a "paper transfer." There are a number of legal and institutional issues associated with each of these extraction options. The Plan, however, will focus on the technical feasibility.

A primary tool that will enable the assessment of storage and extraction options is the comprehensive groundwater model that is currently under development. The model will enable estimates of how the storage of water will impact groundwater levels, existing water quality, and subsurface flows in the basin.

**PEIR SCOPING PROCESS:** Scoping is an open process of eliciting comment on the contents of the PEIR from responsible, trustee, and reviewing agencies, and interested parties. CBMWD held a 45-day scoping period for the proposed Plan from February 23, 2011 through April 8, 2011. During this scoping process, many agencies commented that the project description provided in the NOP was lacking in sufficient detail for a meaningful response. Based on this feedback, CBMWD has elected to reopen the scoping process with a more robust project description (provided above).

The views of your agency, relative to the statutory responsibilities of your agency in connection with the proposed project, are being solicited in an effort to determine the scope and content of the environmental document. CBMWD is holding a 30-day scoping period for the proposed Plan from **July 21, 2011 to August 19, 2011**. The Draft PEIR is anticipated to be available for public review in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2011.

This NOP is available for public review online on CBMWD's website at: [www.centralbasin.org](http://www.centralbasin.org) and in hard copy at the following locations:

Central Basin Municipal Water District  
6252 Telegraph Road  
Commerce, CA 90040-2512  
Phone: 323-201-5500

Leland R. Weaver Library  
4035 Tweedy Boulevard  
South Gate, CA 90280  
Phone: 323-567-8853

Huntington Park Library  
6518 Miles Avenue  
Huntington Park, CA 90255-4388  
Phone: 323-583-1461

South Whittier Library  
14433 Leffingwell Road  
Whittier, CA 90604-2966  
Phone: 562-946-4415

Notice of Preparation for a Program Environmental Impact Report  
Agencies, Organization and Interested Parties  
July 19, 2011

Artesia Library  
18722 S. Clarkdale Avenue  
Artesia, CA 90701  
Phone: 562-865-6614

Downey City Library  
11121 Brookshire Avenue  
Downey, CA 90241-7015  
Phone: 562-904-7360

**POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:**

Issue areas that may be significantly impacted by the proposed Program and will be discussed further in the PEIR are presented here to initiate the scoping process:

*Aesthetics*  
*Agricultural Resources*  
*Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases*  
*Biological Resources*  
*Cultural Resources*  
*Geology, Soils and Seismicity*

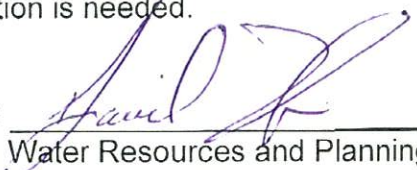
*Hazards and Hazardous Materials*  
*Hydrology and Water Quality*  
*Land Use and Planning*  
*Noise*  
*Population and Housing*  
*Utilities and Service Systems*

**RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF PREPARATION/FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Written comments should be sent ***no later than 5 p.m. on August 19, 2011***, to

Mr. David Hill  
Central Basin Municipal Water District  
6252 Telegraph Road  
Commerce, CA 90040-2512  
Ph: 323.201.5500  
FAX: 323.201.5550

Please include your name and address so that CBMWD can contact you directly if clarification is needed.

Signed:   
Water Resources and Planning Manager

Date: July 19, 2011