



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
December 3, 2013

AGRICULTURAL WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS ON AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 18 PUBLIC MEETING IN EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA

Agricultural water conservation activities will be discussed at the December 18 public meeting of the Colorado River Citizens Forum, sponsored by the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place at 4:00 p.m. PST at the Imperial Irrigation District Board Room, 1285 Broadway, El Centro, CA.

A Pilot Fallowing Program developed by the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD) and the Yuma Mesa Irrigation and Drainage District (YMIDD) will be discussed by Perri Benemelis, Senior Analyst with the CAGRD, a division of Central Arizona Project. Landowners within YMIDD that elect to participate in the Pilot Fallowing Program will commit to fallow qualified land in a specified amount each year and the YMIDD will forbear from diverting Colorado River water that otherwise would have been used to irrigate the fallowed land. The conserved Colorado River water (approximately 9,000 acre-feet/year) will remain in Lake Mead to help minimize or avoid shortages to water users in Arizona and the lower Colorado River Basin.

Approximately 1500 acres will be fallowed within YMIDD, which is less than 10% of the current irrigated acres within the district. The Pilot Fallowing Program is similar to a System Conservation Demonstration Program implemented by the Bureau of Reclamation from 2006 to 2010. YMIDD participated in the Reclamation program from 2008 through 2010, and although the Reclamation program produced additional data, a number of questions remain regarding the methodology, quantification, and the verification of water savings.

In other business, Tanya Trujillo, Executive Director of the Colorado River Board of California, and Tina L. Anderholt Shields, Colorado River Resources Manager for the Imperial Irrigation District,

will provide an update on the Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study Next Steps with a focus on the Agricultural Conservation, Productivity and Transfers Workgroup. Released one year ago, the Basin Study was jointly funded and prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation and the seven Colorado River basin states. It projects water supply and demand imbalances throughout the Colorado River Basin and adjacent areas over the next 50 years. Following release of the study, three multi-stakeholder workgroups were formed to investigate: 1) Municipal and Industrial (M&I) Conservation and Water Reuse, 2) Agricultural Conservation, Productivity and Transfers, and 3) Environmental and Recreational Flows. Additionally, the states and Reclamation are simultaneously pursuing other next step activities identified in the study.

The Agricultural Conservation, Productivity and Transfers Workgroup is collecting information and will prepare a report that quantifies agricultural conservation and transfers of Colorado River water (both in and outside of the Basin) that have occurred to date, documents programs that have been successful to date, lists any existing future plans for these types of activities, and estimates what potential savings could come from these existing plans. From this baseline information, the workgroup will also propose Phase 2 activities.

The USIBWC established the Colorado River Citizens Forum in 2003 to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission projects and related activities in Yuma County, Arizona and Imperial County, California. A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact 928-782-1598 or sally.spener@ibwc.gov.

Media inquiries are directed to:

Sally Spener
915-832-4175
sally.spener@ibwc.gov

COLORADO RIVER CITIZENS FORUM
Wednesday, December 18, 2013
4:00-6:00 p.m. PST
Imperial Irrigation District Board Room
1285 Broadway
El Centro, California

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Elston Grubaugh, Citizens Forum Co-Chair, USIBWC
- Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District/Yuma Mesa Irrigation and Drainage District Pilot Fallowing Program – Perri Benemelis, Senior Analyst, Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District, a division of Central Arizona Project
- Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study, Activities of the Agricultural Conservation, Productivity and Transfers Workgroup – Tanya Trujillo, Executive Director, Colorado River Board of California, and Tina L. Anderholt Shields, PE, Colorado River Resources Manager, Imperial Irrigation District
- Public Comment
- Recognition of Outgoing Citizens Forum Board Members and Recruitment of New Board Members – Anna Morales, Area Operations Manager, USIBWC
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

Directions: From Yuma, I-8 west to Imperial Ave. exit, north past 5 stoplights to Broadway, turn right, park at lot at end of the block. Meeting site is located east of the Bank of America.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 928-782-1598 or e-mail sally.spener@ibwc.gov.