

OCWD Water Issues Committee Meeting
December 13, 2017

Comments on Agenda Item 13
Consideration of South Orange County Pilot
Water Storage and Exchange Program

by

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Some of My Relevant Experience:

- South Orange County (SOC) Water Reliability Studies, MWDOC
- Imported Water/Groundwater Storage Studies for SOC Water Reliability, MWDOC
- Future Use Study for the Baker Aqueduct (included a groundwater alternative), Baker Aqueduct Commission
- SOC Regional Water Facilities Investigation, Boyle Engineering for MWDOC and SOC Participating Agencies
- Project Coordinator/Manager, Orange County Evidentiary Record for Phase I Bay Delta Hearings, Water Supply Management Within Orange County (included OCWD Groundwater Management), for Water Advisory Committee of Orange County submittal to SWRCB and Hearings
- Author of Imported Water Section, Water Development in Orange County, Past, Present and Future, OCWD
- Former Chair, Water Resources Division and Water Management Committee Chair, and Groundwater Committee, AWWA
- Former Member, Groundwater Committee, ACWA and Co-Lead on Groundwater Management Programs and Conferences

Comments on Staff Proposed Approach to an MOU “Pilot Water Storage and Exchange Program” Between OCWD and MNWD

1. Support emergency supply from the GW Basin to SOC for imported supply disruptions utilizing current agreement between OCWD, MWDOD, and IRWD as a model for future capacity and conveyance improvements. Strongly suggest consideration for use of EOCF#2 pipeline to aid both SOC and Central Orange County.
2. Considerations to Recognize in Formulation of a “Pilot” MOU with MNWD:
 - OCWD is the fiduciary manager of the basin on behalf of the groundwater producers and serves to protect their interests.
 - Large investments have been made over time by OCWD for basin protection, expanded utilization and management – water rights protection, recharge facilities, seawater intrusion control, monitoring, advanced water treatment research, GWRS, et. al.
 - The groundwater producers and their customers have priority rights to the basin and the developed operable storage provides substantial value that must not be impaired.

- Operable storage capacity of the basin is roughly 400,000 acre-feet, about one year of demand for groundwater producers.
- Expanding the operable storage capacity of the basin would require significant costs for seawater intrusion control and wells.
- In time groundwater losses to LA County should be substantially controlled allowing the basin to be kept at near full levels for improved drought protection for the groundwater producers. In the interim, any SOC storage program water should be considered water on top of the storage and should include outflow loss provisions.
- Use of the basin for SOC storage needs without proper compensation for the value of the basin's operable storage and management system should not occur until agreed to by the groundwater producers.
- The basin is an underground reservoir and any SOC storage should be the first water to "spill" as the basin is filled in order to assure the currently developed operable storage capacity remains available to the overlying groundwater producers.
- Recharge facilities have a limited capacity and that capacity must first be assured for the benefit of the OCWD groundwater producers.

- It appears that a draft MOU with MNWD is in process. Once a preliminary agreement is developed, it should be circulated for review and comment to the groundwater producers and should include MWDOC.
- In the interest of open and transparent transactions, especially for such an important resource management program, I strongly recommend that OCWD first hold several meetings with the groundwater producers and also to bring MWDOC into the planning process as they have studied and evaluated this concept for many years and are currently a party to the emergency storage agreement and MET CUP Agreement. I am asking that your committee direct staff to initiate this process before any Board action on approving an MOU is considered.
- I commend OCWD and your committee's work on spearheading this very important resource management program but as stated above an open participatory process is critical to its successful outcome.