

MOUNTAIN COUNTIES WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

WATER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PRELIMINARY**INTRODUCTION**

The water needs assessment is being prepared for the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association (Association)^{1/} to facilitate effective participation of the Association's members, from an "Area of Origin" perspective, in the CalFed process to resolve Bay Delta issues. In this regard, it is the intent in preparing this document to identify:

1. The magnitude and time that supplemental water supplies will be required to meet the increasing water demands of the Mountain Counties Region (Region).
2. Potential solutions to meet the increased demands.
3. Problems or constraints in implementing potential solutions.

THE MOUNTAIN COUNTIES REGION

The Association, whose members include counties and special districts, represent a major portion of the watersheds on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains that are tributary to the Sacramento and San Joaquin Delta (Map 1). The region includes the watersheds for the following rivers:

Yuba	Cosumnes	Stanislaus
Bear	Mokelumne	Tuolumne
American	Calaveras	Merced

POPULATION

Although the region is predominantly rural, it is expected to continue to experience a significant increase in population as people from the heavier populated communities in the valley seek residence in the foothill communities. Population projections reported by the California State Department of Finance, as used by the California Department of Water Resources in preparing Bulletin No. 160-98, are presented in Table 1.

The estimated population for the region represents approximately 1.8 percent and 2.3 percent of the statewide population, respectively, in 1995 and 2020.

The ability of the region to expand basic infrastructure (i.e., water and sewer) to accommodate the increasing population is constrained by the relatively small customer base that exists in most areas.

WATER SUPPLY AND USE

The primary source of most public water supply is locally developed surface water. Many old and unimproved conveyance systems developed for mining operations are still in use. These systems include ditches, flumes, and pipes that have been in use for over 100 years. Many of these systems have significant losses, however, repairing or replacing some systems have been opposed by environmental groups and regulatory agencies since the losses have created wetland habitat. While water that is recovered from repairing or replacing the conveyance system may provide much needed additional supply, the associated costs are high.

^{1/} The Mountain Counties Water Resources Association includes the counties of Sierra, Nevada, Yuba, Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa.

The water demand for the respective counties was estimated by the California Department of Water Resources for Bulletin No. 160 98. The estimated water demand for each county for 1995 and 2020, is presented in Table 2. The water demand estimated for 1995 includes all water use, i.e., public water supply as well as groundwater supplied by privately owned wells.

The water demand for the region, excluding the cited demand for environmental use, represents approximately 2.5 percent and 3.0 percent of the statewide water demand for 1995 and 2020, respectively.

COUNTY/DISTRICT WATER NEEDS PROFILE

Summarized on the following sheets are water needs profiles for counties and districts within the Association (profile sheets have not been completed for all counties). The situation within the region with respect to having adequate water supplies generally falls into one of the following categories:

1. Where water entitlements are fully used and supplemental entitlements and infrastructure are required immediately.
2. Where available supplies are fully used and new infrastructure to recover water losses will postpone the need for supplemental entitlements.
3. Where entitlements are adequate, but significant infrastructure is required to convey the water to its place of use.

The water needs profiles for the respective counties and districts follow in the order presented below.

Sierra County (N/A)

Nevada County (N/A)

Yuba County (N/A)

Placer County (N/A)

El Dorado County:

Georgetown Divide Public Utility District

Grizzly Flats Community Services District

Amador County

Calaveras County

Tuolumne County

Mariposa County (N/A)

PRELIMINARY