

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Development of Interim Ground Water Banking Guidelines Status as of March 19, 2008

Central Valley Project (CVP) water service contracts allow a Contractor to bank water immediately surplus to the Contractor's needs in established water banking facilities outside of the contract service area. Banking is to be clearly distinguished from transfers which are subject to an entirely different set of rules.

Reclamation held a series of public scoping meeting in 2007 regarding the development of guidelines for the banking of CVP water. During these meetings, Reclamation contractors and other interested parties cited topics and concerns that needed addressing during the development of the interim guidelines. These topics and concerns included the following:

1. What makes water surplus and bankable?
2. Duration of banking actions.
3. Conveyance and storage of banked water to and from the banking facility.
4. Recovery of banked water – direct or in-lieu.
5. Impacts of banking to third parties.
6. Power used to pump and convey banked water.
7. Recordkeeping.
8. Scheduling delivery and withdrawals.
9. Place of use.
10. Water quality.
11. Banking losses.
12. Transfers of banked water.
13. Administrative requirements.
14. Costs and funding.
15. Environmental requirements.

Reclamation is currently (2008) in the process of developing interim guidelines which address the above topics. These guidelines will provide criteria under which CVP contractors can participate in groundwater banking programs outside their contract service areas to provide operation flexibility and facilitate better management of CVP water supplies for drought planning and water supply reliability.

The interim guidelines are currently being reviewed at the staff level and by the Regional Solicitor to ensure that Reclamation is adhering to all legal requirements concerned with banking and the use of CVP water. Reclamation does not have a time estimate of when this process will be complete; however, once finished, the guidelines will be made available for further public review and comment.