

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR GENERAL MANAGER

Dear valued customers:

The Borrego Water District has been involved in several grant projects over the past few years. These State and Federal funding opportunities provide important data to help us uncover possible solutions to our overdraft situation. Here is a brief description of our current projects and the reasoning behind pursuing these avenues.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS): Back in 1982, and again in 1987 the USGS prepared two reports on the Borrego Valley aquifer. These reports set the stage for what we now know about our water supply. In 2008 the USGS began a three year study, with a one-year no additional cost extension, to update the previous reports. The project included updating the available hydrogeologic data, converting the data of the 1987 geologic model to modern day technology and using the model to aide in future best management practices of the aquifer. The project total cost will be \$634,150, \$211,500 coming from the Federal government and \$422,500 from the District funds. Of this amount, \$131,085 is still to be paid this year. This work is extremely important as a basin management tool as we move forward either in sustainability or importation aspects. The model will also be utilized for the climate change element of the Southeast California Basin Study. A final report is due this year and will be featured at the Annual Town Hall Meeting this spring.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, STAG (State and Tribal Assistance Grant): In 2009 the District received an "earmark" from Congressman Duncan Hunter to study the feasibility of constructing an imported water pipeline. The grant award was for \$266,750 of which we have received \$261,800 to date. This project is evaluating the physical and environmental concerns associated with constructing an importation pipeline. The final report is presently being reviewed for publication and will be featured in the February Board meeting. This is not a construction project. It is a reconnaissance level look of the possible pipeline routes and is designed to uncover any obstacles associated with a future project. This will be useful data that will be incorporated into the Southeast California Basin Study.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation: In 2010 the District was awarded a grant for the Southeast California Basin Study. This project will research the possible water sources that could be available to the Valley if an importation pipeline were to be constructed in the future. The Federal government will provide \$425,000 through the Water Smart program which will fund the Reclamation staff and other necessary expenses to complete the task. The District was able to utilize funds already expended on various groundwater management investigations to match the \$425,000 required by the grant. The work on this project is just beginning and will incorporate data from both the USGS and EPA projects. A final report is due in March 2013.

California Department of Water Resources (DWR): In 2009 the District received approval by the State for the Anza Borrego Desert Integrated Regional Water Management Group (IRWMG). The acceptance of the region allows our area to compete for grant funding opportunities through the various, present and future, water propositions authorized by the legislature. The DWR set up this program to disperse grant funds throughout the State by "regions". The District tried unsuccessfully to join in with other groups but due to geographical and political boundaries, we were forced to create our own region. The

region takes in the eastern side of the mountains in San Diego County and the upper reaches of the Coyote Creek watershed in Riverside County. The idea, as designed by the State, is to compile regional water issues into a list of water and/or flood control projects. Work is progressing well on the formation of this group and next month, the group will apply for approximately \$600,000 to build the regional plan. The maximum award for a planning grant application is \$1,000,000. Once a plan has been adopted, grants can be solicited for the various projects on the list. We welcome all to participate in this process by attending and providing input to the IRWM Plan. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month and can be attended by telephone or in person. Please contact the office, or e-mail me directly to get on the e-mail announcement list.

Coming this spring is another grant opportunity from the DWR. The Local Groundwater Assistance grant, formerly proposition 303 grant, is designed to assist water agencies with groundwater related issues. The maximum award is expected to be \$250,000. In the past, the District has been successful in two of these funding opportunities which funded four monitor wells in the Valley. Projects for this funding will be discussed over the next few months and all public comments are welcome. At this time we do not have a specific project but believe we would have an excellent chance to enhance our groundwater monitoring program. Tracking groundwater levels is now a requirement by the State through the CASGEM (California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring) program. As the local groundwater agency, the District has submitted a program that has been accepted. Monitoring the groundwater levels in the Valley provides hard data on the falling levels in our aquifer and is an important tool in our future water resources.

The staff and Board continue to work on cost-saving measures while providing reliable, safe, water to your door. The District is pursuing all avenues to obtain help from the County, State and Federal government. Our sole-source aquifer, although quite large is in a state of overdraft, which means we are pumping more water out of the aquifer than can naturally be replenished. As we move forward in these trying times, one thing has become apparent - farmers, golf courses and residents ALL need to sit down at the same table to discuss our future water plans.

It's OUR water Borrego - get informed and get involved.

Monthly Regular Board Meeting - fourth Wednesday of each month.

Board Workshop - Tuesday, week prior to fourth Wednesday, usually falls in third week.

Integrated Regional Water Management Stakeholder Committee - second Tuesday of each month.

All public meetings are noticed on the District website - www.borregowd.org

Thank you,

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