



POSITION PAPER ON POLICY

Title XVI

Recommendation

Expand eligibility of the program to transform the funding process into a modern competitive grant program.

Background

The Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992, more commonly referred to as Title XVI (Public Law 102-575), is the only federal program that provides funding specifically for water reuse projects in 17 western states and Hawaii.

Participants have used the funds for planning, design and construction of water reuse projects. Historically, the program has been used to build projects that reduce demand on local and imported surface water and groundwater. Essentially, wastewater treatment improvements offset the need for traditional water sources for a variety of uses, including agricultural irrigation, augmentation of potable supplies and environmental restoration or protection.

Since 1992, approximately \$639 million in Federal cost-share has been leveraged nearly four-fold (\$2.4 billion in non-Federal funding). In 2014 alone, an estimated 378,000 acre-feet of water was recycled.

Under current law, Congress must approve each project. Since the program was enacted in 1992, 53 projects have been authorized, 20 projects have been completed and 37 projects have completed feasibility projects.

Despite the success of the program and the growing demand for recycled water, no new projects have been authorized since 2011. In addition, the current process locks in funding for projects that may not move forward after the authorization because of a variety of factors, such as economic downturns, financing or changes in leadership.

Reformulation of the program would allow authorized projects to move forward, while freeing up funds for a new competitive grant program that would allow new projects to be prioritized and move forward with Congressional oversight.

Growing Water Supplies

By 2020, an estimated 2.3 billion gallons of wastewater will be available daily for reuse in drought-stricken California. That's enough to meet the demand for municipal, commercial and industrial uses for more than 8 million Californians or about 20% of the state's projected population in 2020.