



Information on Potential Metropolitan/Quechan Indian Tribe Seasonal Flowing Pilot Program

Water Planning and Stewardship Committee

Item 9-2

September 13, 2021

Agenda

- Background
- Potential Metropolitan/Quechan Indian Tribe Seasonal Following Pilot Program

Background

Quechan (Kwatsáan) Indian Tribe of the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation

- Constitutes the Reservation Division of the Yuma Project, along with Bard Water District
- Parcels irrigated through the All-American Canal, Yuma Main Canal, groundwater wells, or directly from the Colorado River
- Crops grown:
 - Winter: High-value vegetables
 - Spring/Summer: Lower-value, water-intensive grasses



Colorado River Water Priorities Quantification Settlement Agreement

Agency	Million Acre-feet
PVID	0.42 (Average)
Yuma Project	
IID	3.10
CVWD	0.33
MWD*	0.55
Total	4.40

**Amount fluctuates based on PVID/Yuma Project use, unused IID and CVWD water*

- Water made available to Metropolitan under this program would not affect existing rights in the Colorado River

Quechan Water Rights Settlement Agreement

- Settlement reached between Metropolitan and Quechan in 2005
- Metropolitan provides incentives to the Tribe to limit water use from the Colorado River
 - Provides stable supplies to Metropolitan
- Incentivizes Tribe to not develop and divert an additional:
 - 13,000 AF each year from 2006-2034
 - Since inception, Tribe has forborne diversion of nearly all 13,000 AF each year
 - 20,000 AF each year beginning 2035
- Settlement payments would be delineated from any water savings from potential Pilot

Metropolitan/Bard Seasonal Fallowing Program

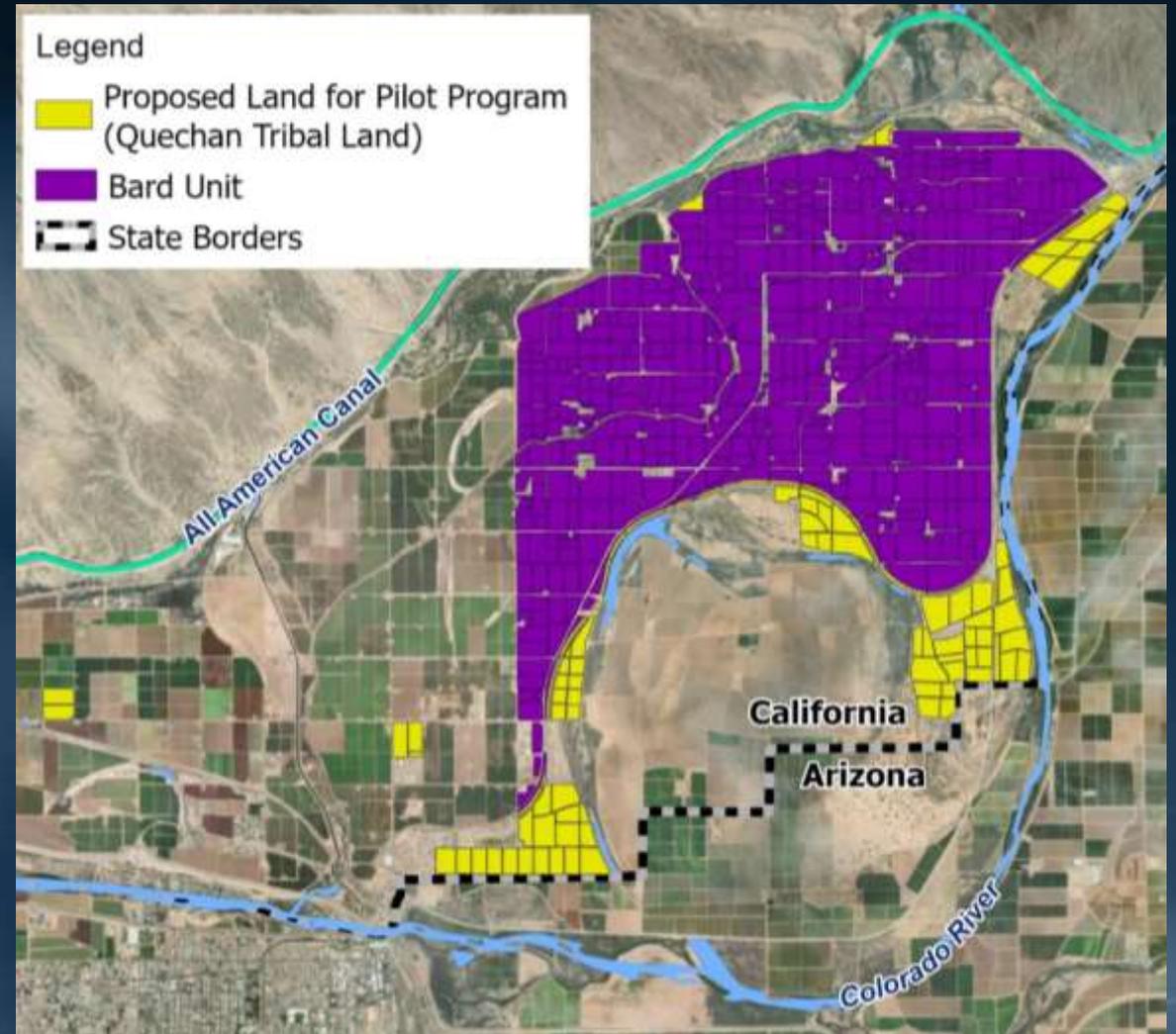
- Authorized by Board in December 2019
- Fallowing occurs April to July, 2020-2026
- Max enrollment of 3,000 irrigable acres each year
- Completed fallowing seasons:
 - 2020: 2,750 acres
 - Est. water savings: 6,075 acre-feet
 - 2021: 2,940 acres
 - Est. water savings: 6,490 acre-feet.
- Metropolitan payments
 - \$1.4 million, escalated annually
 - Avg. water cost: \$207/AF



Potential Metropolitan/Quechan Indian Tribe Seasonal Following Pilot Program

Purpose of Potential Pilot Program

- Evaluate the water savings of fallowing within the Tribal land
- Evaluate water available to Metropolitan from fallowing
- Determine farmer interest
 - **Voluntary participation**
- Explore the possibility of a long-term seasonal fallowing program with the Tribe



Key Elements of Potential Pilot Program

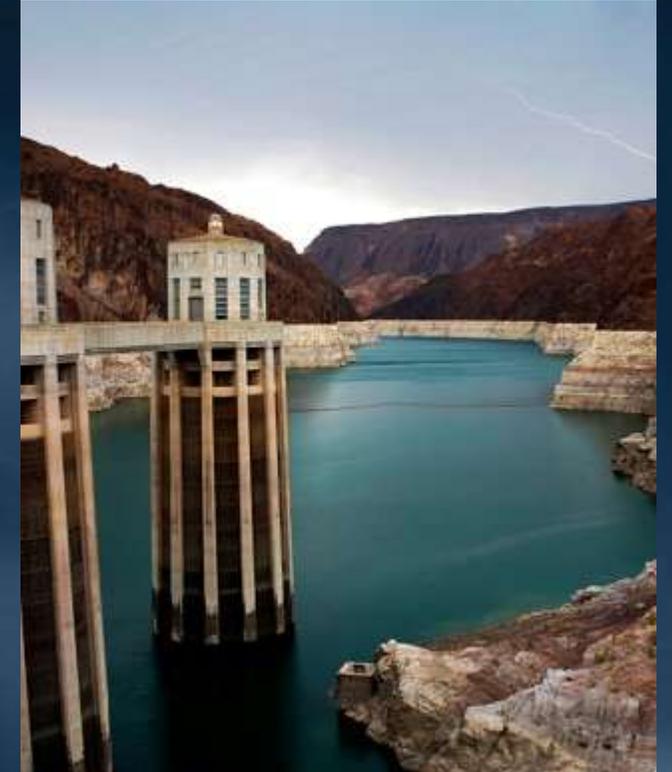
- Two following seasons: April to July, 2022-2023
 - Metropolitan would issue two-year following call by December 31, 2021
- Maximum enrollment of 1,600 irrigable acres each following season
- Participation on first-come, first-served basis
- Eligible parcels must have:
 - Recent history of farming or participation in following program
 - Access to a canal, direct-from-river pumping, or groundwater well
- Program agreement with Tribe and following agreements with farmers

Potential Pilot Program Costs

- Approx. \$473.10 per acre per year of fallowed irrigable land, escalated annually
 - 75% paid to farmer
 - 25% paid to Tribe
- Tribe payment of \$15,000 per year fallowed
 - Direct program costs and improvements
- Payments made in two installments following verification of fallowing
- Total payment costs for potential Pilot: \$1.6 million
 - Estimated unit cost: \$226.25/AF

Potential Pilot Program Benefits

- Expanding partnership between Metropolitan and Tribe
- Metropolitan Water District
 - Water saved through fallowing is available to Metropolitan
 - Est. water savings of 2.0 AF/acre of land fallowed
 - Opportunity for long-term program
- Quechan Tribe
 - Payments to farmers and Tribe
 - Payment to Tribe for system improvements
 - Opportunity for long-term program



Next Steps



