



Special Committee on Ag and Tribal Partnerships
Information on the Evaluation of
Crop Substitution with
Metropolitan's Colorado River
Agricultural Partners

Item 6e

June 23, 2026

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Crop Substitution Evaluation

Background

- The State of California has an urgent need to identify programs that conserve Colorado River supplies
- On May 1, 2026, the Lower Basin states submitted a proposal to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation that included 440,000 AF of reductions to California in both 2027 and 2028
 - Metropolitan is exploring potential programs to help California reduce its use

Crop Substitution Evaluation

Potential Program Exploration

- Metropolitan and PVID have discussed non-fallowing agricultural water conservation programs
 - Ex: crop switching program
- A farming entity is replacing alfalfa with a low water use crop in PVID's and IID's service areas.
 - 1 AF per acre compared to ~4.5 AF per acre
- Crop substitution has the potential to:
 - Conserve significant amounts of water
 - Preserve existing agricultural economies and communities

Crop Substitution Evaluation



Evaluation

- Metropolitan is evaluating the farming entity's efforts to farm a low water use crop
 - What are the actual water savings benefits?
 - Is a crop substitution program feasible in PVID and/or IID?
- Metropolitan and the farming entity signed a MOU to document the evaluation and Metropolitan's intent to assess the feasibility of a Crop Substitution Pilot Program
 - Non-binding

Crop Substitution Evaluation

Process From Evaluation to Program Development



Data Gathering



Evaluation



Conclusions



Potential Terms



Agency Discussions



Crop Substitution Evaluation

Crop Substitution Pilot Program

- Metropolitan has not made any commitments to develop a Crop Substitution Pilot Program
- Development and implementation of a Crop Substitution Pilot Program will depend on:
 - Water savings benefits
 - Feasibility of program success
 - Local support

Determined
through
evaluation

Crop Substitution Evaluation

Next Steps

- Continue to pursue the crop substitution evaluation
- Set up a site visit to farms in PVID with Metropolitan Directors on the Special Committee on Ag and Tribal Partnerships
- If a Crop Substitution Pilot Program is determined to be beneficial and feasible, Metropolitan will hold discussions with PVID and IID

