

California Department of Water Resources
Division of Statewide Integrated Water Management
Water Use and Efficiency Branch

STATUS REPORT ON
DEVELOPMENT OF FOURTH TARGET METHOD FOR URBAN WATER SUPPLIERS
TO MEET 2020 WATER USE TARGETS

10 January 2011

In November 2009, water conservation legislation, SBX7 7, was signed into law as part of a comprehensive water legislation package of five bills. This bill addresses both urban and agricultural water conservation. The legislation sets a goal of achieving a 20 percent statewide reduction in urban per capita water use and directs urban retail water suppliers to set 2020 urban water use targets. The law does not require that each water supplier reduce its per capita use by 20 percent. Instead, suppliers choose one of four methods for determining their urban water use target, three of which are specified in California Water Code §10608.20. A fourth method for determining urban water use targets is required to be developed by DWR. The task to develop the fourth method, the subject of this status report, is designated Project U4 by DWR.

Project Description

The purpose of Project U4, Fourth Target Method, is to develop a fourth target method in accordance with Water Code Section 10608.20(b)(4), which states:

A method that shall be identified and developed by the department, through a public process, and reported to the Legislature no later than December 31, 2010. The method developed by the department shall identify per capita targets that cumulatively result in a statewide 20-percent reduction in urban daily per capita water use by December 31, 2020. In developing urban daily per capita water use targets, the department shall do all of the following:

- (A) Consider climatic differences within the state.*
- (B) Consider population density differences within the state.*
- (C) Provide flexibility to communities and regions in meeting the targets.*
- (D) Consider different levels of per capita water use according to plant water needs in different regions.*
- (E) Consider different levels of commercial, industrial, and institutional water use in different regions of the state.*
- (F) Avoid placing an undue hardship on communities that have implemented conservation measures or taken actions to keep per capita water use low.*

Public Process

The development of the target method has relied on input from two public listening sessions at the beginning, from a 34-member Urban Stakeholder Committee (USC), and from a U4

Technical Subcommittee of the USC. To date there have been nine USC meetings and five U4 Technical Subcommittee meetings. The target method will be the topic in at least one additional USC meeting. Discussion documents for all meetings and all written comments received have been posted on DWR's Web site. The method proposed for adoption will be posted and be the subject of at least one public workshop. After consideration of the public comments, DWR will present the proposed target method to the California Water Commission (CWC) before adoption. The adopted method will be described in a report to the Legislature.

Schedule

Development of a target method that meets the statutory criteria and is publicly acceptable has been a technical challenge. Data have not been available for several promising proposals. There have been differing expectations regarding the outcomes for the fourth target method. To ensure a method that is technically defensible and responsive to public input, DWR has extended the adoption date until mid-February 2011. The proposed method will be released about January 18, 2011 followed by public workshops near the end of January. Before final adoption by DWR, the recommended method will be presented to the California Water Commission at its February 16, 2011 meeting.