

**LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER  
ANNUAL OWENS VALLEY REPORT**

**Annual Owens Valley Operations Plan for Runoff Year 2008-09  
Conditions of Owens Valley  
Status of 1991 Environmental Impact Report Mitigation Measure  
Status of Other Studies, Projects, and Activities**

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**May 2008**

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A The Bishop Cone Audit for the 2006-2007 Runoff Year

## **SUMMARY**

This report includes LADWP's proposed Owens Valley operations plan for the 2008-09 runoff year, an update on Owens Valley conditions, the current status of LADWP's environmental and mitigation projects, and other studies, projects, and activities.

### **Owens Valley Annual Operations Plan Summary**

For the period of April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 the forecast Owens Valley runoff is 356,100 acre-feet, or 86% of normal. According to the well ON/OFF provisions of the Water Agreement, approximately 144,000 acre-feet of water is available for groundwater pumping from Owens Valley wellfields. Currently, LADWP pumping is governed by the ON/OFF provisions of the Water Agreement and the Interim Management Plan (IMP) agreed upon by Inyo County and LADWP. Accordingly, LADWP's planned pumping is limited to 66,800 acre-feet for 2008-09 runoff year.

### **Owens Valley Conditions**

The 2008-09 runoff year is forecast to be below normal. The overall Eastern Sierra snow pack as of April 1, 2008 was 97% of normal. However, precipitation on the valley floor has been above normal with approximately 6.60 inches (mainly due to a storm event in early January 2008) as compared to the long-term average of 5.97 inches. Despite last year's below normal runoff, the overall vegetation cover in the Owens Valley remained above the mid-1980's baseline conditions in 2007. Similarly, groundwater levels in the wellfields generally remained stable mainly due to minimal pumping by LADWP.

During 2007-08 runoff year the Lower Owens River reached full operation status with minimum average flows of 40 cfs measured at all gauge stations. The total water use by the Lower Owens River, the delta, and the Blackrock waterfowl habitat was approximately 23,000 acre-feet for the year. The releases at the Los Angeles Aqueduct (LAA) intake is augmented through additional releases at the Independence, Blackrock, Georges, Locust, and Alabama spillgates to maintain an average continuous flow of at least 40 cfs in the river channel.

Construction of Owens Lake Dust Mitigation Measures continued during 2007-08 runoff year. With the additional areas covered by the Dust Control Project, water demand by the project continued to increase with total water use of 66,000 acre-feet during 2007-08 runoff years.

### **Enhancement/Mitigation Project Status**

The enhancement/mitigation projects discussed in this report are environmental projects that were implemented prior to the 1991 EIR, used to evaluate a long term groundwater management plan in the Owens Valley. Some of these projects were identified in the EIR as mitigations for impacts due to LADWP's water gathering activities. There are 26 projects identified as enhancement/mitigation measures; 24 of these have been completed or are being implemented, and two are in the final planning stages.

### **Mitigation Project Status**

There are 42 mitigation projects identified for thirteen impacts in the 1991 Owens Valley EIR. Twenty-nine of these projects have been completed or are being fully implemented. Ten of the mitigation projects are currently partially implemented, as they are in the process of being constructed or are being revegetated. Three projects are in the planning phase.

### **Other Studies**

Inyo County and LADWP are jointly working toward the completion of nine cooperative studies to develop a better understanding of Owens Valley natural resources and their connection to LADWP water gathering activities.

The status of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs for the Laws Irrigation Project, Well 415 in Big Pine, and the Lower Owens River Project (LORP) have been updated. The status on implementation of the 1991 Water Agreement and the 1997 MOU provisions has also been updated.