

## **Briefing Statement**

**Title:** Desert Water Resources Study

**Issue:** A FY 2000 work plan is needed for the Desert Water Resource Study

**Background/Status:**

- ◆ The DMG approved a desert water resources study for inclusion in its FY 2001 initiatives for the California Desert. Preliminary indications are that funding for the Study will be included in the Department of the Interior's proposed FY 2001 budget.
- ◆ The US Geological Survey (GS) has \$200-\$300k available to initiate the study in FY 2000. The money requires a match from a State or local agency. The matching funds need to be secured and the GS funds obligated early in FY 2000, otherwise the money will freed up to address other priority needs in the California.
- ◆ The California Department of Water Resource (CDWR) supports the study effort and currently has funds available to participate in and sponsor the study.
- ◆ The study will have ramifications for and be of potential interest to a variety of Federal, State and local agencies in the desert including (but not limited to) the GS, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Native American tribes, military bases/Department of Defense, California Department of Fish and Game, CDWR, California State Division of Mines and Geology, California State Water Quality Control Board, Mojave Water Agency, the State of Nevada, Inyo, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Kern, Imperial and San Diego Counties, and a host of local municipalities.
- ◆ The Science and Data Management Team believes that it should have general oversight responsibilities for the Desert Water Resource Study.

**Proposed Action:**

The DMG should direct the SDMT to develop a FY 2000 work plan for the Desert Water Resources Study. The work plan should be based on the funds available from GS and CDWR. FY 2000 Water Study objectives/tasks should include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ assessing data needs/gaps,
- ◆ developing a detailed Desert Water Resources Study Work Plan for FY 2001+ that describes the projects scope, objectives, tasks, end products, schedule, and budget in detail, and addresses the needs of as many of the affected/interested parties (above) as possible,
- ◆ developing a project management and stakeholder involvement plan for the study
- ◆ securing additional study partners/cooperators and developing agreements/MOU's to formalize their participation in the study.
- ◆ building consensus with Federal, State, local agencies and interested stakeholders on the need and scope of the project.

A draft FY 2000 work plan should be presented to the DMG for approval at its December 1-2 meeting in Death Valley.

**Contact:** John Hamill, DOI Coordinator, Cal Desert Mgt. Project - (760) 255-8888