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Memorandum

Date: October 19, 2009
To: Interested Parties
From: Walter Cotter, General Manager, Browns Valley Irrigation District
Subject: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Browns Valley Irrigation District Temporary Water Transfers Project

The Browns Valley Irrigation District (BVID) has issued a draft environmental impact report (DEIR) evaluating the potential environmental effects of the BVID Temporary Water Transfers Project. The DEIR has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.).

BVID is proposing a multiyear series of short-term (1-year) temporary water transfers to Department of Water Resources (DWR), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and contractors of the Central Valley Project (CVP) or State Water Project (SWP) south of the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta (Delta). The purpose of the proposed project is to maximize the utility to BVID and other water users of water conserved under BVID's pre-1914 water right (Conservation Water). The Conservation Water is available for transfer because BVID implemented the Upper Main Water Conservation Project, which made available 3,100 acre-feet per year (afy), under BVID's pre-1914 appropriative water right, for additional BVID demands or for transfer to willing buyers.

Each year during the period 2010-2025, BVID intends to identify willing buyers (DWR, Reclamation, and CVP and SWP contractors) downstream of its water service area that could take delivery of the Conservation Water, and execute one or more temporary transfer agreements. The water transfers would occur over a period of 2–6 weeks between July 1 and October 31 of each year. The Conservation Water would be transferred only during years when sufficient supplies were available for BVID to both make full deliveries to its Yuba River service area and transfer Conservation Water.

To accommodate the schedule for making the water available to the buyer, the Conservation Water would be temporarily stored by Yuba County Water Agency (YCWA) in New Bullards Bar Reservoir at the rate that it is conserved during the irrigation season. The Conservation Water would be released into the North Yuba River from New Bullards Bar Reservoir under agreements with YCWA and pursuant to river-management procedures established by the Lower Yuba River Accord. The Conservation Water would flow through Englebright Reservoir and down the lower Yuba, Feather, and Sacramento Rivers in excess of existing minimum flow requirements to the Delta.

No known hazardous materials contamination sites would be affected.

In addition to the proposed project, the DEIR considers the No-Project Alternative, a service area expansion alternative in lieu of transfers, and two north-of-Delta temporary transfer alternatives.

All impacts evaluated in the DEIR have been identified as being less than significant without mitigation required.

Copies of the DEIR and electronic copies of the reference documents may be reviewed during normal business hours at the BVID office, 9370 Browns Valley School Rd, Browns Valley, CA 95918, and at the Yuba County Library, 303 2nd St., Marysville, CA 95901-6011.

The DEIR is also available for review online at www.bvid.org. Electronic copies of the DEIR are also available on CD. To request a copy, please contact Walter Cotter, BVID's General Manager, at (530) 743-5703.

The DEIR is available for public review and comment until Friday, December 4, 2009. Written comments must be submitted no later than 3 p.m. on Friday, December 4, 2009 to the following address:

Walter Cotter, General Manager
Browns Valley Irrigation District
PO Box 6
Browns Valley, CA 95918
Fax: (530) 743-0445

Comments also may be provided via e-mail to Walter Cotter at walter@bvid.org. If comments are provided via e-mail, please include the project title in the subject line, attach comments in Microsoft Word format, and include the commenter's U.S. Postal Service mailing address.