

## SAN DIEGO REGION EDITION

The San Diego County Water Authority is studying a potential new aqueduct to transport its independent and highly reliable water supplies from the Colorado River to San Diego County at a lower cost than other options. The second phase of the study is currently on hold.

A Regional Conveyance System is one of the ideas being explored by San Diego County water leaders to enhance partnerships and provide solutions that make sense locally and more broadly as part of Governor Newsom's Water Portfolio Program to develop water resiliency statewide.

## GOALS OF THE STUDY

The Water Authority's study assesses whether a new conveyance system is the most affordable long-term strategy to move conserved water from the Imperial Valley to San Diego County under the landmark 2003 Quantification Settlement Agreement, or QSA. The feasibility study also focuses on how a new system could provide multiple benefits as part of a long-term water management strategy for California and the Southwest. Currently, the Water Authority pays the Metropolitan

### The Phase B Study would:

- Address questions about mitigating short-term rate impacts
- Look at benefits of potential partnerships and funding opportunities
- Assess financing options and the agreement requirements
- Include a robust stakeholder outreach

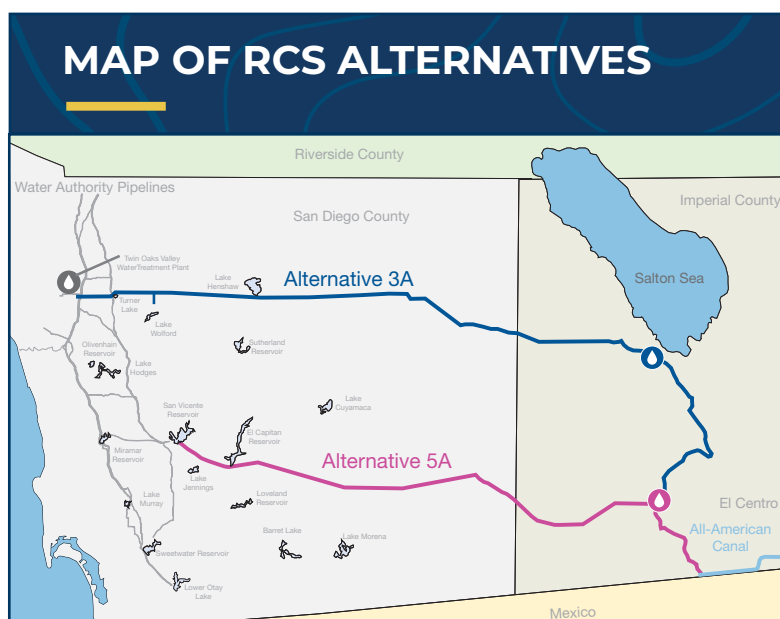
Water District of Southern California (MWD) to convey QSA water through Riverside County before it flows to the San Diego region.

## PHASED STUDY PROVIDES FLEXIBILITY

The phased feasibility study, currently on hold, gives the Water Authority's Board flexibility to provide direction at key decision points. Phase A, completed in August 2020, focused on engineering and costs and looked at three potential routes. Phase A results demonstrated that Northern Alternative 3A and Southern Alternative 5A are technically feasible and cost-competitive with other options – including continued use of MWD facilities – and should be studied further in Phase B.

Both Alternatives 5A and 3A connect to the end of the All-American Canal in southwest Imperial County. Alternative 5A would follow a southern route and connect to the Water Authority's system at San Vicente Reservoir. Alternative 3A would follow a northern route and connect to the Water Authority's system at the Twin Oaks Valley Water Treatment Plant north of San Marcos.

Phase B, which was approved by the Water Authority Board in November 2020, but is on hold, would focus on an analysis of economics, potential partnerships, funding opportunities, and legal requirements. Phase B would include a robust stakeholder outreach.



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[sdcwa.org](http://sdcwa.org)  
[waternewsnetwork.com](http://waternewsnetwork.com)



## WATER RELIABILITY

Since the QSA started in 2003, the Water Authority has received an increasing portion of its water supplies through the transfer of conserved water from the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) and the lining of the All-American and Coachella canals. The QSA supplies, which reached their full annual transfer amount in 2021, meet half of the San Diego region’s water demands, ensuring a long-term highly reliable base supply that supports local water supply development projects.

The water transfer agreement with IID runs through 2047 with an option to extend to 2077 if both parties agree. The canal lining water flows to San Diego County for 110 years.

Since the Water Authority has no direct access to water conserved by IID, it is delivered to San Diego County under a separate agreement with MWD that ends in 2047. To prepare for that timeline, the Water Authority would need to negotiate a new agreement with MWD or explore other conveyance options for the IID transfer water. Delivery of the canal lining water is secured for the entire 110-year duration of that supply.

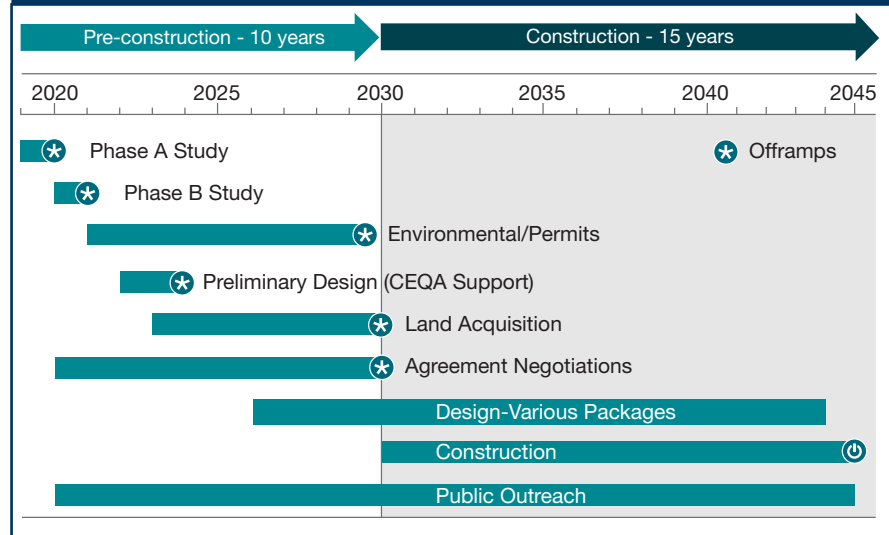
The Water Authority’s feasibility study is part of wide-ranging discussions across the Southwest about how to best manage the limited water supplies from the Colorado River for the maximum benefits.



The Regional Conveyance System would connect to the All-American Canal in Imperial County, and the Water Authority is assessing potential benefits the project could deliver for other stakeholders in the area.

## FLEXIBILITY IN DECISION MAKING

The development process provides numerous offramps for the Water Authority’s Board of Directors until construction begins, not only at the end of each phase but at any point along the way.



## POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF REGIONAL CONVEYANCE

The study is designed to explore potential partnerships and compatible multi-use projects that could help reduce cost to the Water Authority and its member agencies while providing strong support for the State of California’s Water Resilience Portfolio Initiative.

The study also considers a variety of partnerships across the Southwest that could develop or enhance operational water storage, renewable energy integration, and other multi-benefit opportunities. In the Imperial Valley, the study evaluates potential for shared facilities with IID that could support agriculture while addressing critical issues at the Salton Sea. Further, the study considers partnerships with state, federal, local agencies, tribal governments, and Mexico, along with potential public-private partnerships.

## MORE INFO

<http://bit.ly/ColoradoRiverSM>