

The Water Authority's supply portfolio includes high-priority, independent Colorado River supplies negotiated through the landmark 2003 Quantification Settlement Agreement, or QSA. These supplies – the result of water conservation efforts – are the cornerstone of the San Diego region's long-term water supply strategy.

In addition, the Water Authority purchases Colorado River water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Before 2003, the Water Authority purchased all of its imported water supply from MWD, which owns and operates the 240-mile Colorado River Aqueduct. Dependence on a single supplier increased the risk of water shortages.

By developing large, independent supplies from the Colorado River, the Water Authority enhanced water reliability and minimized the risk of serious shortages for San Diego. The QSA supplies include a conservation-and-transfer agreement with the Imperial Irrigation District and water conserved by lining portions of the All-American and Coachella canals. The Water Authority receives 277,700 acre-feet annually from these efforts, comprising more than half of the San Diego region's total water supply.

THE QSA

In October 2003, the San Diego County Water Authority, Coachella Valley Water District, Imperial Irrigation District, MWD, State of California, and U.S. Department of the Interior completed a historic set of agreements to conserve and transfer Colorado River water.

The QSA provide highly reliable conserved water supplies for the San Diego region that support efforts to develop local water supplies such as recycling and potable reuse. The landmark agreement also allowed California to implement major Colorado River water conservation and transfer programs, stabilizing

water supplies for up to 75 years and reducing the state's demand on the river to its 4.4 million-acre-foot entitlement. In addition, it provided a restoration path for the environmentally sensitive Salton Sea.

The QSA has held up to scrutiny under several unsuccessful legal challenges in state and federal courts. The Water Authority continues to work with all the major players on Colorado River issues and water management strategies that would provide the Water Authority additional operational flexibility and benefit the Southwest and Basin states.

KEY BENEFITS OF THE QSA

■ Reducing California's Over-Dependence on Colorado River

The QSA enabled California to reduce its historical overdependence on the Colorado River through voluntary agriculture-to-urban water transfers and other programs. The state can now live within its 4.4 million-acre-foot entitlement.

■ Restoring the Salton Sea

Legislation associated with the QSA makes restoration of the Salton Sea a state responsibility.

■ Providing Water

The QSA provides more than 30 million acre-feet through conservation over the life of the transfer programs, including long-term supplies to San Diego County.

■ Fostering Mutual Benefits

QSA funds support conservation, economic diversification, agricultural growth, environmental mitigation, and protection of long-standing water rights.

WATER TRANSFERS

As part of the QSA, the Water Authority-Imperial Irrigation District (IID) water transfer provides 200,000 acre-feet of water a year for San Diego County through water conservation measures in Imperial Valley. It is the largest agricultural to urban water transfer in the nation. The initial term of the Water Authority-IID Water Transfer Agreement is 45 years. If both parties agree, the agreement can be renewed for an additional 30 years.

Supported by annual funding from the Water Authority, IID conserves water through a combination of system conservation and on-farm conservation methods. In 2010, the Water Authority also provided IID with \$50 million to assist in these efforts. IID is using the money for the exclusive purpose of constructing system-conservation capital improvement projects. Between 2003 and 2017, the Water Authority also provided \$30 million to IID to help diversify the Imperial Valley economy and mitigate socioeconomic impacts of the water transfer.

CANAL LINING PROJECTS

As part of the QSA, the Water Authority obtained rights to conserved water from the All-American and Coachella canal linings – 77,700 acre-feet per year for 110 years. Over that time, 8.5 million acre-feet will flow to San Diego County. Water flows were diverted from existing earthen canals to the new concrete-lined sections, significantly reducing water loss through leakage and allowing the conserved water to be put to use.

Under the canal lining projects, approximately 23 miles of parallel, concrete-lined canal were constructed next to the original All-American Canal, and 35 miles of parallel, concrete-lined canal were constructed next to the original Coachella Canal. The Coachella Canal Lining Project was completed in 2007. The All-American Canal Lining Project was finished in 2010.



MORE INFO



The All-American Canal