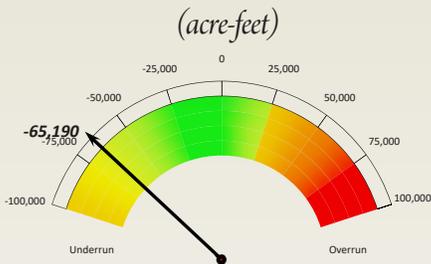




Ditchbank

May 2019

IID 2019 Forecasted Water Use



<https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/hourly/forecast.pdf>

4/30/2019

Water for growing cannabis, hemp

Until recently, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation had one policy regarding the use of federal facilities for the supply of water for cannabis or hemp growers: it was prohibited.

Because IID's Colorado River water supply is obtained through a federal water contract and diverted through federal facilities, laws prohibiting water deliveries for the cultivation of these crops applied to IID water users.

With the recent declassification of hemp as a Schedule 1 controlled substance in the 2018 Farm Bill, and while water deliveries for hemp cultivation are still generally prohibited, state and federal regulators are developing new plans that are anticipated

to lessen this restriction. For now though, IID can only provide water service for hemp production if one of two authorized exemptions apply:

- California Department of Food and Agriculture pilot project.
- educational purposes.

CDFA pilot projects

If a California Department of Food and Agriculture pilot project is being pursued, a letter on official CDFA letterhead, signed under penalty of perjury, must be submitted to IID. The letter must state that the cultivation of hemp is for the purpose of studying the growth, cultivation or

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DCP potential impacts on Salton Sea

IID filed a petition in April in Los Angeles Superior Court alleging violations of the California Environmental Quality Act by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, calling on the court to suspend approvals and actions related to the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan until such time that an appropriate CEQA analysis and process is completed.

The CEQA statute requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible.

IID's petition alleges that MWD violated CEQA principles by committing to enter into agreements, on behalf of itself and all other California contractors, which could require MWD to forgo diverting up to hundreds of thousands of acre-feet of

water annually from the Colorado River without considering how it will make up the shortfall, which could total over 2 million acre-feet.

The district maintains that the Salton Sea is an integral part of the Colorado River system and its rapid decline presents a severe public health and environmental hazard for the Imperial and Coachella valleys. Further, environmental injustice impacts may affect a number of severely disadvantaged communities in both valleys and damage an agricultural economy that serves the nation.

"The logic in going forward without IID was that the DCP couldn't wait for the Salton Sea," said Henry Martinez, IID general manager. "This legal challenge

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Improved hydrology in the Colorado River basin

Weather data and hydrology reports indicate that precipitation in the Colorado River basin has been above average throughout the months of February and March, with snowpack peaking at 133 percent of normal in April. The predicted shortage operating condition that has been widely anticipated for calendar year 2020 has been delayed for at least a year due to the increased water supply forecasts.

Snowpack

During the first half of March, two significant storm systems swept through the basin. In some areas of the southwest and central Utah and Colorado, precipitation conditions ranged from 110 to

300 percent of average, with some areas receiving record-setting snowpack. March also experienced cooler temperatures that helped preserve carry-over snowpack from previous months at lower elevations.

Forecasted runoff

The forecasted April-to-July runoff into Lake Powell is projected to be 9.2 million acre-feet, which is 128 percent of normal. Since early February, this forecast has increased nearly 4 MAF and has the potential to result in the second highest observed runoff volume in the last 22 years.

Leaching can be beneficial for soil and for crops

Growers are reminded of the many benefits of leaching to improve soil conditions and crop production.

Leaching allows water to thoroughly wet the soil, causing salts to dissolve and move into lower soil stratifications and subsurface tile drains. Pushing the salt away from the root zone can provide better crop growth and improve yields. Given the current water use forecast, growers should determine if a summer leaching event

would be beneficial to fields between crops.

In addition to leaching salts, this irrigation method can help growers monitor tile lines, refill the field's soil moisture profile, assist with weed control and potentially manage pathogens.

For a complete list of water regulations, **visit www.iid.com/waterregulations**.

Growing Cannabis

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marketing of industrial hemp and that the site is certified by, and registered with, the CDFA.

Educational projects

For educational projects, a full-time professor at an accredited institution may file a letter, signed under penalty of perjury and on official letterhead, that fulfills all the parameters established by the 2014 Farm Bill. A second letter from an administrative official at the institution (dean or higher, on official letterhead and signed under penalty of perjury), would also need to expressly authorize the aforementioned professor to conduct such research and confirm the professor's employment. Both letters must be provided to IID as a condition of water service for hemp.

Farm Bill

Although the 2018 Farm Bill removed hemp from classification as a Schedule 1 controlled substance, it maintained federal regulation of hemp production under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Pursuant to the bill, USDA will develop regulations to evaluate and approve plans submitted by states to regulate hemp. Plans

will need to incorporate special provisions ensuring compliance with the Farm Bill. To date, no USDA-approved California regulatory plan or USDA federal regulatory plan is currently in place, therefore, hemp production remains illegal under federal law, outside of the above exemptions, and is not yet eligible for IID water delivery service.

DCP and Salton Sea

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is going to put that logic to the test and the focus will now be where it should have been all along – at the Salton Sea.”

While IID worked to be a partner in the DCP process, the Bureau of Reclamation and state water officials, including California, completed agency approvals for a DCP that excluded IID in mid-March.

