

**Statement of Robert Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner  
Bureau of Reclamation  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Before the  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Subcommittee on Water and Power**

**May 24, 2007  
HR 31**

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Bob Quint, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am pleased to be here today to give the Department of the Interior's views on HR 31, the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District Wastewater and Recycled Water Facilities Act. The Department does not support HR 31.

HR 31 would amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, 43 U.S.C. 390h *et seq.*), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of facilities needed to treat wastewater and distribute recycled water within the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District's service area. It provides for Federal funding of 25 percent of the total project cost or \$12.5 million, whichever is less.

The Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District is located in southwestern Riverside County, which has been experiencing rapid growth. The District is heavily dependent on imported water provided by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. In order to lessen this dependence, and to provide for additional future growth, the District is developing plans for recycled water systems in the Alberhill and Wildomar areas. The Alberhill system consists of a wastewater treatment facility and distribution system, which includes pumps, pipelines, and storage facilities. Reclamation does not have an estimated cost for this system. The Wildomar system consists of a distribution system which includes pumps, pipelines, and storage facilities. Total estimated cost of the Wildomar system is about \$16.2 million.

Of the 32 specific Title XVI projects authorized to date, 21 have received funding. The remaining estimated total authorized Federal cost share of these 21 active Title XVI projects is at least \$328 million. Given the costs of the currently active Title XVI projects, we do not support the authorization of new projects at this time.

The Department supports efforts to increase local water supplies and increase recycled water use in southern California. Reclamation is currently working with the District to review the technical work completed to date and to identify the additional work necessary to prepare a complete feasibility report meeting the feasibility requirements of Title XVI projects. However, because the technical studies are not complete, the feasibility and cost effectiveness of this project cannot be determined. Title XVI provisions require that these technical studies be completed and reviewed to determine the feasibility and cost effectiveness. Reclamation cannot support authorization of projects before the feasibility study is complete.

While Reclamation does not support new water recycling project authorizations, we understand that the projects established by Title XVI are important to many water users in the West. To that end, Reclamation has set about revising and improving its Directives and Standards that govern reviews of Title XVI projects. By doing so, we believe that Reclamation can play a more constructive role with local sponsors in weighing the merits and ultimate feasibility of proposed water recycling projects.

Madam Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HR 31. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.