

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Series: Public Lands

Part 600: Public Land Policy

Chapter 2: Water Conservation Policy for the Public Lands Administered by the Department of the Interior

Originating Office: Bureau of Land Management

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2.1 In many areas of the West, existing water supplies are being used to capacity. In some places, water is being “mined” from underground reserves far beyond annual replenishment. In the long run, disregard for the conservation of this vital national resource can only jeopardize existing water uses and limit future growth. The Department of the Interior recognizes the magnitude of the impact that Federal land management has upon the Nation’s land and water resources. Such recognition in no way infringes on the obligations of the respective States and of citizens themselves to manage and conserve water resources.

2.2 Federal lands will be managed under the highest conservation standards and technological processes available with primary consideration given to the conservation of the Nation’s lands and resources. This management will be implemented through comprehensive land use planning done in coordination with other governmental agencies and in full cooperation with interested groups and individuals.

2.3 In all of its public land management programs, the Department of the Interior will adopt policies which encourage the management of water as a renewable natural resource.

2.4 The Department of the Interior will conduct its public land management activities in a manner to promote the conservation of water supplies. In its land disposition programs, the Department will avoid actions which would endanger the supply of adequate water for existing users or encourage the unwise dissipation of water reserves.

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