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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D C 20548

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RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

MAY 2 1974

Mr. Gilbert G. Stamm
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
Department of the Interior

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Dear Mr. Stamm:

We have completed our review of the coordination between the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture in planning for irrigation projects.

In a draft of a proposed report to the Congress, we suggested that the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture have their respective agencies jointly establish (1) uniform policies and procedures for determining irrigation benefits in planning for multipurpose water resource projects and (2) a coordination process for comprehensive planning of irrigation projects. Also, we suggested that the Water Resources Council encourage and assist the Departments in establishing a coordination process and review the jointly establish policies and procedures for making irrigation benefit determinations for conformance with the Council's Principles and Standards for Planning Water and Related Land Resources.

Department of Interior's comments on the draft of our proposed report advised us that all three of our suggestions have been met or have been adequately provided for in the new Principles and Standards. The comments stated that the Bureau of Reclamation was using, Guidelines for Implementing Principles and Standards for Multiobjective Planning of Water Resources and a recent addendum which was developed by a multiagency group including Agriculture and Reclamation representatives. Also, we were advised that the guidelines were under review by the Department of the Interior and would be reviewed by the Water Resources Council for conformance with the Council's Principles and Standards.

We believe that the actions being taken by the Departments and the Council should bring about improvements in the coordination process and in achieving uniformity in computing irrigation benefits. Further, our planned report on need for improvement in benefit-cost

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determinations for Federal water resource projects, which was also commented on by your department, deals more comprehensively with the subject of benefit determinations. We therefore do not plan any further reporting on our coordination review at this time.

We appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended to us during our review.

Sincerely yours,


Harold Pichney
Assistant Director.

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