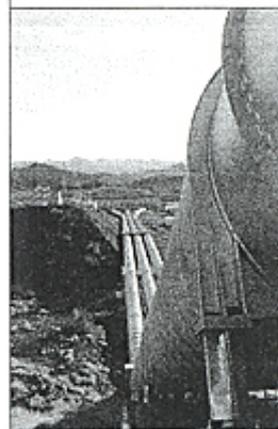
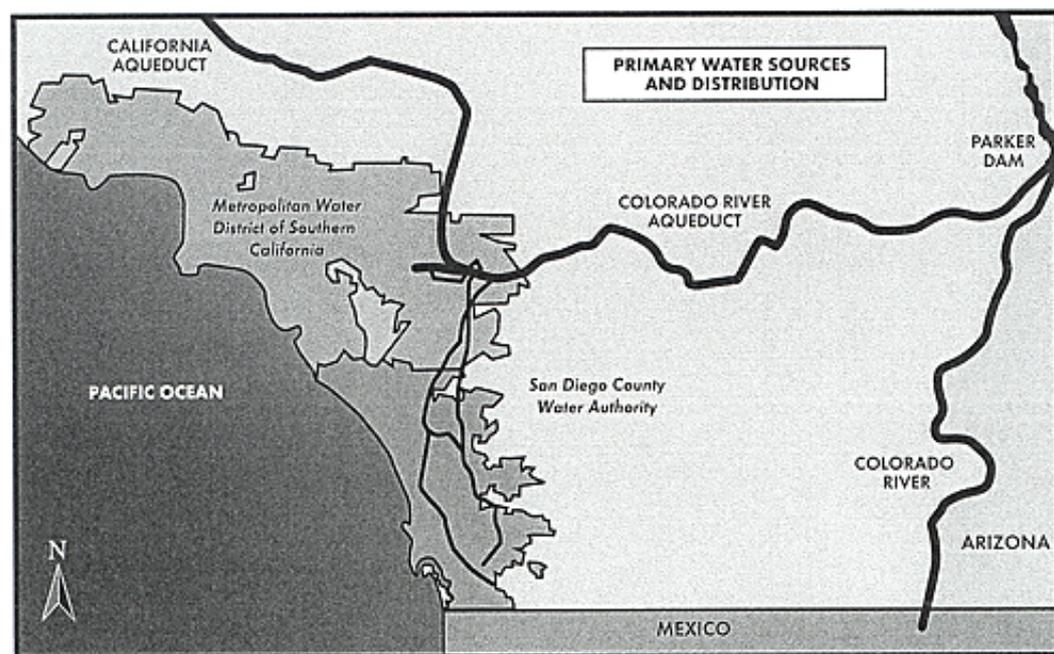


## SECTION 3 - IMPORTED WATER SUPPLIES

As San Diego County has grown, so has the region's reliance on imported water supplies. Historically, the Authority has imported 75 to 95 percent of the region's water supply. In FY2000, the Authority supplied 83 percent of the water used in the region. Metropolitan is currently the sole source of imported water supply to the Authority. Metropolitan's ability to provide reliable supplies, particularly in a dry year, is constrained by the preferential right of each of its member agencies, as well as by current uncertainties regarding the continued reliability of the State Water Project and the Colorado River. Therefore, the Authority is taking steps to reduce dependence upon Metropolitan and diversify imported supplies. In April 1998, the Authority entered into an agreement with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) for the transfer of 200,000 AF of conserved water as a major component of its diversification effort. The transfer is a cornerstone of the California Colorado River Water Use Plan. During the next five years, it is expected that the water transfer agreement with IID, along with other water transfers, will be implemented to increase the Authority's water supply reliability and reduce sole reliance on Metropolitan. This section describes the existing and anticipated future imported water supplies for the San Diego region.

FIGURE 3-1  
METROPOLITAN SERVICE AREA  
INCLUDING SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY



### 3.1 METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT

Formed in 1928 to develop, store, and distribute supplemental water in Southern California for domestic and municipal purposes, Metropolitan now supplies water to approximately 16 million people in a service area that includes portions of Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego counties. The Metropolitan service area, shown in **Figure 3-1**, covers a 70-mile-wide strip of the Southern California coastal plain, extending from the city of Oxnard on the north to the Mexican border. Close to half of the water used in this 5,200-square-mile region is supplied by Metropolitan, and about 90 percent of its population receives at least some of its water from Metropolitan. The extent to which Metropolitan's member agencies rely upon Metropolitan supplies varies. The ability of Metropolitan to provide supplies in a given year may depend upon the extent to which member agencies exercise their respective preferential right to purchase water.

The Authority, one of 27 Metropolitan member agencies, is the largest agency in terms of deliveries, purchasing about 30 percent of all the water Metropolitan delivered in FY1989-99. **Table 3-1** shows water use by Metropolitan's member agencies for fiscal year 1998-99 and preferential right to water based on 2.1 million acre-feet (MAF) of supply, which is what Metropolitan has represented as its firm supply. Metropolitan obtains its water from two sources: the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA), which it owns and operates, and the State Water Project (SWP).

#### 3.1.1 Colorado River

Metropolitan was formed to import water from the Colorado River. During the 1930s, Metropolitan built the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) to convey this water. The first deliveries were made to Metropolitan member agencies in 1941. The aqueduct is more than 240 miles long, beginning at Lake Havasu on the Arizona/California border and ending at Lake Mathews in Riverside County. The aqueduct has capacity to deliver up to 1.3 MAF each year. **Figure 3-1** shows the location of the aqueduct.

For many years, Metropolitan has chosen, for financial reasons, to minimize SWP deliveries to the Authority so that its water supply comes primarily from the Colorado River. Because the high salinity Colorado River water has been shown to cause extensive economic damage in San Diego County, the Authority has long sought to obtain its share of SWP supplies for which it pays Metropolitan. **Section 3.1.3** contains additional information on the issue of salinity in Metropolitan's supplies.