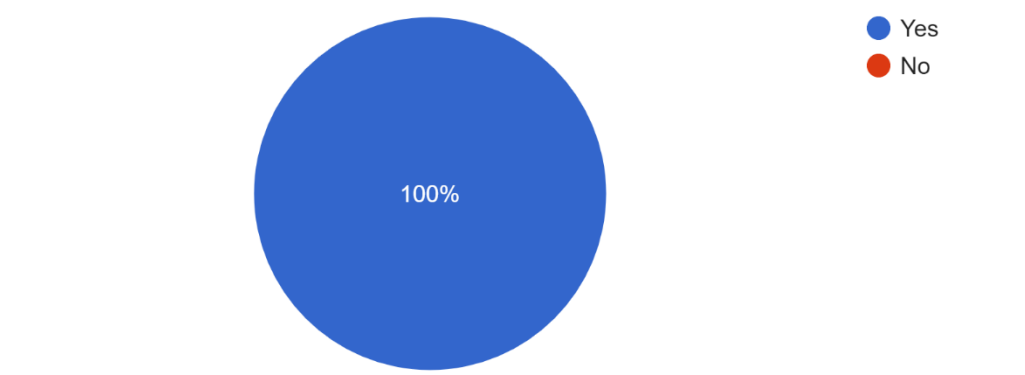
February 18, 2021 Agricultural BMP Advisory Committee Meeting Questionnaire Responses

These are responses collected from a questionnaire distributed during the February 18, 2021 Agricultural BMP Adviosry Committee Meeting.

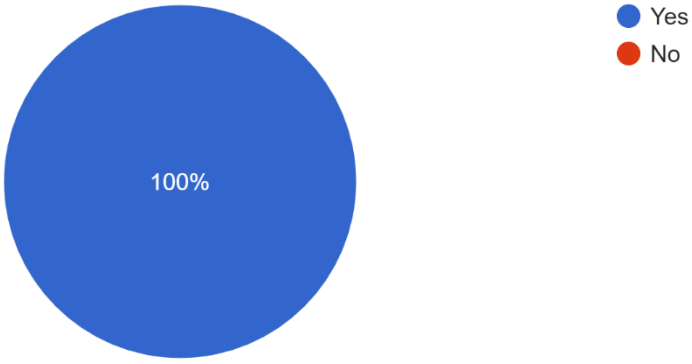
(*Note: Different colors are diffent reponses)



Please explain your answer regarding Category 1. If you would like to see changes made to the category, please describe any specific changes suggested.
BMP 1.1 Concrete lined ditch: Suggest to rename category to: "Lined Ditch" to allow for other lining technologies such as HDPE liners such as Smart Ditch or other approved membrane technologies.
Water users in the Roosevelt Irrigation District already have concrete lined ditches on their farms.

Do you agree with the changes to BMP Category 2 as proposed?

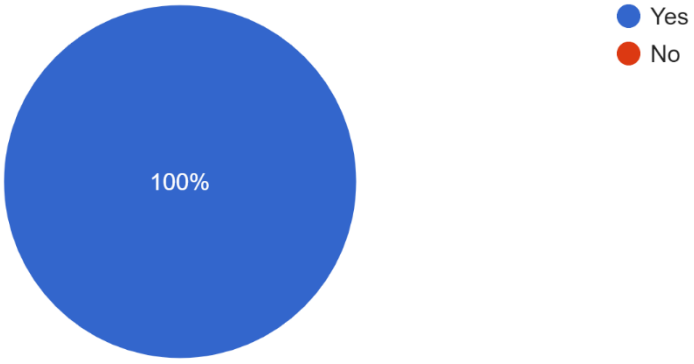
3 responses



Please explain your answer regarding Category 2. If you answered no, would you support the changes with modifications? Please describe any specific modifications suggested.
We support the concepts outlined in changes to Category 2 in that they do a better job of reflecting the value of level basin flood irrigation relative to drip and sprinkler irrigation. However, we reserve the right to make changes or modifications to the proposals for new BMPs 2.7 and 2.8 to make sure that they accurately reflect on-farm conditions and realities. There are also additional modifications that need to be made to modify the pressure measurement requirements for sprinkler irrigation to replace "mainline water pressure" with "pressure at the sprinkler head." This change needs to be made in Categories 2.6, 2.7, and 2.11. We also believe that Category Two needs to include a "substitute practices" category such as that found in Category Three in order to encapsulate additional practices that are deserving of credit in the BMP worksheet.
The proposed modifications in 2.7 and 2.8 that deal with non-qualifying sprinkler and drip systems allows greater contribution by system operators to improve their system efficiencies with the proposed management and infrastructure practices. BMP 2.9 and 2.10 are appropriate since they allow slightly more slope in flood-irrigated fields that have uniform slopes. This increase in allowable slope improves the system efficiency of these flood systems by allowing more gradient downfield to push water to the end of the field in an optimum time. It has become evident over the past years that grades that are too flat do not allow the water to move downfield fast enough to be highly efficient on level systems.

Do you agree with the changes to BMP Category 3 as proposed?

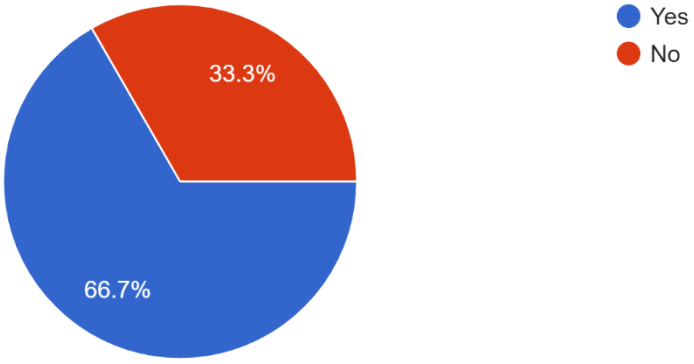
3 responses



Please explain your answer regarding Category 3. If you answered no, would you support the changes with modifications? Please describe any specific modifications suggested.
BMP 3.10 should not be restricted to participation only with Consultant or ID's sponsored irrigation scheduling services. Consider including Grant funded programs (eg. ADWR/BOR/USDA) or technologies invested by operator (eg. weather based or soil moisture monitoring scheduling programs).
We support the changes proposed to Category 3. We also believe that there is an opportunity for additional management-based BMPs to fully capture the irrigation management practices employed by farmers to make their water use as efficient as possible. We look forward to continuing to work with the Department to draft these additional BMPs.
BMP 3.1 allows the inclusion of GPS guidance systems for field layout and leveling control as well as laser-controlled level systems which are already included. The GPS precision control of tractors and other farm and construction equipment is rather recent and was not widely available when the earlier Management Plans were developed. The GPS systems have had wide acceptance by Arizona farmers and allow greater water conservation by creating very precise borders and furrows, which increase the irrigation efficiency by providing a very uniform and precise field layout for water applications. BMP 3.2 and 3.3 The addition of these practices assures that sprinkler and drip systems are motivated to provide regular system maintenance and/or system replacements at the end of their useful life. It also allows the systems owners to demonstrate the efficient system performance to the Department as needed to extend the life of the systems if they are still performing at the specified efficiency. BMP 3.6. The inclusion of Angled Borders into the Angled Rows BMP is appropriate, since a border functions similar to a water furrow, but is wider. Laying out borders at an angle reduces the field slope within that border and allows the field to become a level system and achieve high irrigation efficiency without moving large quantities of soil to remove the field slope.

Do you agree with the proposal to make no changes to BMP Category 4?

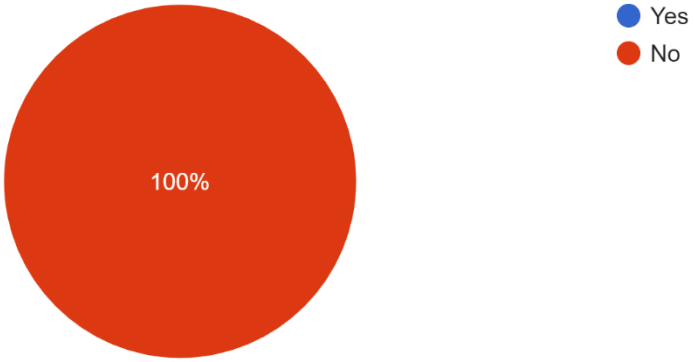
3 responses



Please explain your answer regarding Category 4. If you would like to see changes made to the category, please describe any specific changes suggested.
We support the changes proposed to Category 4. We also believe that there is an opportunity for additional management-based BMPs to fully capture the irrigation management practices employed by farmers to make their water use as efficient as possible. We look forward to continuing to work with the Department to draft these additional BMPs.
BMP 4.4 The proposal is to add another practice which improves irrigation efficiency by applying a compound known as polyacrylamide to the irrigation water. This compound is a flocculating agent which removes suspended soil from the water and allows it to stay in place, reducing soil erosion in the furrow or border and improving the soil uptake of water. BMP 4.8 Planting in bottom of furrow . It is proposed to include the border irrigation system along with the furrow system since this practice has the same benefits as planting in the bottom of the furrow. Both systems have seeds placed just under the soil surface and irrigation water is applied down the border, over the top of the seedbed, allowing rapid wetting of the soil around the seed, as compared to placing the seed above the water surface and waiting for the soil to absorb water by capillary action.

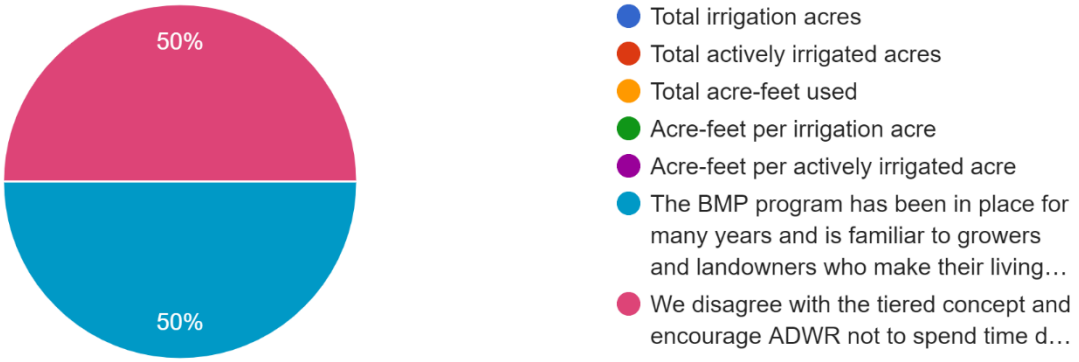
Please review the 5MP Concepts summary regarding introducing Tiers to the BMP Programs for the 5MP. Do you support including this type of concept in the 5MPs?

2 responses



If we pursue the Tiers concept for the 5MPs, which criteria should we use to establish those tiers?

2 responses



Do you have any other feedback or items we should focus on in discussion of the Tiers concept?
Need more defined program information or explanation of the Tiers concept to provide feedback.
Requiring higher water use farms to employ more BMPs does not recognize the efficiency factors of each individual farm and may encourage producers to move water from highly efficient lands and onto less efficient lands. We believe this concept is problematic and should be dismissed at this time.
I recommend staying with the BMP program, further evaluate and consider the proposed modifications, since this approach maintains the structure of the BMP program and provides stability to the water conservation issues that are implemented on the farms in this area.