

feasibility studies with OSW funding a portion of the cost and the State supplying direct funds or personnel to the programs.

I am pleased to report to this committee that the construction of the plant in Jibba, Saudi Arabia, is now complete. Initial startup operations are underway and we expect to have the plant in commercial operation by midsummer.

Another interesting development that I am pleased to report to the members of this committee is that the Department of the Interior has formed a task force which will utilize the best expertise of the bureaus and agencies of the Department for an in-depth coordinated study of the potential development, for both power and water, of the geothermal resources of the Imperial Valley region. An important part of this task force effort will be an evaluation of the potential of existing processes to desalt mineral laden geothermal brines and to develop new processes or combinations of processes, as required, to recover economically fresh water from this presently untapped source of supply.

This study of geothermal resources along with other desalting alternatives are important facets of the Department's Western U.S. Water Plan Study. Even from preliminary studies, we can foresee that desalting may have major application to meet the long-range water needs in this region, both as to quantity and quality.

There is universal agreement that the water supply of the Colorado River is inadequate to meet future demands. There is further widespread agreement that augmentation of the natural flows of the river will be necessary, as a solution to rising water demands. Augmentation by desalting may well provide opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of Colorado River basin's water supply.

Turning to our program that we propose for 1972, we are asking for an appropriation authorization of \$27,025,000. In the current year, fiscal year 1971, we have available for our program \$28,573,000. By simple arithmetic, this indicates a decrease of \$1,548,000. However, in our 1971 appropriation, there is a nonrecurring item of \$4.3 million for the construction of the module in Orange County. So if we take that into consideration, we are actually asking this committee for an expanded program of approximately \$2.7 million greater than we requested last year. We believe that the fiscal year 1972 program provides for an aggressive research program, both basic and applied, and also provides for the construction of two reverse osmosis test bed plants. We are also seeking five additional positions very badly needed for the effective conduct of our operations.

Our authorization for appropriation is divided into four categories. Category 1 is our research and development operating expenses. In this category, there is an increase of \$495,000. This increase results primarily from additional program effort for environmental and general applied research and development. Such programs as materials, crystallization and electrodialysis research and development programs were cut back. Additional emphasis needs to be directed to the areas of environmental protection. Since we in the Office of Saline Water are concerned with improving the environment through the development of desalting technology, it is imperative that we assure that desalination has no adverse environmental effect.

In category 2, which is our test bed and test facility program, we are requesting an increase of \$1.9 million. The increase represents two