

IV. TIMING AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR A FEDERAL DESALTING PROGRAM

Timing

The optimum timing and sequencing of the research, development and applications of the desalting effort is crucial to its successful conclusion.

If the expected benefits due to future reduction in water costs are to be achieved, continual refinement of the desalting processes must occur. If these can be accelerated then the benefits may be even greater. The sooner desalting becomes more competitive, the earlier it will capture benefits in offering cheaper alternatives for near future actions.

There is an important aspect to the timing of desalting research if large-scale desalting plants are to be a realistic alternative for meeting water demands in the future. For instance, to meet expected water needs in southern California toward the end of a century, it must be known well in advance if desalting will be economically and reliably available when required. If this assurance cannot be given early enough, then alternative conventional supplies will have to be sought; thus, if California