



P.O. Box 1267, Hanford, California 93232
www.CaliforniaWaterAlliance.org

SUMMARY

California State Water Resource Control Board

Water Rights Prioritization Proposal

March 2014

SUMMARY

California State Water Resource Control Board ("SWRCB") in response to a Temporary Urgency Change Petition filed by the CVP and SWP operators, issued an order which had the effect of undermining water rights and contracts, regardless of historic priority, under SWCRB control for "health & safety" purposes. The current proposal would cause State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) agricultural surface water deliveries to cease until 2015. Areas in need of "health & safety" water for the next year are undefined and not one evidentiary hearing has occurred.

Further, an official SWRCB decision was scheduled for March 12, 2014. A formal request for a delay of decision until March 21, 2014 was submitted by Senator Feinstein, Senator Boxer, Congressman Garamendi, and Congressman Costa on March 5, 2014. SWRCB's response was received on March 10, 2014, but with no clarity as to when they will implement further orders or hold hearings.

STATE WATER RESOURCE CONTROL BOARD

The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations. The State Water Resources

Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards) protect water quality and administers surface water rights.

- Felecia Marcus; Chair – Appointed in May 2012 by Gov. Jerry Brown
- Frances Spivy-Weber; Vice-Chair – Reappointed in March 2013 by Gov. Jerry Brown
- Steven Moore; Member - Appointed in May 2012 by Gov. Jerry Brown
- Tam M. Doduc; Member - Reappointed in March 2013 by Gov. Jerry Brown
- Dorene D'Adamo; Member – Appointed in March 2013 by Gov. Jerry Brown
- Tom Howard; Executive Director - Appointed in August 2010 by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger

AREA of IMPACT

- Area of impact includes 3,750,000 irrigated acres.
- State Water Project Service Area includes Greater Los Angeles Area, Greater San Diego Area, Greater San Francisco Area, Santa Clara Valley, Inland Empire, Central Coast, Sacramento Valley, and San Joaquin Valley.
- Central Valley Project Service Area spans 400 miles from the Cascade Mountains near Redding to the Tehachapi Mountains near Los Angeles. CVP manages 9 million acre feet of water for California cities, businesses, farms, and wildlife refuges. Including 1 million households daily water needs, 1/3 California's farmland, 11 power generating facilities, and over 420,000 acres of fish & wildlife refuge annually.
- Impacted Counties: Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Fresno, Kern, Kings, San Joaquin, Merced, Madera, Stanislaus, Alameda, Santa Clara, Tulare, Shasta, Trinity, Tehama, Colusa, Butte, Glenn, Sutter, Yuba, Yolo, Sacramento, Mariposa.

PROJECTED ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- 40-80% unemployment in impacted SWP & CVP service areas.



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- 700,000-800,000 acres of farmland fallowed. Equivalent of 1,100 square miles or the Greater Los Angeles & San Diego areas combined.
- Estimated \$2.5 billion direct loss to California farm economy.
- Estimated additional \$5 billion loss to state economy from reduced related economic activity. Related industries include, but are not limited to, processing, transportation, wholesale, retail, cargo shipping via ports of Oakland, Stockton, Los Angeles, & Long Beach.
- Increased consumer level food and milk prices estimated at \$10 - \$15 per trip to the market, and 10% - 15% increase in fruit, vegetables, beef and poultry prices in the short-term.
- Increased utility costs, including energy & water. Projections based on 2007-2009 drought data where consumers paid \$1.7 billion more in energy bills.

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

- Habitat for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds will be reduced by up to 550,000 acres.
- Water for refuges are expected to be reduced or eliminated impacting up to 230 species of wildlife.
- Depleted aquifers due to over reliance on groundwater, and inability to annually recharge aquifers with surface water.

LEGAL IMPACT

- Water rights within impacted SWP & CVP service areas, including historic pre-1914, are being undermined, fundamentally changing California state law.
- Reassessment of all property values with effected water rights, changing all tax assessment & revenues in all impacted counties. Estimated reduction of property values, on average, by approximately 50%.

SOURCES

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