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I am Joe Scoto A third generation Merced County Farmer, School Board Member, Merced Irrigation District advisory committee member, past 4-H leader, Cub Scout Leader and current Farm Bureau President.

I am not the only community member, business owner or parent involved in all these volunteer positions. We involve ourselves because we believe in our community and the future of our youth.

This could have never been achieved without our past generations hard work and the vision of a community and county revolving around water and Agriculture. Our forefathers built Infrastructure, Schools, Businesses and towns making sure our future generations could help our communities grow.

The State Water Resources Control Boards proposed unimpaired flow requirement would literally collapse our community, dismantle our economy and destroy our sustainability. Frankly our future as the 5<sup>th</sup> largest County in the United States in total value of Agricultural products sold would Vanish.

Under your proposal we would have a severe shortage of water 50% of the time. To replace this loss of surface water your document states that we will be able to increase pumping groundwater by more than 100,000 ac ft per year- at the same time you are demanding we implement sustainable groundwater management practices. We all know as common sense individuals that surface water is the biggest tool that we have to preserve drought stressed aquifers.

Merced County Agriculture is the number one economic driver in this County with over 4 billion in gross revenues. If implemented both the flow proposal and the groundwater management plan you will defiantly destroy this County and all its Communities. This would be the largest water grab in this state since the Metropolitan water district robbery of the Owens Valley water.

Are you doing this because we are a small poor Agriculture based Community?

Are you doing this to benefit others?

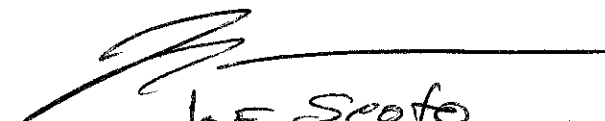
If we were Los Angeles, would you be taking our water?

**This devastation could all happen with the decision made by YOU an APPOINTED BOARD that would not be held ACCOUNTABLE for YOUR ACTIONS.**

There has never been a time in our lives when we have felt so threatened with our future. We all work so hard at keeping our youth involved in activities that would have a positive outlook on their wanting to stay and better our community.

If this board has a conscience and is truly concerned about this State and its Communities, than you the Board should look at other alternatives that would benefit and not destroy this County.

The Merced Irrigation Districts (Merced River SAFE) plan would be a positive alternative to the Bay Delta SED plan.

  
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