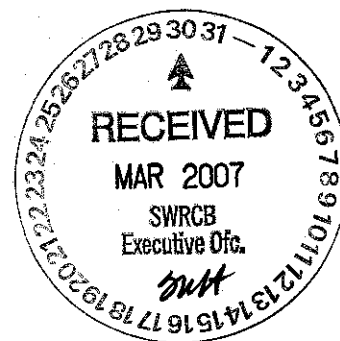




4/18/07 BdMtg Item 7
Upper Santa Clara River
Deadline: 4/4/07 noon

March 23, 2007



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State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Fax: 916-341-5620

Re: Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL Comment Letter

The Ventura County Economic Development Association which represents virtually all of the major businesses in Ventura County is in strong support of the staff recommendation related to the Basin Plan amendments for chloride on the Upper Santa Clara River.

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Our group is particularly concerned about environmental quality degradation that will affect the economic vitality of our region and impact our quality of life. The estimated gross value for Ventura County agriculture for calendar year 2005 is over \$1.2 billion, including \$652.7 million in fruit and nut crops, \$330.2 million in vegetables and \$213.6 million in nursery stock. For individual crops, strawberries led the way at \$328.5 million. This does not include the other economic benefits that such production creates (e.g. agricultural jobs, equipment purchases, packing and processing jobs, transportation, tractors and related equipment, and general purchases of goods and services throughout the local economy).

Agriculture represents a valuable beneficial use of water from the Upper Santa Clara River system, as well as a significant part of our regional heritage. We applaud the actions of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and urge the State Board to: 1) approve the Basin Plan amendment adopted unanimously by the Los Angeles Regional Board; and 2) authorize the Executive Director to submit the amendment to the Office of Administrative Law and to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard J. Smith
Chairman of the Board