



State Water Resources Control Board



Linda S. Adams
*Secretary for
Environmental Protection*

Executive Office

Tam M. Doduc, Board Chair

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

May 11, 2007

Lester Snow, Director
Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Kirk Rodgers, Regional Director
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Messrs. Snow and Rodgers:

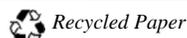
REPORT OF POTENTIAL EXCEEDENCE OF SOUTHERN DELTA AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVE

This letter is an initial response to the April 24, 2007 memo from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) informing the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) of a potential exceedence of the salinity water quality objective at Old River near Tracy Road Bridge in the southern Delta. For the record, this objective was, in fact, exceeded on April 30. I understand from your memo that additional exceedences are likely to occur at this and the two other southern Delta compliance stations throughout the summer due to dry conditions in the San Joaquin Valley.

Condition 4 of State Water Board Order WR 2006-0006 requires DWR and the Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) to inform the State Water Board of potential exceedences at Interagency Stations C-6, C-8 and P-18 in the southern Delta, and to describe possible corrective actions. These actions could include additional releases from upstream reservoirs, recirculation of water through the San Joaquin River and purchases or exchanges of water from other entities. In essence, your memo informs the Board that potential exceedences are beyond the control of DWR and the Bureau and that you will not implement the actions mentioned above.

The State Water Board agrees with DWR's assertion that making releases of water at Lake Oroville or shutting down the Banks Pumping Plant will do little, if anything, to improve salinity at the three southern Delta stations. Your letter, however, provides no analysis of why increased San Joaquin River flows are infeasible. The additional flows provided through the Vernalis Adaptive Management Plan (VAMP) that commenced April 23 demonstrate that such flows can have significant positive effect on southern Delta salinity. San Joaquin River flow augmentation could be achieved through:

California Environmental Protection Agency



1) releases of water from New Melones Reservoir; 2) recirculation of water through the Delta Mendota Canal; or 3) other water releases in the San Joaquin basin. Each of these potential actions will require participation by the Bureau. There is substantial evidence in the record that salinity problems in the San Joaquin basin are due to Central Valley Project operations. The Bureau must therefore participate in identifying and developing potential solutions.

Accordingly, please provide to the State Water Board, within two weeks of the date of this letter, a feasibility analysis of how increased San Joaquin River flows could be employed to improve southern Delta salinity. Specifically, your analysis should evaluate the feasibility of: 1) releases of water from New Melones Reservoir; 2) recirculation of water through the Delta Mendota Canal; and 3) other water releases in the San Joaquin basin. This analysis should include: 1) the specific sources, quantity, and quality of water available; 2) the cost of this water; and 3) the rationale for excluding full consideration of any actions.

Also, please copy any future correspondence in this matter to the Central Delta Water Agency, the South Delta Water Agency, the Contra Costa Water District, the County of San Joaquin and the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, as required by Order WR 2006-0006, Condition 9.

If you have questions, please contact Ms. Gita Kapahi, Chief of the Special Projects Unit in the Division of Water Rights, at (916) 341-5289.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Dorothy Rice
Executive Director

cc: David H. Roose, Chief
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(continued next page)

Lester Snow
Kirk Rodgers

3

May 11, 2007

cc: (continuation page)

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