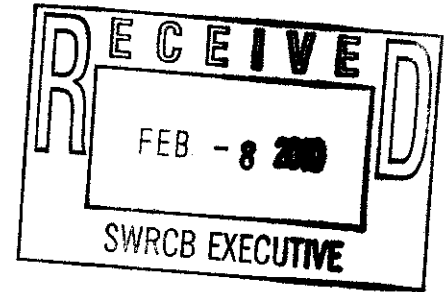


February 3, 2010

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk
State Water Resources Control Board
P. O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100



Comment letter 2/16/10 Board Meeting Item: Order – Kern River

State Water Resources Control Board

I am writing this letter to urge the State Water Resources Control Board to approve the draft recommendation regarding the appropriation of the Kern River and to support the City of Bakersfield's application to utilize the unappropriated water in the historic Kern River channel.

In the 1940's, there were many artesian wells located in the Bakersfield area encouraging a thriving agriculture economy. These wells have since dried up as the water table has been depleted. Valuable farmland is being sold for housing. In addition, the depleted water table and dry river bed have also resulted in changes of the natural flora and fauna and Bakersfield has become a dry, dusty area.

Various agencies with water rights, have long promised sufficient water to maintain the aquifer. Yet, water is rarely seen in the river. The residents of Bakersfield deserve to enjoy their river all year long just as the residents of Fresno do.

Allowing the unappropriated water to return to its historic path provides many benefits. Restoration of natural flora and fauna along the river channel, recharging of the Bakersfield aquifer, increased recreational opportunities for Bakersfield citizens, encourage tourism and creation of a more inviting, aesthetically pleasing city are a few of the benefits a river would provide.

Therefore, I am asking the Board to find that the Kern River is not fully appropriated and to support the City of Bakersfield's application to run this water down the historic Kern River Channel.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shari Darke".

Shari Darke