



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR



MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

OCT 12 2015

Mr. Joel Nelsen, President
California Citrus Mutual
512 North Kaweah Avenue
Exeter, CA 93221

Dear Mr. Nelsen:

SCARCITY OF AVAILABLE WATER TO THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CITRUS INDUSTRY

Thank you for your July 22, 2015 letter to Felicia Marcus, Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), regarding the scarcity of available water to the San Joaquin Valley citrus industry as a result of the ongoing drought. Chair Marcus referred your letter to me for a response.

The State Water Board Members and their staff appreciate the concerns that California Citrus Mutual and many other associations and individuals have raised about the lack of water available for farming and the hardships that the current drought conditions have created for all Californians. We have and will continue to carefully consider all needs during the drought. To date, we have acted expeditiously to relax long-standing scientifically based minimal flow and temperature requirements to protect fish and wildlife and other uses in the Delta and Sacramento-San Joaquin Valleys on numerous occasions to make more water available primarily for agricultural uses north and south of the Delta. Last year, the changes we approved to the requirements of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project (Projects) resulted in savings of more than 400 thousand acre-feet (TAF) of water mostly for agricultural uses. This year, the changes that were approved will result in approximately 800 TAF of savings. Most of these changes have been at the expense of fish and wildlife that are currently experiencing historically low population levels that may ultimately lead to extinctions of economically and ecologically important species. Despite these concerns, almost all of the changes that have been requested for the Projects have been approved in order to reduce the effects of the drought on agriculture and people.

However, the changes that were approved cannot fully mitigate the effects of historic drought conditions in which there simply is not enough water to allocate to all human uses of water. A minimal amount of outflow must be provided through the Delta to prevent sea water intrusion so that water can continue to be diverted from the Delta for agricultural and municipal uses. In addition, senior water right holders are entitled to the use of water prior to junior water right holders. In the Delta watershed these uses are significant. The Projects are amongst the most junior users of water in the Delta. As such, there is limited water available to them during a drought for uses south of the Delta. This limited water availability for the Projects makes water transfers critical. The State Water Board has also acted expeditiously to facilitate and expedite

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these transfers over the past several years in addition to making water available to users north of the Delta who transfer water south of the Delta. We have also provided drinking water and financial assistance to communities in need.

With regard to your concern over temperature management at Shasta Reservoir, pursuant to State Water Board Order 90-5 and condition 6 of the April 6, 2015 Temporary Urgency Change Petition Order, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) was required to develop and implement a temperature management plan (TMP) for the Sacramento River to ensure that the Central Valley Project (CVP) operations will provide reasonable protection for endangered winter-run Chinook salmon and other salmonids that rely entirely on cold water and appropriate flow conditions from Shasta Reservoir. Last year temperature control was lost on the Sacramento River due to insufficient cold water resources and inadequate cold water pool management resulting in almost complete mortality to last year's run of winter-run Chinook salmon. Significant mortality also occurred to other salmon runs last year and in prior drought years due to water project operations for water supply purposes, creating a significant concern for endangered species and the commercial and recreational salmon fishing industry. The State Water Board made a commitment to avoid this situation this year in order to avoid a potential salmon collapse.

Reclamation submitted a draft TMP in mid-April, and an updated plan on May 4, 2015, to me for approval. Based on information from Reclamation that additional water could be released from Shasta Reservoir without harming the fisheries, I provisionally approved the draft TMP and directed Reclamation to prepare a final TMP by June 1 for approval that would be modified as necessary to ensure temperature and flow control. On May 29, 2015, Reclamation informed me that the temperature in Shasta Lake was much warmer than the April temperature modeling predicted. To avoid another significant mortality event and associated extinction concerns and per my provisional approval, I temporarily suspended the approval of the draft TMP and directed Reclamation to work closely with State Water Board staff and the fisheries agencies to develop a revised TMP that provides for temperature control throughout the season. On June 25, 2015, Reclamation submitted a revised TMP and, on July 7, 2015, I approved the final TMP.

The revised TMP does not provide for optimal temperature levels (56 degrees Fahrenheit); but instead targets a warmer temperature (57 to 58 degrees) in order to extend cold water resources through the temperature control season. To date, temperature control has largely been maintained, with a few exceptions, affording protection to winter-run for the majority of the season and helping to avoid a fisheries disaster. It is also expected that temperature control will be maintained through the end of the season for the few remaining redds. After those redds emerge, plans are also in place to protect fall-run Chinook salmon and facilitate water transfers associated with the change to the TMP. These water transfers should reduce or eliminate much, if not all, of the water supply impact that resulted from the change to the TMP. Any remaining water supply impact from the change will result in increased storage which should result in water supply benefits in the coming year that will improve water supply reliability. It should be specifically noted that temperature control operations do not have a water supply cost since the water that is provided for temperature control serves other purposes, including water supplies and salinity control in the Delta.

We continue to commit to seek an appropriate balance between the competing water needs in the face of historic dry conditions. We appreciate your input and will continue to consider the needs of San Joaquin Valley farming and other uses as the drought continues. If you have

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questions or need assistance, please contact Rich Satkowski at (916) 341-5439 or by email at: rich.satkowski@waterboards.ca.gov. Written correspondences or inquiries should be addressed as follows: State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights, Attn: Rich Satkowski, P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA, 95812-2000.

Sincerely,



Thomas Howard
Executive Director

cc: Senator Jean Fuller
Senator Anthony Cannella
Senator Tom Berryhill
Senator Cathleen Galgiani
Senator Steve Glazer
Senator Andy Vidak
Senator Richard Roth
Assembly Member Kristin Olsen
Assembly Member Henry Perea
Assembly Member Frank Bigelow
Assembly Member Jim Patterson
Assembly Member Adam Gray
Assembly Member Adrin Nazarian
Assembly Member Devon Mathis