



Helping Our Members Prosper!

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June 18, 2015

State Water Resources Control Board
Chairwoman Felicia Marcus and all Board Members
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812

RE: Sacramento River Temperature Plan

Dear Ms. Marcus:

Yosemite Farm Credit is a \$2.0 billion agricultural cooperative lender and part of the Farm Credit System. We have 3,850 loans, primarily in Stanislaus and Merced Counties.

The drought and the shortage of water in California continues to raise many concerns. One of those concerns, again this year is the level and temperature of water at the Shasta Dam. In order for water deliveries to be made to those for whom it was intended, an agreement was made between all the stakeholders including state and federal operational managers, state and federal fish biologists, and the water user community. Together they drafted and agreed to a carefully crafted Temperature Management Plan. As agreed to, this plan, provided security for the needs of endangered fish species while also providing a certain amount of water to benefit communities, refuges and agriculture. This plan has now been rescinded as it has been discovered that there was an error with temperature readings at Shasta.

Now as alternatives are being developed via the consultation between Reclamation and the fish agencies, the water user community has been excluded from these discussions. The alternatives that were presented to the State Water Resources Control Board should have some input from the water user community inclusive of their districts and agencies. We need to continue with a balanced all-inclusive approach to this very difficult situation.

The original plan provided just enough water for export that made possible a number of very creative water swaps and transfers that would benefit millions of people and millions of acres of productive farmland. All those plans now hang in the balance. If releases from storage are slightly reduced, it will have devastating consequences and the ripple effect on water users will be significant. While the outcome for fish is not certain, the outcome for farmers, communities and refuges is.

Decisions on our borrower's farms were made based on the small amount of water exports that were planned through the summer. Crops have been planted and there have been tens of millions of dollars invested in them already. Should water be delayed or curtailed, then irreparable damage will result and they will be lost. The impact on farms, employees and communities will be significant, and continue on through to our suppliers, processors, local businesses, financial institutions, port workers, transportation workers and others who rely on agricultural products produced in this state, all will be seriously impacted. Consumers will also see prices increase and may have to rely on imported produce that is not produced with the high level of environmental and ethical standards that we have here in California. Thus, once again, the less privileged of our society will be forced to seek cheap and possibly unhealthy food items.

While we may appreciate your present dilemma, we strongly feel, that those original agreed to and acted upon water scheduled deliveries, must be included into any alternative plan proposed for adoption by the original stakeholders.

Sincerely;



Leonard Van Elderen
President and CEO

cc: Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL STATE WATER RESOURCE CONTROL BOARD MEMBERS: Jeanine.townsend@waterboards.ca.gov
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