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MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

FILE COPY

July 14, 2015

Mr. Jim Vincent, President
Ms. Kelly Vincent, Vice President
Jim Vincent Farming, Inc.
18580 Aubrey Ave.
Dos Palos, CA 93620-9723

Subject: Request to Senator Boxer to Provide Support in Solving Water Delivery/Pumping Problem

Dear Mr. and Ms. Vincent:

Thank you for your April 6, 2015 letters to Senator Boxer. On May 1, 2015, the Senator's office referred your letters to Felicia Marcus, Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board). Chair Marcus referred your letter to me for a response.

Your letters request that the Senator intervene and provide support in solving your water delivery/pumping problem. In addition, your letters state that "SWRCB staff has shown time and time again its unwillingness to work with the many agencies involved, even when they were all in agreement" and that "[s]taff has no idea of the devastation that will be caused by shutting down the pumps." Since your letters were both dated April 6, 2015, I assume that you are referring to the series of Orders issued by me on February 3, March 5, and April 6, 2015 dealing with the temporary modification of flow and salinity requirements for the San Francisco Bay-Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta).

The State Water Board and their staff appreciate the very real concerns with the lack of water availability for farming that you raised in your letters and the frustration and hardships those concerns have caused for you and for others. We have and will continue to carefully consider those issues during the drought. To date, we have acted expeditiously to relax long-standing scientifically based minimal flow and other requirements to protect fish and wildlife and other uses in the Delta 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 of water mostly for agricultural uses. This water year, the changes that were approved will result in approximately 640 thousand acre-feet 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.

FELICIA MARCUS, CHAIR | THOMAS HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Jim Vincent, President
Ms. Kelly Vincent, Vice President

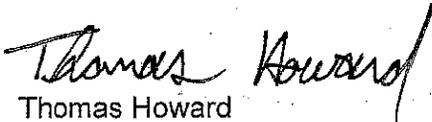
- 2 -

July 14, 2015

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 such 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 these transfers over the past several years and to make water available for transfer south of the Delta. We have also worked to provide drinking water and financial assistance to communities in need.

We are committed to continue 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 farming and other uses as the drought continues. If you have 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: The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building, Suite 112
Washington, DC 20510-0505