

CAMULOS RANCH
PIRU, CALIFORNIA
93040

VIA FACSIMILE (916) 341-5620

March 27, 2007

State Water Resources Control Board
Attention: Song Her, Clerk to the Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



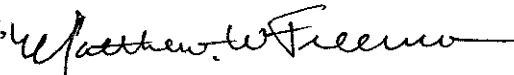
RE: Comment Letter - Upper Santa Clara River Chloride TMDL

The Camulos Ranch Company is writing to show support for the Regional Board's revised TMDL Plan and for the State Board's staff recommendation to the State Board to adopt this proposed amendment. We have been in agriculture since 1839 producing a variety of row and tree crops as well as livestock in Ventura County. The Federal Government has recognized our historic buildings as the first official federal historic landmarks in Ventura County along the Upper Santa Clara River.

As growers, we may only appear to be in the background of all of the technical studies, policy-making, and politics that are going on. But we are, and will be, the ones who have to live with the consequences and decisions made by others. While we benefit from the Santa Clara River, we also inevitably suffer from its degradation.

The Santa Clara River is the lifeblood of our heritage and our livelihoods. The Camulos Ranch has continuously operated the oldest river diversion on the Upper Santa Clara River to irrigate our fertile farm fields. As river water quality deteriorates, we growers will become the unnecessary victims of a problem. It is time to act. The longer we wait, the more damage will be done and we already have direct experience with damage. We have seen stunted growth and leaf burn in Strawberry plants with lower yields per acre due primarily to higher levels of Chloride and corresponding high EC and TDS values. We have seen these high levels of chloride manifested as chloride leaf tip burn damage in our avocado trees, which again stresses the trees and reduces yields. We do not have the ability to leach our fields using well water because the Piru Basin Aquifer is becoming impaired due to high chloride level recharge from the Santa Clara River. If these high chloride impacts continue, it may limit other crop selections and plantings thereby reducing our ability to compete causing additional impacts and direct economic losses.

For these reasons, I support the State Board's staff recommendations to: (1) approve the Basin Plan amendment unanimously adopted by the Los Angeles Regional Board on August 3, 2006, Resolution No. R4-2006-016; and (2) authorize the Executive Director to submit the amendment to the Office of Administrative Law and to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. I can be reached at (805) 521-1561 if you have any questions.

Sincerely, 
Matthew W. Freeman
General Manager
Camulos Ranch Company

Cc: Robert P. Roy