



Westlands Water District

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PRESS RELEASE

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Westlands Water District Statement on California WaterFix

FRESNO, CA – After a thorough analysis by independent consultants and District staff, multiple special board meetings, and grower workshops, the Westlands Water District Board of Directors voted by a margin of 7 to 1 to not participate in the California WaterFix (CWF). The District appreciates the efforts of Governor Jerry Brown and his administration to balance the interests of many. Indeed, over the last twelve months the State administration worked diligently to define a viable project, but from Westlands' perspective, the project is not financially viable.

Westlands' principal source of water is the Central Valley Project, a project operated by the United States Bureau of Reclamation. The CVP is integrated both operationally and financially. However, under the "participation approach" announced by Reclamation for CWF, only CVP contractors that chose to participate in CWF would pay the costs of constructing and operating new facilities, with no assurance that those contractors would receive the water supply benefits resulting from CWF.

Westlands supported the development of CWF and has invested considerable financial resources, time, and expertise into its planning, but consistently stated that it would not obligate the farmers it serves to billions of dollars in debt without reasonable assurances that the project would produce reliable, affordable water supplies. The District recognizes that solving Delta conveyance issues is critical to ensuring reliable water supplies to support the economy of the State, but it cannot support a project that would make water supplies for its farmers unaffordable.

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Westlands Water District is the largest agricultural water district in the United States, made up of more than 1,000 square miles of prime farmland in western Fresno and Kings Counties. Under federal contracts, Westlands provides water to 700 family-owned farms that average 875 acres in size.