



SPECIAL TASK FORCE REPORT ON SAN LUIS UNIT

Central Valley Project, California



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

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A memorandum to the files was attached to this memorandum which further discussed the size of the Westlands Water District at the time of authorization. The memorandum described Westlands as follows:

"The attached map shows the overlapping of Westlands Water District and the San Luis service area. There are 496,000 gross acres in the service area and 400,000 in the district. Of these, 284,000 acres are common to both: 212,000 acres are in the service area above (west of) the district, and 116,000 acres are in the district below (east of) the service area."²³

Another memorandum from the Regional Director to the Commissioner, dated May 8, 1959, delineates the acreage as follows:²⁴

San Luis Unit service area ..	496,000 acres
Westlands Water District	400,000 acres
Area Common to Both	
Unit and District	284,000 acres
Area Within District but	
Outside Unit	116,000 acres

The 116,000 acres contained within the district, but outside the Unit, lie almost entirely on the east side of the district near the valley trough. This land was eventually added to the district after a determination was made by the Bureau of Reclamation that the lands—which were originally classed as marginal—were indeed irrigable. (The Bureau's explanation of the soil classification procedures followed in this instance is contained in Appendix D.)

Therefore, the 9(d) contract for repayment of the distribution system covers all of the 400,000 acres in the original Westlands Water District, including the 116,000 acres that was not in the service area when the San Luis Unit was authorized.

When the Definite Plan Report on the San Luis Unit was developed in 1962, the total acreage in the Federal San Luis Service area had increased to 610,500 acres,²⁵ 110,500 more than contemplated in the authorizing act. Most of this increase resulted from the addition of two new water districts. The *Broadview Water Association*, containing 9,813 acres of land and the *Westplains Water Storage District*, which was described as containing 200,000 acres of land

²³ Memorandum to the files, San Luis Unit, CVP (Edgar P. Price), March 17, 1960.

²⁴ Memorandum from Acting Regional Director, Sacramento to Commissioner of Reclamation concerning land ownership data—San Luis Unit, CVP, May 8, 1959.

²⁵ Definite Plan Report, San Luis Unit, December 1962, p. 7.

of which 160,000 were considered irrigable. (See Map No. 7). The Broadview District was originally a part of the Westlands Water District, but withdrew from the district after the San Luis Unit was authorized. According to the Definite Plan Report, the Broadview District would receive its water from the Delta-Mendota Canal.²⁶ The formation of Broadview accounts for most of the reduction in total acreage of the Westlands Water District—from 399,000 acres to 391,000 acres—from what was described in the Feasibility Report.

With regard to the Westplains District, the Definite Plan Report says that "it is anticipated that the district will contract for water service from the Unit."

The merger of Westlands Water District and Westplains Water Service District in June 1965 added an additional 208,000 acres (of which approximately 40,000 acres lie outside the Federal San Luis Service area) to the Westlands Water District, but the 9(d) contract was not amended prior to execution to provide for the construction of distribution systems in this area. It was anticipated that both the water service contract and the distribution system repayment contract would be amended so that service might be provided to the additional acreages. The vehicle for amendment became the amendatory contract.²⁷ As a result of the merger, the Westlands Water District now contains about 599,525 gross acres. Deductions for nonirrigable lands, the Lemoore Naval Air Station operations area, rights-of-way, and commercial, industrial and residential uses leaves 549,443 irrigable acres. After deduction for farmsteads, farm roads and ditches a productive area of approximately 530,665 acres remains.

In June 1965, the Bureau of Reclamation regional office in Sacramento began contemplating construction of portions of the distribution and drainage system in the Westplains area. Bureau officials requested guidance from the Regional Solicitor as to how they should proceed in the event the merger of Westlands and Westplains became effective. The guidance was summarized in a June 2 memorandum from the Regional Director to the Commissioner as follows:

"A. When the Governor of California signs the State Bill, the present Westplains lands will have the same status of those originally in the Westlands District.

²⁶ *Id.*, pp. 20-22.

²⁷ See discussion of Proposed Amendatory Contract on page III-54 of this chapter.