



June 25, 2014

State Water Resources Control Board  
Clerk to the Board  
Post Office Box 100 Sacramento, CA 95812-0100  
[commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov)

**SUBJECT: 7/1-2/14 BOARD MEETING Agenda Item #5**  
**Consideration of a proposed Resolution regarding drought related emergency regulations for curtailment of diversions to protect senior water rights.**

To Whom It May Concern:


My name is David S. Absher and I am a grower in Patterson Irrigation District, a California irrigation district that holds pre-1914 water rights on the San Joaquin River. My family and I operate Absher Land & Livestock, Inc., a small family farming company, and have been farming in the Patterson area for 10 years. Our crops include Alfalfa, Corn, Small Grains, Wheat, Triticale, Almonds and Beef Cattle.

I am following the State Board workshop items regarding the curtailment of senior water rights holders on the San Joaquin River and am deeply concerned about the possibility of curtailment and what that will mean to my farm and our community. Based on the coordination occurring between water rights holders on the San Joaquin River system, we believe curtailments should not be issued for 2014. We have been aware of the severity of the drought and have made significant changes to our operations to account for some water supply shortfalls in 2014, including selling livestock, fallowing land and longer intervals between irrigations to make it through the worst drought in recent history. Still, the issuance of curtailments will have a major impact to our operations including potentially losing our 2014 seasonal crops as well as severely damaging or killing our permanent and semi-permanent crops.

A major component of our decision to purchase land in the Patterson area was because of the senior water rights afforded to this land. Now the State of California is challenging these rights which provide so much value and reliability to my family's farm and livelihood. The actions you are considering will have huge implications on our family farm this year, and for generations to come.

I implore you to consider the additional and potentially long-lasting economic impacts that will result from senior water rights curtailments in a year that is already fraught with water supply shortages. We also ask that you consider the coordinated efforts already undertaken by senior rights holders to assure that there will be no injury. I urge the State Board to not issue curtailments to senior water rights holders on the San Joaquin River.

Sincerely,

  
David S. Absher  
President