

State Water Board

7/1-2/14 BOARD MEETING (Item #5)

From:

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(S018689, S017678)

Dear Board Members:

Concerning the curtailment of diversions by senior water rights holders, we strongly suggest that water not be cut off. A complete curtailment of our only source of water for cattle is critical for their health and welfare and the ranching operation. Besides the obvious benefits, irrigated pastures are also our primary defense against wild fire. In the past our green spaces have served as bases of operation for fire fighting.

Cattle need water, and they need food. Our family has been in the cattle business for over 70 years, developing improvements in industry- recognized registered Hereford cattle. We are talking about decades of hard work to establish breeding stock for the rest of the cattle industry.

Cutting water off totally would pretty much mean we are out of business. Since hay has become scarce because of the drought, keeping the operation going without irrigation until winter would be impossible. We have a system of irrigation and pasture rotation that demonstrates the best use of the water that we have. We are not wasteful.

There is not much of a market at the moment for breeding stock as commercial ranchers are being forced to reduce their herds. In order to maintain high quality cattle for the future, sending genetically superior breeding stock to slaughter should be out of the question – they should not be hamburger! We and other breeders are growing cattle. It is not a crop that we can just forget this year and replant next year.

Our cattle and pastures cannot survive a curtailment of our historical water rights.

Thank you for your consideration.

Frank Crowe