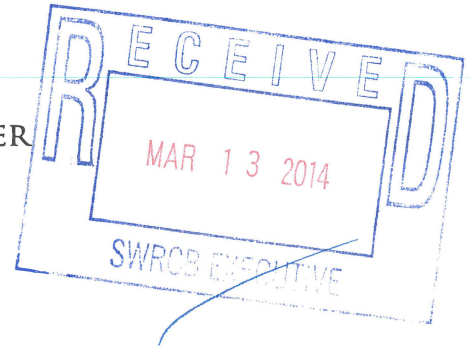




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THOMAS I. CAVALLERO
COUNTY OF MERCED
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF-CORONER



Mr. Tom Howard
Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Howard,

As Merced County's Sheriff-Coroner I have grave concerns over what I believe is the State Water Resources Control Board's intention to significantly restrict water deliveries to Merced County and counties throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

Should concern for potential public health and safety issues be a justification for such a decision, I can assure you that curtailing valley agricultural water deliveries will have a detrimental impact on the valley's health and safety that will be both profound and immediate.

Merced County's economy is based upon agricultural production and those jobs that support it. When farmland cannot be productive because of the unavailability of water, Merced County's unemployment, particularly in rural communities, will rise alarmingly.

As unemployment rises, so, undoubtedly, will the valley's crime rate. As community members, previously employed either directly or indirectly by agri-businesses, become desperate, many are likely to turn towards criminal activity for financial gain.

An idle and frustrated populous imposes a dangerous burden on government services and presents a genuine public health and safety risk.

Director Howard, I can appreciate the very serious dilemma your board faces, as well as its obligation to manage California's precious water resources responsibility. However, as a Sheriff-Coroner in the heart of California's agricultural region, I can assure you that significantly reducing Merced County's water delivery will have a predictable, immediate and profound impact on public health and safety here, and throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

Sincerely,



Thomas I. Cavallero
Sheriff-Coroner

Cc: Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator
Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senator
Jim Costa, U.S. Representative
Anthony Cannella, California State Senator
Adam Gray, California State Assembly Member
Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Janelle Beland, Undersecretary, California Natural Resources Agency
Gordon Burns, Undersecretary, California Environmental Protection Agency
Felicia Marcus, Chair, State Water Resources Control Board
Dorene D'Adamo, Member, State Water Resources Control Board
Tam M. Doduc, Member, State Water Resources Control Board
Steven Moore, Member, State Water Resources Control Board
Frances Spivy-Weber, Vice Chair, State Water Resources Control Board
John Pedrozo, Merced County Board of Supervisors
Hubert "Hub" Walsh, Merced County Board of Supervisors
Linn Davis, Merced County Board of Supervisors
Deidre F. Kelsey, Merced County Board of Supervisors
Jerry O'Banion, Merced County Board of Supervisors
Amanda Carvajal, Executive Director, Merced County Farm Bureau