

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION

R-04- 568

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RESTORATION OF THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER

WHEREAS, in 1999, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors adopted the Strategic Plan to Meet Water Needs that outlined water resource goals and objectives to protect water quality and increase water supply reliability. Such goals included the support of efforts to increase storage at the Friant Dam for water quality, which could be used to increase flows in the San Joaquin River at critical times in order to maintain water quality standards; and

WHEREAS, on December 9, 2003, the Board adopted a Resolution stating that the San Joaquin River should be restored to provide for the reestablishment of instream flows from Friant Dam to the Delta and other measures be implemented such as a recirculation program and/or releases from San Luis Reservoir to result in improved water quality in the South and Central Delta including the City of Stockton Deep Water Channel and reallocation of water supply from New Melones Reservoir to meet the requirements of the Watershed Protection Act; and

WHEREAS, the Resolution also stated that water users in San Joaquin County should have priority for water resource development and supply in the Delta and other local watersheds including the San Joaquin River over water exports, and the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project must mitigate all impacts to comply with the San Joaquin River, Delta, and Watershed Protection Acts; and

WHEREAS, on August 27, 2004, United States District Court ruled that the Federal government was liable for destroying a significant salmon fishery on the San Joaquin River. Since the late 1940's, there were harmful effects and decreased releases due to the United States Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation's Friant Dam Project which decreased flows by 90 percent on a river that previously allowed prosperous and historic fisheries to thrive. The extinction of San Joaquin salmon stocks may be directly attributed to low instream flows, specifically, those which enable adult salmon to migrate upstream. The Friant Dam Project has diverted nearly the entire River and long reaches of the waterway have remained dry in all but the wettest of years; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that water available to meet the County's demands is seriously inadequate, and that this inadequacy of supply results in a large part because Friant Dam operations divert more than 90 percent of the River's natural snowmelt away from San Joaquin County. This diversion is inconsistent with the County's area of origin needs. Such waters are needed for the benefit of County water users to address unsustainable groundwater overdraft; and

WHEREAS, when the CVP began operating, it reduced flows in the San Joaquin River to the detriment of beneficial uses within the South and Central Delta. To date, provisions for those users who were dependent upon and/or entitled to that flow have not been made. CVP operations have also resulted in drainage to the San Joaquin River of hundreds of thousands of tons of concentrated salt each year from the farmlands and wetlands in the CVP's Westside service area. Water from New Melones Reservoir has been used to dilute this salt load. The actual amount of water required to meet the salinity standard can be as much as 200,000-acre feet in some years. The Bureau of Reclamation has not yet proposed or undertaken any project to dispose of salt that does not include transport via the San Joaquin River;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors supports the following:

1. That the San Joaquin River be restored to provide for the reestablishment of instream flows from the Friant Dam to the Delta for salmon fishery restoration and for all other beneficial uses in the County.
2. That San Joaquin County representatives are authorized to participate in negotiations to restore the San Joaquin River from the negative impacts of historic Friant Dam operations, and that actions taken to restore the San Joaquin River should not negatively impact San Joaquin County water users, but should return flows to the River and surrounding waterways to provide reliable water supplies to sustain the County's economic, social, and environmental viability.
3. That water supply from the New Melones Reservoir be reallocated to honor area of origin statutes under the Watershed Protection Act, and that drainage water from lands in the Central Valley Project Westside service area shall not be permitted to drain into the San Joaquin River at times when the drainage will cause the need for releases from the Stanislaus River or from other eastside tributaries to comply with the Vernalis and South Delta Salinity Standards.

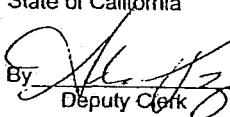

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 10/12/04 by the following vote of the Board of Supervisors, to wit:

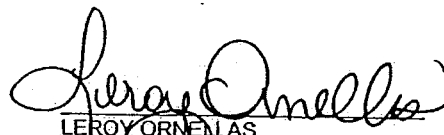
AYES: MOW, SIEGLOCK, GUTIERREZ, ORNELLAS

NOES: NONE

ABSENT: MARENCO

ATTEST: LOIS M. SAHYOUN
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
of the County of San Joaquin,
State of California

By 
Deputy Clerk 


LEROY ORNELLAS
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors
County of San Joaquin
State of California