



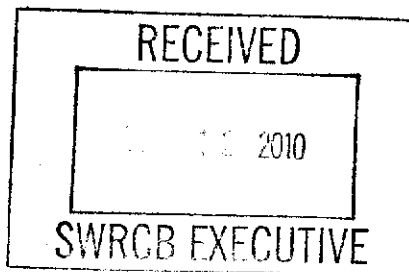
DWR
Barbara, please
advise regarding
status. VA

Al Montna
Board President
Owner, Montna Farms

October 4, 2010

Joshua Eddy
Executive Director

Mr. Donald Glaser, Regional Director
Mid-Pacific Region
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898



Cy: Bd
CT

Kiran Black
Sacramento Valley
Walnut Growers

Ashley Boren
Executive Director
Sustainable Conservation

Donald Bransford, Owner
Bransford Farms

Mr. Mark Cowin, Director
California Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836, Room 115-1
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Michael Darnell
CA Policy Director,
American Farmland Trust

Mr. Charles Hoppin, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Dan Dooley
Vice President,
University of California

Ben Drake, President
Drake Enterprises

Dear Sirs:

Luawanna Hallstrom
Partner, Oceanside
Produce & Collaborative
Communications

On behalf of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture we are writing to urge that the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the California State Water Resources Control Board, do everything in your power to enable a proposed exchange of up to 150,000 acre-feet of water between Westlands Water District (Westlands), the San Luis Water District (San Luis) and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD).

Sean McNally,
Vice President
Grimmway Farms

Craig McNamara
President, Sierra
Orchards

As you know, California experienced serious drought conditions from 2007-2009 with this past year being about an average year. The drought has been exacerbated by regulatory actions that curtailed deliveries of water to farmers to protect several fish species. This has created a very difficult planning environment for both water districts and farmers. Initial 2010 water allocations were very low, forcing San Luis and Westlands Water Districts to purchase additional supplemental water supplies. These supplies came from farmers and water districts north of the Delta that have made system efficiency improvements in past years, which allow water to be available to help distressed farmers south of the Delta. Subsequently, extraordinary late season precipitation and overall water conditions improved dramatically in the spring of 2010, offsetting the immediate need for the supplies stored in San Luis Reservoir. USBR has advised Westlands and San Luis must "use it or lose it" and this water is now at considerable risk of spill during the upcoming precipitation season, an outcome which would result in needless waste of 150,000 acre-feet of water.

Marvin Meyers
Partner, Meyers/Oxford
Farms

Adan Ortega, Jr.
Water Conservation
Partners, Inc.

Kerry Tucker, CEO
Nuffer, Smith, Tucker,
Inc.

Arlan Van Leeuwen
Owner, New Hope Dairy

David J. Wehner, Dean,
CA Polytechnic State
University, San Luis
Obispo



With the proposed water exchange, Westlands, San Luis and MWD are creatively finding new ways to provide more certainty to farmers and providing water benefits to Southern California. Under the proposed exchange agreement, Westlands and San Luis will jointly deliver up to 150,000 acre-feet of their water currently stored in San Luis Reservoir to MWD. For every 3 acre-feet MWD receives from Westlands and San Luis, MWD will return 2 acre-feet to them before the end of September 2011. The water will be moved to MWD's storage facilities such as Diamond Valley Lake, and very significantly, in groundwater basins around Southern California that are in very high need of replenishment due to the recent drought. This exchange will safeguard the supplies in San Luis from the risk of spilling, provide greater certainty for next year to farmers and help Southern California reserve levels which have been drawn dangerously low by the drought.

There are several regulatory issues that must be addressed since this entails an exchange between Federal Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) water users. Currently, MWD, Westlands and San Luis are working with DWR and USBR on these issues including obtaining a consolidated place of use from the State Water Resources Control Board and compliance with National Environmental Policy Act requirements. We urge that these matters be handled diligently, prudently and quickly.

Given the lack of progress in improving environmental conditions in the Sacramento Delta and building new storage facilities due to the state's financial situation, it is imperative that we maximize the efficiency of California's existing water systems particularly south of the Delta. Westlands, San Luis and MWD have demonstrated a high level of creativity and innovation in developing this novel exchange agreement. They have also created a way to help mitigate job losses and land damage in west Fresno County in future droughts, while making best use of storage strategies that help protect the groundwater storage basins of Southern California. We also need to continue encouraging investments made by farmers and water agencies north of the Delta in the efficiency of their water facilities and practices as well as in their ability to recover the cost of the improvements while helping other parts of California in distress.

We urge your agencies to act fast and stand ready to help in any way you can on this matter. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alfred G. Montna', written in a cursive style.

Alfred G. Montna
President