

State Water Resources Control Board
Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board
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My name is Jean Okuye, 10181 Olive Ave., Livingston, Merced County.

Just like you all, I have 4 requirements to stay alive: FOOD, WATER, SHELTER and AIR/SPACE.

I am a small farmer on a special place on earth which other people would like to have. My land and water continue to be threatened. The city wanted to move out 3 miles to take my land for "urban preserve;" the irrigation district is forced to pump the water under my land to provide enough water for all their demands. Farmers are forced to put more straws in the ground as surface water becomes more scarce.

We all know this is not sustainable. In a short time of playing with nature we have created a mess.

I don't want to see our Central Valley become another Owens Valley, a dust bowl.

We must protect those 4 requirements we need to survive: ability to grow food and provide healthy water and air, and guarantee people have shelter where they can live sustainably.

We all need to conserve more, use less, something farmers have modeled with their new irrigation methods. We also need a government of, by and for the people which will act to protect a sustainable life.

Please dig deep before you take the water from these three rivers for other uses. We farmers in SJ Valley can't dig anymore.

*Jean Okuye, Merced Co. Farm Bureau president
3/20/13*

*5th gen. on farm young people in Livingston area are coming back to farms
Represent M.C. Farm Bureau for environment and Integrated
Regional Water Management advisory committee in Merced
Farmers must be concerned about environment to succeed*