



SPECIAL TASK FORCE REPORT ON SAN LUIS UNIT,

Central Valley Project, California



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402
Stock No. 024-003-00123-6

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1978 O-255-265

of the Interior after consultation with the district to make rules and regulations consistent with provisions of the contract.

Article 29 deals with performing work with contributed funds. This article allows the Bureau of Reclamation to use funds contributed by the district for purposes of performing construction or maintenance work on the distribution system not otherwise provided in the contract, or any work covered by the contract for which Congress has not appropriated funds.

The Board of Directors must approve the action with a resolution describing the work to be done and authorizing its performance with contributed funds. Unexpended funds upon completion will be refunded to the district. The amount in excess of the contributed funds needed to complete the work will be paid by the district.

Analysis of Distribution Repayment Contract

A. *Service Area.* The previous review of the terms of the distribution system contract demonstrates that the areas to be served by the distribution and drainage system included approximately 400,000 acres, all of which lie to the east of the San Luis Canal and entirely within the boundaries of the Westlands Water District as it existed prior to the merger with the Westplains Water Storage District, which occurred in January 1965.¹⁷ The maps attached to the contract further illustrate that the contract was meant to provide a system to serve *only* the old Westlands Water District. (See maps No. 4 and 5.)

The Federal San Luis service area boundaries and the boundaries of the Westlands Water District were not synonymous at the time of the authorization of the Unit (1960). The San Luis service area as described in the Act included approximately 500,000 acres.¹⁸ This figure was based on the service area as delineated in the San Luis Unit Feasibility Report, which at that time included three water districts formed under California Water District Law—*San Luis Water District* (51,290 acres), the *Panoche Water District* (40,070 acres), and the *Westlands Water District* (399,000 acres).¹⁹ (See map No. 1.)

¹⁷ 13 California Water Code 37800, Part 8.1.

¹⁸ Section 1(a) of the Act of June 3, 1960, Public Law 86-488, 74 Stat. 156.

¹⁹ U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, A Report on the Feasibility of Water Supply Development, San Luis Unit, Central Valley Project, California, May 1955, p. 8. The report notes that a portion of the San Luis Water District would "probably not be served under the long-term contract (from the Delta-Mendota Canal) because it lies above the proposed San Luis Canal and could be served more easily from it."

The Feasibility Report also demonstrates that the distribution system was intended to serve lands in other districts besides Westlands. The report states that "the total gross area served by the distribution system from the San Luis Canal is 457,000 acres,"²⁰ which at that time was an area larger than Westlands, but smaller than the total service area. The report goes on to indicate that a distribution system was contemplated for the area west of the San Luis Canal, which referred to the Panoche District, San Luis Districts, and Westplains area. According to the report:

"... 142,000 acres lying above the canal would be served by the pump lift type distribution system. The maximum elevation of this land is about 485 feet . . . The remaining 315,000 acres lying below the canal would be served by gravity type distribution systems . . . The total gross service area of the two canals would be 496,000 acres."²¹

When Congress was in the final stages of authorizing the San Luis Unit in 1960, the question arose in the Bureau's Regional Office in Sacramento as to whether the Bureau of Reclamation would be constrained by the San Luis service area boundaries that were delineated in the Feasibility Report. The Regional Project Development Engineer informed the Regional Director in a memorandum dated March 30, 1960, that, in his opinion, the boundaries of the service area were flexible:

"Throughout the investigation we have treated San Luis Unit in the same manner as all other areas we have investigated. The service area was not drawn to be final but merely to indicate the general size, shape and location of lands which would be served. We have assumed that the Bureau would follow its usual practice of marketing water to the limit of the supply, to all lands in the general area which meet the usual qualifications."

"I suggest that in further conversations with the Manager of the Westlands Water District, he be advised that the district could apply for water for all its area, and the Bureau would apply the same eligibility criteria throughout the district. *No portion of the Westlands Water District would be ineligible for service just because it lies outside the service area shown in the Feasibility Report.*" (Emphasis added.)²²

²⁰ *Id.*, p. 72.

²¹ *Id.*, pp. 72-73.

²² Memorandum from Project Development Engineer to Regional Director, March 30, 1960.