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# Senate

## California Legislature

**JIM BATTIN**

SENATOR

THIRTY-SEVENTH SENATE DISTRICT

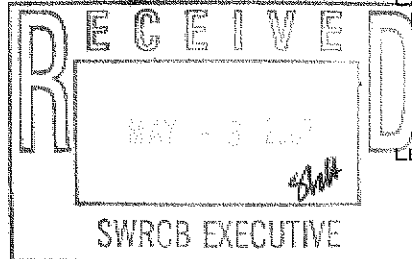


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May 3, 2007

Tam Doduc  
Chair  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: Support for approval of the Santa Ana River water rights petitions as scheduled to be heard  
May 2 - 4

Dear Chair Doduc:

As a legislator representing the Santa Ana Watershed region, I respectfully request that the State Water Resources Control Board take appropriate action during this hearing to seize a rare and tremendous opportunity to consummate one of the most progressive regional water resource management efforts in California today.

Specifically, I request that the board approve all permits necessary to conserve water behind Seven Oaks Dam as requested in the applications for water rights before you today.

The prospect of expanding the available supply of drinking water for this watershed through the capture of stormwater is, in this semi-arid environment, a water resource management strategy essential to the long term ecological and economic sustainability of this watershed. It is also a strategy built on a solid foundation of extraordinarily successful cooperation among all stakeholders in this process – as reflected by the remarkable fact that there is no conflict among the water agencies who are party to these water rights. Further, all projects related to these water rights applications have completed and passed full CEQA review, and the Department of Fish and Game has resolved all issues with the applicants and is not opposing the permits.

Throughout the watershed, the critical need to conserve this periodically available new water behind Seven Oaks Dam is widely recognized and broadly supported. In a state that is often faced with deep internal differences within the water community, it is truly encouraging to witness the high level of intergovernmental cooperation and agreement among water agencies in the Santa Ana Watershed in order to achieve conservation of this new water behind Seven Oaks Dam.

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Agencies such as the Western Municipal Water District, the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, and the signers of the historic Seven Oaks Accord demonstrated exemplary leadership in peacefully resolving their disputes over water rights. Moreover, these same parties have pooled enormous financial and staff resources, cooperating over many years to share costs of design, construction and use according to a mutually beneficial long term plan

In my capacity as a representative for the region I urge you to consider also the statewide benefits associated with the conservation and recharge of local aquifers with waters captured during storm events behind Seven Oaks Dam. By expanding the water sources available to this region, the dependence on imported water from the sensitive Bay-Delta and the oversubscribed Colorado River will be reduced – which will benefit the state as a whole. Reduction of imports into the Santa Ana region during a drought or catastrophic failure of imported systems means other areas without similar local resources may benefit from the resulting improved elasticity in water supply.

As policymakers seek to maximize groundwater storage – the opportunity to capture and store local stormwater captured from Seven Oaks Dam will be a key component of important water supply strategies. The ability to exercise the option to improve groundwater storage capabilities and water supply elasticity are desirable policy goals that can only be fulfilled, in some cases, by making the best decision at a finite point in time.

I believe that today's hearing represents a rare and unique opportunity to benefit water supply and flexible water management in California and urge you to act to provide the legal means to secure these vital water resources by granting all permits related to the applications before you today.

Sincerely,



JIM BATTIN  
Senator  
37<sup>th</sup> District

cc: Members of the State Water Resources Control Board