

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

In follow up to the September 30th meeting regarding California's water supply crisis, we would like to provide you with the list of action items and projects that we referenced in our comments to you which will help to mitigate the crisis. This list has been revised. There are several items on this list that the Department of Interior may not be aware of, so we would like to provide some additional information on the benefits of these projects.

While the United States Government has dedicated a small portion of the stimulus money to help the irrigation infrastructure in the area, we believe that there are many more opportunities to fund projects which improve infrastructure for delivery systems. This list highlights many of these projects and actions that can be taken in the short to medium term to address the water supply crisis.

We would also like to bring to your attention several projects that provide opportunities to help balance the need for water with the environmental concerns dictating many of your decisions. While an investment in traditional irrigation infrastructure to increase the flexibility of responding to drought conditions and restrictions on pumping is necessary, we believe there are also opportunities to think bigger. We envision a comprehensive water and energy program that will meet the needs of our communities for the future and serve as a template as a new way to balance agricultural and energy production with environmental concerns.

California's Central Valley holds an untapped aquifer of poor quality groundwater that can be purified using reclamation plants to distill the water for use in surrounding communities and conveyed to the California Aqueduct, essentially creating a new water source. This process could be powered by new solar generating facilities, co-located with the reclamation plants. Additionally, we should grasp this opportunity to address the environmental concerns with current intakes and invest in water conveyance projects and interchanges allowing us to efficiently manage our water resources by allowing us to move it where it is needed most, when it is needed most.

As you know, the situation facing our constituents is dire. Last year alone, water shortages cost the San Joaquin Valley over \$309 million in losses and current projections are that we will lose more than 25,000 jobs this year due to pumping restrictions, with the bulk of them in the San Joaquin Valley. Our valley faces a number of challenges, but the intertwined problems of water shortages and drainage concerns consistently create ongoing battles among everyone impacted. Some of these projects have the potential to solve both issues in a manner that is environmentally sustainable, while saving and creating jobs.

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While the Department of the Interior has signaled its intention to help by providing stimulus funds to this effort, we believe the larger goal of modernizing traditional irrigation infrastructure and reclaiming water from the currently unusable ground water using solar technology deserves additional attention from our Cabinet officials.

Within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, there are multiple initiatives that should be tapped to help support these visionary projects. Under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture, funds were provided to the following programs; the Rural Water and Waste Disposal Program, Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations the Watershed Rehabilitation Program and the general Construction account, which all offer opportunities to support the reclamation and distillation of ground water in the Central Valley and deliver water for municipal use to support the project goals.

Within the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation received sizeable amounts that can be used on traditional irrigation infrastructure to alleviate the current restrictions under the biological opinion and restore agricultural production. Additionally, the Secretary of Energy was given broad authority to support alternative energy projects and transmission. Utilizing these funds to create solar facilities serving the reclamation plants in the valley meets the goals of creating clean energy sources and creating jobs while creating a greater environmental return by addressing the drainage issues plaguing California's San Joaquin Valley.

We will be working with the Secretary of Energy to address the solar components of these projects, however we urge you to fund the projects detailed below. All of these projects are authorized under TITLE 34: CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT IMPROVEMENT ACT as provide in Public Law 102-575.

Patterson Irrigation District ("PID") proposes the construction of a fish screen at its San Joaquin River diversion, four (4) agricultural wells and two (2) pipeline projects connecting PID's water delivery system to the Delta-Mendota Canal (DMC). The pipelines would have a capacity of 230 cfs and could wheel up to 100,000 ac-ft per year to the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley. The cost of these projects would total \$31,100,000.

Westlands Water District ("Westlands") proposes to construct reclamation plants in drainage impacted areas of the San Joaquin Valley to reclaim poor quality groundwater. The new technology vapor compression process will be powered by a new solar generating facility designed to reduce emissions. The water will provide drinking water for rural communities that lack a current supply of clean water. The balance of the water will be discharged to the California Aqueduct for the benefit of irrigation, industrial and residential use. The project includes 36 groundwater production wells serving six treatment plants and necessary conveyance upgrades to distribute the available water. Total project cost is \$117,000,000.

West Stanislaus Irrigation District ("WSID") proposes improvements to its main canal system and the construction of a fish screen on its San Joaquin River diversion and a 200 cfs pipeline inter-connecting WSID's delivery system to the DMC. The pipeline could wheel up to 50,000 ac-ft per year to the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley. The cost of these projects would total \$30,000,000.

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Stockton East Water District proposes building a new intake structure and fish screen for the 75 cfs diversion at Ballota Weir. The new and enhanced project will also be powered by a proposed solar energy generating facility to help reduce emissions. Implementation of the proposed project is anticipated to enhance fishery resources and improve water management, flood control and aquifer protection from saline intrusion. The cost of the new intake structure and fish screen is \$8,000,000.

Merced Irrigation District ("MID") proposes the New Exchequer Dam Spillway Modification Project to increase the capacity of Lake McClure by up to 70,000 acre-feet in wet water years and generate an additional 10,000 megawatt hours per year of renewable energy. The cost of this project is \$40,000,000.

Semitropic-Rosamond Water Bank Authority ("Authority") proposes the Antelope Valley Water Bank Initial Recharge and Recovery Facility Improvement Project. This project will add new facilities to a water bank to provide a mechanism for existing and potential water bank users to buy/sell/lease/exchange water to meet existing and future water requirements. The project includes improvements to an existing recharge basin, development of an expanded delivery system (new pipelines), installation of four new recovery wells, a new recovery basin, new collection and recovery system, and a turnout. We understand that ARRA funding has been provided via Challenge Grants to the tune of \$5,000,000. The total cost of this project is \$10,850,000.

Semitropic Water Storage District ("District") proposes the Pond-Poso Spreading and Recovery Facility. This project will complete the District's spreading works (recharge facilities), which will add up to 65,000 acre-ft per year of direct recharge and 66,000 acre-ft of recovery capacity from the District's groundwater bank. Work includes construction of recharge ponds and ditches, interbasin structures, pumping plant, 15 wells, 11 casing path wells and 6 shallow wells. Currently, Semitropic operates a Groundwater Bank, providing long term storage of water for use in times of need. We understand that ARRA funding has been provided via Challenge Grants to the tune of \$2,220,659. The cost of this project is \$8,672,372.

We urge you to join us in pushing these projects forward and allocating resources from multiple Cabinet Departments to comprehensively address the agricultural and environmental concerns in our region. We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to quell the problems at hand and create a long term solution that will benefit the entire state of California.

Sincerely,



DENNIS CARDOZA
Member of Congress



JIM COSTA
Member of Congress

Enc: Authorization within PL 102-575

Specific authorization for the above projects as authorized by Public Law 102-575 , TITLE 34: CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT IMPROVEMENT ACT

Section 3408. Additional Authorities

(C) Contracts for additional storage and delivery of water. The Secretary is authorized to enter into contracts pursuant to Reclamation law and this title with any Federal agency, California water user or water agency , State agency, or private non-profit organization for the exchange, impoundment, storage, carriage and delivery of Central Valley Project and non-project water for domestic, municipal, industrial, fish and wildlife and any other beneficial purpose, except that nothing in this section shall be deemed to supersede the provisions of section 103 of Pub. L. 99-546 (100 stat3051)

Section 3408

(I) Water Conservation-

(1) The Secretary is authorized to undertake, in cooperation with Central Valley Project irrigation contractors, water conservation projects or measures needed to meet the requirements of this title. The Secretary shall execute a cost sharing agreement for any such project or measure undertaken. Under such agreement the Secretary is authorized to pay up to 100 percent of the costs of such projects or measures. Any water saved by such projects or measures shall be governed by the conditions of subparagraph 3405 (E) (1) (A) and (J) of this title, and shall be made available to the Secretary in proportion to the Secretary's contribution to the total cost of such project or measure. Such water shall be used by the Secretary to meet the Secretary's obligations under this title, including the requirements of paragraph 3406 (B) (3) such projects or measures must be implemented fully by September 30, 1999.

(21) Assist the State of California in efforts to develop and implement measures to avoid losses of juvenile anadromous fish resulting from unscreened or inadequately screened diversions on the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, their tributaries, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and the Suisun Marsh. Such measures shall include but shall not be limited to construction of screens on unscreened diversions, rehabilitation of existing screens, replacement of existing non-functioning screens, and relocation of diversions to less fishery sensitive areas. The Secretary's share of costs associated with activities authorized under this paragraph shall not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of any such activity.

(3) Measures to eliminate barriers to upstream and downstream migration of salmonides in the Central Valley, including but not limited to screening programs, barrier removal programs and programs for the construction or rehabilitation of fish ladders on tributary streams.

(6) Other measures which the Secretary determines would protect, restore, and enhance natural production of salmon and steel-head trout in tributary streams of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, including but not limited to the Merced, Mokelumne, and Calaveras Rivers and Battle, Butte, Deer, Elder, Mill, and Thomes Creeks.

(9) All studies and investigations shall take into account and be fully consistent with the fish, wildlife, and habitat protection and restoration measures require by this title or by any other state or federal law. Seventy-five percent of the costs associated with implementation of this subsection shall be borne by the United States as a nonreimbursable cost; the remaining 25 percent shall be borne by the State of California.

(h) The Secretary shall enter into a binding cost-share agreement with the State of California with respect to the timely reimbursement of costs allocated to the State in this title. Such agreement shall provide for consideration of the value of direct reimbursements, specific contributions to the Restoration Fund, and water, conveyance capacity, or other contribution in-kind that would supplement existing programs and that would, as determined by the Secretary, materially contribute to attainment of the goals and objectives of this title.

(e) Funding to Non-Federal Entities—If the Secretary determines that the State of California or any agency or subdivision thereof, an Indian tribe, or a non-profit entity concerned with restoration, protection, or enhancement of fish, wildlife, habitat or environmental values is able to assist in implementing any action authorized by this title in an efficient, timely and cost effective manner, the Secretary is authorized to provide funding to such entity on such terms and conditions as he deems necessary to assist in implementing the identified action.

(c) Contracts for Additional Storage and Delivery of Water—The Secretary is authorized to enter into contracts pursuant to Reclamation law and this title with any Federal agency, California water user or water agency, State agency, or private non-profit organization for the exchange, impoundment, storage, carriage, and delivery of Central Valley Project and non-project water for domestic, municipal, industrial, fish and wildlife, and any other beneficial purpose, except that nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to supersede the provisions of section 103 of Pub. L. 99-546 (100 Stat. 3051).

(1) Water conservation: The Secretary shall execute a cost-sharing agreement for any such project or measure undertaken. Under such agreement, the secretary is authorized to pay up t 100 percent of the costs of such projects or measures.

October 2, 2009

TO: Secretary Salazar- Department of the Interior

FROM: Congressman Dennis Cardoza and Congressman Jim Costa

SUBJECT: Actions and Projects to Address California's Water Supply Crisis

- Reconsultation of FWS and NOAA Biological Opinions
- Undertake a National Academy of Sciences 6 month review of all the factors in the decline of the Delta
- 2-Gate Fish Protection Demonstration Project- coordination and funding
- Delta Mendota Canal and California Aqueduct Intertie- coordination and funding
- Completion of a long-term, multi-year water transfer program
- Develop a program to coordinate schedules on North to South transfers
- Support permanent reform of intra county East-West transfers within the CVP
- Patterson Irrigation District Pumping Plant and Fish Screen
- Patterson Irrigation District Pipeline Project
- Diversify Level 2/Level IV Refuge Program
- Announce 2011 rescheduled water decision in the Spring, 2010
- Additional federal support for the Westside Water Use Efficiency and Conservation program
- Support the removal of restrictions under the Emergency Drought Relief Act which restrict funds to temporary projects
- Mendota Dam Replacement
- San Luis Drain Rehabilitation
- Allow the use of Whiskeytown Reservoir to be used to meet the water supply needs of the most impacted areas
- Work in collaboration with the state on the development of a long term Joint Point of Diversion program
- Friant-Kern and Madera Canals Capacity Correction
- Friant-Kern Canal Reverse Flow
- Pipeline Replacements in the San Luis Unit
- Westlands Water District Reclamation Project for drainage impacted areas and reclamation of poor groundwater
- West Stanislaus Irrigation District fish screen and pipeline
- Stockton East Water District intake structure and fish screen
- Merced Irrigation District New Exchequer Dam Spillway Modification Project
- Semitropic-Rosamond Water Bank Authority Antelope Valley Water Bank Initial Recharge and Recovery Facility Improvement Project
- Semitropic Water Storage District Pond-Poso Spreading and Recovery Facility