



STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT

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June 27, 1995

Bay Delta Advisory Commission
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Stockton East Water District, I want to wish you success on the difficult task you are now undertaking on behalf of California. Certainly no problem faced by the state has proven more intractable than the water supply and environmental conflicts in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta estuary.

As you begin your work of crafting the long-term Bay-Delta solution, I hope you will keep in mind the unique situation of our District and provide for equitable relief of our dilemma in your ultimate decisions.

As you may know, Stockton East Water District (SEWD) has long experienced a chronic and critical overdraft of the groundwater basin in our service area. This overdraft has caused saline waters from the Delta to migrate inland. Left unchecked, the overdraft could cause water levels to drop as much as 200 feet below ground in some areas and poorer quality water could migrate an additional two miles by the year 2020.

Over the years, we have taken a number of actions to mitigate this problem, including treatment of surface waters from New Hogan Reservoir to offset groundwater supplies in the city of Stockton. More importantly, we and Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District (CSJWCD) signed water supply contracts with the Bureau of Reclamation in 1983 for 155,000 acre-feet of supplemental surface water supplies from New Melones Reservoir.

In 1988, acting upon notification from the Bureau that the water was available, we bonded for \$65 million and built the necessary conveyance facilities to accept delivery of our water supply.

However, ever since completion of the New Melones Water Conveyance Facilities in 1993, the Bureau has refused to deliver our contractual water supply. The Bureau contends that the supply is now unavailable, due to reallocations under the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) and, more recently, additional dedications to Delta water quality standards under the December 1994 Bay-Delta Accord.

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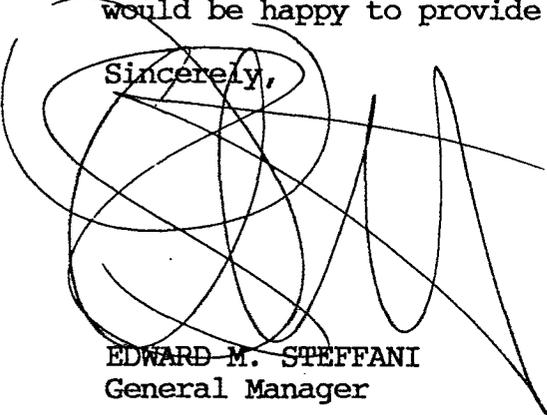
Stockton East Water District and Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District are the only federal water contractors to be completely denied a water supply due to CVPIA. Even in this extraordinarily wet year, CSJWCD will receive only a partial supply while SEWD will receive no water from New Melones.

These actions have forced us to resort to litigation in order to defend our rights. However, we would much prefer to settle our differences out of court. We believe we have acted responsibly in investing in new infrastructure to remedy a long-standing water supply and quality problem in our service area. We believe we have been unfairly singled out to bear the brunt of new water quality standards. Every day that passes without resolution of this issue, our aquifer deteriorates.

Many interests have been critical of the December Bay-Delta Accord because those who participated in its development did not comprise a full spectrum of the water community. We were excluded, and we have suffered by that exclusion. I know that part of your charge is to broaden the participation in the long-term solution that California so desperately needs. By addressing our situation in your deliberations, I hope that you can develop a solution that recognizes our local commitment to remedying the critical groundwater overdraft.

If you require any additional information regarding our situation, I would be happy to provide it for you. Thank you.

Sincerely,



EDWARD M. STEFFANI
General Manager

EMS:dbw