

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

December 15, 1994

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

When I campaigned for President, I said many times that environmental protection and economic growth can go hand in hand.

Today's historic Bay Delta agreement demonstrates that this goal can be achieved. It resolves one of the most contentious and important public policy issues affecting the State of California. It puts an end to a bitter conflict that has persisted for decades.

This is a solution that serves all the people of California. It means farmers will have a reliable supply of water to grow their crops; that commercial and sport fishermen will have reliable supplies of fish; that cities in California will have consistent, predictable supplies of water at reasonable rates; and that those who love the outdoors will find places throughout Northern California with fish, birds, and clean, fresh water.

Under the leadership of Secretary Babbitt and Administrator Browner, the federal government aggressively faced up to its responsibilities, took a process that had previously failed, and made it work. We made certain all the federal agencies worked together, not at cross purposes; we challenged our scientists to create new ways of using water more efficiently; and we invited all stakeholders to take responsibility for a comprehensive solution.

The result is an innovative plan that protects both water quality and water supplies; that enhances environmental and economic progress; and that provides the certainty necessary for water users to plan well into the future. It demonstrates that, with strong leadership and a cooperative spirit, environmental laws can be properly and productively enforced.

This historic agreement is good for economic growth, good for the environment, and good for California and the nation.

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