

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF MADERA**

MADERA COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
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August 26, 1998

Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Department of the Interior
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825-1898

Re: Madera Ranch Water Banking Project

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing on behalf of the Madera County Board of Supervisors to express the Board's concerns about the proposed Madera Ranch Water Banking Project near the City of Madera. The Madera County Board of Supervisors has had the opportunity to review information concerning the Bureau of Reclamation's Phase I Report and believes that that report has raised more questions than it has provided answers regarding the proposed project. Based on the information provided to date, it appears the project is more likely to worsen the water overdraft conditions in Madera County and the surrounding area than to help improve those conditions.

Area farmers and land owners have very serious concerns about the proposed project and apparent deficiencies in your Phase I Report. At their own expense they hired an expert in local groundwater conditions to examine and prepare a critique of the Phase I Report. I am attaching a copy of the report dated July 30, 1998 prepared by Kenneth D. Schmidt and Associates of Fresno. Mr. Schmidt is a highly regarded groundwater expert and I urge you to give his comments the highest consideration.

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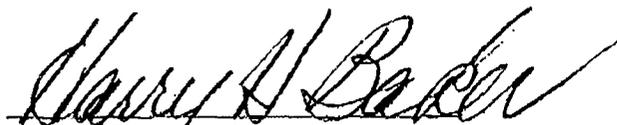
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In light of the serious questions raised about the adequacy of the Phase I Report, we urge you to defer consideration of the Phase II activities until the problems identified with the Phase I Report can be addressed to the satisfaction of area farmers and land owners and their experts.

Very truly yours,



HARRY H. BAKER
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

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Encl.

cc: Board of Supervisors
California Department of Water Resources
Madera County Farm Bureau
Madera Irrigation District
Gravelly Ford Water District
Aliso Water District
Governor Wilson
Chester Andrew

CAWPSIVANNAPHASEI.LIR August 25, 1998

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