



CALIFORNIA
FRESH FRUIT
ASSOCIATION

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Jim Watson
General Manager
Sites Project Authority
P.O. Box 517
Maxwell, CA 95955

Dear Mr. Watson,

On behalf of the California Fresh Fruit Association I write to express support for the Sites Reservoir Project. The California Fresh Fruit Association is a non-profit, agricultural trade association representing permanent crops (fresh fruit) grown and packed throughout California. For the past five years, many of our organization's family farming operations were severely impacted by drought and water management decisions that reduced the availability of critically needed surface water supplies. Having additional above-ground surface storage north of the Delta better enables flexible water management as the added supply would help to address Delta salinity levels while relieving overall stress on the state's water system. Moreover, we believe the added capacity would allow other reservoirs to carry water into the summer months, a time that is very critical for crop development. With new supply comes an enhanced opportunity for greater flexibility in water management decision making, whether it's making supplies available, or enhancing fulfillment of water contracts. We are encouraged by the project's potential to free up water for you use through an exchange for irrigation or to put to use to alleviate environmental needs.

It is our understanding the Sites Project would add up to 1,800,000 acre-ft. of capacity to produce 500,000 acre-feet of critical supplies to California's water system on an annualized basis. With its ability to integrate operations with the state's water system, Sites is an approach that will help the state capture, store and move water where it needs to be, when it is needed most. California will continue to face intense water challenges including limited supplies, a growing population, the effects of climate change, increased flow requirements for native fish, and water for wetlands. Now more than ever, California's water system needs a more flexible and sustainable solution to capturing and storing water for beneficial uses, including irrigation, when it is critically needed.

We encourage the California Water Commission to invest in the Sites Project and to look to fund qualifying above-ground surface storage projects, which should also include the Temperance Flat Project, to best ensure our limited financial resources are put towards securing California's water future; a future where agricultural irrigation benefits from reduced uncertainty because of the enhanced ability to manage water more effectively. To strengthen the California water picture, first we must expand our capacity to capture more water for a growing state.

We look forward to advancing important above-ground surface storage projects.

Sincerely,

George Radanovich, President

Cc: Tim Johnson, President, California Rice Commission
Christopher Valadez, Director, Environmental & Regulatory Affairs, California Fresh Fruit Association