



July 19, 2017

Mr. Armando Quintero
Chair
California Water Commission
PO Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001
Emailed to: CWC@water.ca.gov

RE: Support for Sites and Temperance Flat Projects

Dear Chairman Quintero:

Founded in 1926, Western Growers members are local and regional family farmers growing fresh produce in Arizona, California, Colorado and New Mexico. Our members and their workers provide half the nation's fresh fruits, vegetables and tree nuts, including half of America's fresh organic produce. It is on their behalf that we express our strong support for both the Sites Reservoir and Temperance Flat Reservoir projects in their applications for Proposition 1 public benefit funding.

One of the consequences of climate change is that California's historic precipitation and runoff patterns will change, resulting in greater unreliability of the Sierra snowpack. We must now contend with less snowpack along with faster, flashier and more chaotic runoff into our existing storage and conveyance infrastructure. Indeed, we may have already begun to experience such changes. This year's record-breaking rain and snow accumulations, coming on the heels of the worst recorded drought ever experienced, vividly demonstrates the need to adapt and enhance a system designed in a climatic era that no longer exists, and for a state population less than half of what it is today.

From October 1, 2016 through July 9, 2017 (nine months of the current water year), more than 50 million acre feet of water flowed into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. After accounting for diversions for in-Delta use and exports by the State Water Project and Central Valley Project, more than 46 million acre feet flowed out to the ocean.

The Sites Project would add up to 1.8 million acre feet of capacity in an off-stream reservoir north of the Delta. State and federal water project operations in recent years have demonstrated the great need for this project as operators struggled with conflicting demands on the Sacramento River system. The Sites Project would provide critically needed flexibility for system operators by capturing high runoff flows on the Sacramento River and allowing later releases from Sites or upstream reservoirs for environmental and economic uses.

Temperance Flat Reservoir would be located on the San Joaquin River in the foothills northeast of Fresno and would create an additional 1.26 million acre-feet of water storage. Combined with the existing Millerton Lake, the complex would provide storage capacity of 1.78 million acre feet. The need is obvious: In 17 of the last 40 years, water has been released from Millerton Lake (Friant Dam) for flood control purposes, due to lack of storage capacity. This season alone Millerton will have released approximately 2.5 million acre feet to the ocean, lost for groundwater recharge or water supply.

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