

**California Water Crisis
Remarks of Doug Mosebar
President, California Farm Bureau Federation
U.S. Department of the Interior Public Meeting
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Good morning. My name is Doug Mosebar, and I am the president of the California Farm Bureau Federation, representing 32,000 farm and ranch families throughout the state of California and 40,000 consumer families who support maintaining the viability of our local farms.

Without reliable water supplies we risk eroding our ability to grow food for our nation and the world. Farm water shortages in California have thus far resulted in \$1.5 billion to \$2.2 billion in lost revenue ... half-a-million fertile acres lie idle ... 40,000 jobs have been lost ... and we are seeing unemployment rates of 40 percent or higher in our rural communities.

Here's what those numbers mean.

We risk losing California farms that have been feeding our nation and the world for generations.

Our rural communities will become ghost towns without an agricultural economy to sustain jobs and the businesses that support farming endeavors.

We will erode the quantity and the quality of our future food supply.

This is a national food security issue and you must act now to craft a solution. A few key points are: 1) the status quo is not working; 2) the Endangered Species Act, as currently implemented, is part of the problem; and 3) we need more water storage.

We appreciate efforts being made by Secretary Salazar, Deputy Secretary Hayes and the Department of Interior but we are disappointed by the department's insistence that environmental regulations are not a part of our water problem.

California is in the third year of natural drought, which has reduced water deliveries this year by 1.6 million acre-feet. But our state Department of Water Resources says an additional 500,000 acre-feet of water have been lost due to federal Endangered Species Act regulations intended to protect the delta smelt. In other words, nearly one-quarter of this year's water shortages can be attributed to federal regulatory restrictions.

In addition, our statewide water storage and delivery system has not been significantly improved in 30 years. Yet, our population continues to grow: At 38 million today, California's population is predicted to reach 49.2 million by 2030 and 59.5 million by 2050. We need to improve our water system to meet this growing demand.

The delta and the delta smelt are impacted by numerous factors, including changing water quality and flow, water exports, loss of habitat and increased competition and predation from invasive species.

Millions of dollars and man-hours have been spent studying the cause and ways to reverse the delta smelt's decline, yet the main focus has been entirely on reducing water exports, and little success has been achieved.

This situation is an example of why the Endangered Species Act is unsustainable. The species-specific approach of the law often works to the detriment of ecosystem-wide conservation. In the case of the delta, the salmon and smelt biological opinions need to be reconsulted and considered in light of one another.

We are also very concerned with the adequacy of science used in developing biological opinions. We strongly encourage the Department of the Interior and the Department of Commerce to act immediately on Senator Dianne Feinstein's call for an independent scientific review of the existing biological opinion by the National Academy of Sciences. Such an independent review process is needed to provide oversight and ensure the scientific integrity of the federal agencies' decisions in this case.

Californians recognize that our water system is in crisis. Farmers have done their part to continually implement highly efficient irrigation practices. For example, in the last six years, farmers in the San Joaquin Valley have invested more than \$1.5 billion in high-efficiency irrigation systems. Now, we need the government to match that investment, by building projects that assure reliable water supplies for the valley and for the rest of the state.

We need a combination of solutions, including new surface water storage with continuous appropriation, protections for area-of-origin water rights, improved conveyance and delta ecosystem improvements. This holistic approach will provide water supply reliability for our growing population, vital environmental protection, and ensure farmers' ability to continue growing our nation's own safe and nutritious food supply.

Specifically, we support the following items:

1. Prompt approval and development of the Two Gates project in the delta to avoid shutting off the pumps during key periods of the year, especially during our rainy season and into the periods of optimum water flow (Costa/Cardoza Amendments to Energy and Water Appropriations bill--H.R. 3183).
2. Development of an "intertie" canal to link state and federal water projects.
3. Passage of legislation creating a temporary waiver of the Endangered Species Act for the duration of the current drought (H.R. 856 and H.R.3105).
4. Reconsultation on the causes of fish decline in the delta and an examination of all factors affecting fish numbers. Among other things, this reconsultation should take into account the adverse effects of invasive species, non-native predation, and new science that shows urban runoff and wastewater are contributing significantly to the destruction of food supplies for protected species in the delta.
5. A firm commitment and timetable from the federal government and the state of California to pursue meaningful water development by advancing studies and early engineering work for projects such as the Sites Reservoir, enlargement of Lake Shasta and development of additional water storage above the San Joaquin River.

Thank you for holding this meeting. We look forward to working with you to find solutions to California's water crisis.