



## California Sportfishing Protection Alliance

*"An Advocate for Fisheries, Habitat and Water Quality"*

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26 February 2015

State Water Resources Control Board  
Tom Howard, Executive Director  
1001 "I" Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[Tom.Howard@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Tom.Howard@waterboards.ca.gov)

VIA: Electronic Submission  
Hardcopy if Requested

RE: Economic Impacts Of Drought - Order Approving In Part And Denying In Part A Petition For Temporary Urgency Changes and Conditions Requiring Compliance With Delta Water Quality Objectives In Response To Drought Conditions

Dear Mr. Howard:

The California Sportfishing Protection Alliance (CSPA) noted the numerous remarks that were made during the recent workshop, on the above referenced matter, regarding the economic and employment impacts of the present drought. Consequently, we reviewed the last ten years of annual Crop & Livestock Reports from the eight San Joaquin Valley County Agricultural Commissioners that must be submitted to the California Department of Agriculture. We then examined the employment data for the San Joaquin Valley counties compiled by the California Employment Development Department (EDD) for the last decade. The information suggests that drought is a relatively minor source of economic loss in the San Joaquin Valley and that it would be highly speculative to assume that economic and farm employment conditions would be significantly improved by the measures requested in the Temporary Urgency Change Petition or approved by State Board Executive Director.

The annual crop reports<sup>1</sup> demonstrate that the eight San Joaquin Valley counties reported a significant increase in the production value of agricultural commodities in 2011 totaling \$30.47 billion. This was the last wet year in both the Sacramento and San Joaquin River drainages. In 2012, a dry year in the San Joaquin Basin and below normal year in the Sacramento Valley, crop value increased 6.34% to \$32.53 billion. Crop value again increased by 8.67% to \$35.62 billion

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<sup>1</sup> Fresno County: <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/DepartmentPage.aspx?id=54231>

Kern County: <http://www.kernag.com/caap/crop-reports/crop-reports.asp>

Kings County: <http://www.countyofkings.com/departments/agricultural-commissioner/crop-reports-1941-2011>

Tulare County: <http://agcomm.co.tulare.ca.us/default/index.cfm/standards-and-quarantine/crop-reports1/>

Madera County: <http://www.madera-county.com/index.php/publications/crop-reports>

Merced County: <http://www.co.merced.ca.us/Archive.aspx?AMID=36>

Stanislaus County: <http://www.stanag.org/crop-reports.shtm>

San Joaquin County: <http://www.sjgov.org/agcomm/annualrpts.aspx>

in the second drought year of 2013, which was critically dry in the San Joaquin Valley and dry in the Sacramento Valley. Seven of the eight counties reported record highs for 2013. In fact, the value of crop production in the second drought year of 2013 was some 14.46% over the wet year of 2011. The crop reports for 2014 are not yet available. CSPA's worksheet for the annual crop reports is included as Attachment 1.

CSPA then examined farm industry employment.<sup>2</sup> In the wet/wet year of 2011, farm industry employment in the eight counties totaled 189,900. In the dry/below normal year of 2012, farm employment increased 3.31% to 196,400 and, in the critically dry/dry year of 2013, farm employment further increased 4.57% to 205,800. Farm employment went up in all eight counties in both 2012 and 2013. This is further reflected in the overall all decrease in total unemployment in all counties in 2012, 2013 and 2014. While the "annual employment" results for 2014 are not yet posted, the monthly results have been released and they reveal a slight decrease in farm employment of 0.45% to 204,876. However, this decrease of 924 jobs in the Valley should not have caused the degree of impacts described at the workshop. Indeed, the 23 January 2014 press releases by EDD for each of the eight counties revealed that, between December 2013 and December 2014, total aggregate farm and nonfarm employment in the eight counties increased 300 and 21,800 jobs, respectively.

CSPA acknowledges that impacts have occurred. We do, however, question whether the impacts can be principally attributed to drought, whether they can be relieved by measures in the State Board's TUCP Order or whether the impacts are in significant measure related to the overall economy and economic structure of San Joaquin Valley agriculture. Examination of historical unemployment data in the Valley since 2000 reveals endemic unemployment that increases to catastrophic levels in a number of disadvantaged communities but which changes relatively little regardless of the water year type.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have questions or require clarification, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Bill Jennings, Executive Director  
California Sportfishing Protection Alliance

Attachment 1: Farm Production & Employment Worksheet

cc: Members of the State Water Resources Control Board  
Department of Water Resources, c/o James Mizell  
Bureau of Reclamation, Regional Solicitor's Office, c/o Amy Aufdemberge  
Barbara Evoy, Les Grober, Jean McCue, Rich Satkowski

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/LMID/Employment\\_by\\_Industry\\_Data.html](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/LMID/Employment_by_Industry_Data.html)