



July 19, 2017

Mr. Armando Quintero  
Chair  
California Water Commission  
PO Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  
Emailed to: [CWC@water.ca.gov](mailto: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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Page 2

The voters of California approved Proposition 1 by a margin of more than two-to-one, and they had a clear understanding, in the midst of a historic drought, that they were being asked whether California should invest in new water storage projects. Governor Brown and other signatories of the official ballot argument in support of Proposition 1 wrote in relevant part: “Proposition 1 invests in *new storage increasing the amount of water that can be stored during wet years* for the dry years that will continue to challenge California.” (Emphasis added.)

As surface water storage projects, Sites and Temperance Flat provide the only means of capturing and storing heavy snowmelt and rain runoff – especially in wet years – that can be later utilized for groundwater recharge. Without this surface storage supply, groundwater recharge opportunities are lost as flood flows cannot be accommodated by saturated recharge lands. As the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act is implemented, the need for this capacity and flexibility is greater than ever.

Both projects would also provide needed additional flood protection for communities throughout the Central Valley.

These projects will help make California’s water system more efficient and reliable. The projects help meet the objectives of the California Water Action Plan by providing a substantial supply of high-quality water to support the economy and the environment.

We respectfully urge the Commission to support both the Sites Reservoir Project and the Temperance Flat Reservoir Project to the fullest extent possible.

Sincerely,

Dave Puglia  
Executive Vice President

- C: Carol Baker, Member, California Water Commission  
Andrew Ball, Member, California Water Commission  
Joseph Byrne, Member, California Water Commission  
Daniel Curtain, Member, California Water Commission  
Joe Del Bosque, Member, California Water Commission  
Maria Herrera, Member, California Water Commission  
Catherine Keig, Member, California Water Commission  
David Orth, Member, California Water Commission  
Joe Yun, Executive Officer, California Water Commission  
Jim Watson, General Manager, Sites Project Authority  
Mario Santoyo, Executive Director, San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority