

**CA State Board of Food & Agriculture
Water Resolution**

WHEREAS, California's farmers produce more than half the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables, generate approximately \$28 billion in gross receipts annually, employ 1.1 million people and create \$60 billion in personal income each year.

WHEREAS, more than one-quarter of California's landmass is used for agriculture and the attendant open space—about 27.7 million acres, including 5 million acres of federal grazing land. About half of this total is pasture and range, another 39% is cropland, and the remainder is divided between woodland and other land.

WHEREAS, about 97% of California's 74,000 farms are family or individually operated, and more than 90% of the state's farms are small businesses under federal law.

WHEREAS, the Central Valley Project (CVP) serves water to one-third of California's farmland and more than 1 million California households, and generates clean hydroelectric energy for two million Californians.

WHEREAS, the State Water Project provides water supplies for 23 million Californians and 755,000 acres of irrigated farmland.

WHEREAS, cities, farms and rural communities throughout the Central Valley and the Silicon Valley are dependent upon the CVP water supplies that serve as the socio-economic foundation for the region.

WHEREAS, CVP water serves a broad array of environmentally beneficial purposes, including water supplies for state and federal wildlife refuges and other waterfowl habitat, instream flows that provide habitat for various fisheries, and rice straw decomposition. Many of the innovative landowner based partnerships include the participation of conservation organizations including Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and the California Waterfowl Association.

WHEREAS, CVP water users for the past 13 years have contributed to the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) Restoration Fund, which, in turn has funded hundreds of restoration projects to protect and improve fish and wildlife habitat and the continuing recovery of threatened and endangered species.

WHEREAS, the Sacramento River Water Right Settlement Contracts have either been executed or will soon be executed by the Department of the Interior. The Settlement Contractors hold vested water rights that pre-date the CVP. The Settlement Contractors have been recognized for progressive water management in the Sacramento Valley over the past decade, including the completion of fish screens to protect species of fish listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (including salmon and steelhead), innovative water use efficiency measures, the conjunctive management of surface and groundwater and projects to meet wildlife refuge water supplies.

WHEREAS, many of the Sacramento River, Shasta and Trinity River Divisions Water Service Contracts in Northern California have been executed. These contracts allow for the continued beneficial use of water, and include numerous provisions to promote efficient water use, including the utilization of highly-efficient, fully metered underground pipelines to decrease losses due to evaporation and seepage. The contracts also include incentives for contractors to promote farming activities that provide habitat for waterfowl.

WHEREAS, the Delta Division, the San Luis Unit, and San Felipe Division Water Service contracts have either been executed or will soon be executed by the Department of the Interior. These contracts allow for the continued beneficial use of water for the irrigation of more than one million acres of highly productive farmland on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, San Benito County, and Santa Clara County, and include numerous provisions to promote efficient water use, including the utilization of highly-efficient, fully metered underground pipelines to decrease losses due to evaporation and seepage. These contracts account for approximately \$2 billion of total agricultural production in the San Joaquin Valley, and support roughly \$16.5 billion of economic activity in the Silicon Valley.

WHEREAS, the Friant and Cross Valley Canal Division serves water to approximately 15,000 mostly small family farmers on more than 1 million acres of extremely productive land on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley. Annual gross farm gate (excluding dairy and cattle) exceeds \$2 billion and the service area includes the top three agricultural counties in the nation. Sixty percent of the crops are permanent plantings, predominantly citrus, nuts, vineyards and tree fruit. The service area utilizes highly efficient irrigation delivery systems and groundwater recharge programs. Numerous cities are also significantly or entirely dependent upon CVP water supplies, including the cities of Fresno, Orange Cove and Lindsay.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Board of Food and Agriculture supports the Department of the Interior in its efforts to renew and defend the Central Valley Water Right Settlement Contracts and Water Service Contracts to assure the continued and uninterrupted delivery of water to cities, farms, wildlife refuges and fisheries in the Central Valley and the Silicon Valley. The Board also recommends that the Governor, the Cabinet Secretaries and the State of California formally support the renewal of these Water Right Settlement Contracts and Water Service Contracts and the California rural communities, cities, and businesses they sustain. Furthermore, we also urge the Governor, the Cabinet Secretaries, and the State of California to support water rights throughout California and the full utilization of the State Water Project for farms, cities, rural communities, wildlife refuges and other related purposes.

Subscribed
Helen Lopez, Executive Director

Approved May 25, 2005