



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
Mid-Pacific Regional Office  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898

IN REPLY REFER TO:

MP-170  
PRJ-1.00

FEB 02 2012

Ms. Barbara L. Evoy  
Deputy Director for Water Rights  
Attention: Ms. Katherine Mrowka  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Subject: San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) Compliance with Conditions 4, 7, and 13 of the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) Order Dated September 30, 2011, Applications 234, 1465, and 5638, Friant Division, Central Valley Project.

Dear Ms. Evoy:

On September 30, 2011, we received a Water Rights Order (Order) from the State Board for the Water Year (WY) 2012 Interim Flows Project (Project). The Order includes a series of conditions that the Bureau of Reclamation is to implement in carrying out the Project. This letter reports on activities in compliance with Conditions 4, 7, and 13 of the Order.

Condition 4 of the Order states: "Reclamation shall complete and submit to the Deputy Director for Water Rights the Recirculation Plan by February 1, 2012." In February 2011, we largely completed the enclosed Plan for the Recirculation, Recapture, Reuse, Exchange, or Transfer of Interim and Restoration Flows (Plan). This Plan was prepared in coordination with the Friant Water Authority, Friant Division long-term contractors, San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Although this Plan was largely complete, the parties were not able to agree upon a few critical items, the most significant was whether the reduction in the ability to recapture flood flows at Mendota Dam constituted an involuntary reduction in water supply allocations to the west side Central Valley Project contractors consistent with Section 10004(a)(4) of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act. Discussions on completing the Plan have been on hold pending Reclamation's decision on this issue.

We have worked diligently this past year to resolve this issue. Our intention was to complete this effort some time ago, but we have not completed our analysis to date. Pending resolution of several issues, we expect to make a final decision by February 29, 2012. We will notify the parties and the State Board of our decision on or before February 29, 2012.

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With this final decision, we will engage the parties to complete the Plan. We expect to complete the Plan by August 1, 2012. Until such time as the Plan is complete, Reclamation will continue to operate consistent with the February 2011 version of the Plan.

Condition 7 of the Order states:

“As part of implementing the Seepage Monitoring Plan, Reclamation shall publish the then-current well locations, monitoring/buffer groundwater thresholds, and proposed process for development of and updates to action thresholds on the SJRRP website by January 10, 2012 for public review and comment and shall also provide this information to the Division. In the event that written comments are submitted within 20 calendar days, Reclamation shall consider these comments and provide written responses, which may include revisions to the thresholds, by March 1, 2012. Comments, responses, and then-current thresholds shall be published on the SJRRP website by March 1, 2012, and also provided to the Deputy Director for Water Rights for review, modification and approval. Recognizing that many factors contribute to groundwater elevations, Reclamation shall manage Interim Flows to avoid exceeding an action threshold to the extent possible. In addition, and prior to January 10, 2012, Reclamation shall publish on the SJRRP website the location of all new monitoring wells installed in 2011 and its plans for installation of additional monitoring wells in 2012, including proposed well locations and estimated timelines for installation. Plans for installation of new monitoring wells shall include surveying well locations.”

The enclosed memo requesting comments on the groundwater thresholds that are included in Appendix H to the Seepage Management Plan (March 28, 2011), was posted on the SJRRP website at [www.restoresjr.net/flows/Groundwater/index.html](http://www.restoresjr.net/flows/Groundwater/index.html) on January 10, 2012. Appendix H includes monitoring thresholds to identify groundwater levels of concern and buffer zones to add a safety factor for protecting crop root zones. It also includes the proposed process for development of and updates to action thresholds. The thresholds were developed in coordination with the Seepage and Conveyance Technical Feedback Group and have not changed since the March 28, 2011 version of the Seepage Management Plan. Appendix H is enclosed, consistent with the requirement in Condition 7 of the Order to provide this information to the State Board. No comments were received on the groundwater thresholds.

Current well locations can be found in the Monitoring Well Atlas available on the SJRRP website at [www.restoresjr.net/flows/groundwater/groundwater.html](http://www.restoresjr.net/flows/groundwater/groundwater.html). In 2011, we installed 35 additional monitoring wells in Reaches 2A through 4B1. The locations of these wells are provided in the Monitoring Well Atlas. At this time, we do not have plans to install additional monitoring wells in 2012. As additional information becomes available, or if landowners identify areas of concern that are not covered by the existing monitoring well network, we may install additional monitoring wells. In the event that additional wells are installed, we will publish the locations and timelines on the SJRRP website. Our monitoring well network

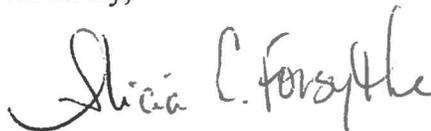
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(including private landowner and irrigation district wells that we may also monitor) includes more than 150 wells in all reaches of the river.

Condition 13 states: "Prior to February 1, 2012, Reclamation shall document that it has either entered into or attempted to enter into a continuous operations and maintenance agreement, or comparable funding mechanism, that accounts for increased operations and maintenance costs of CCID, SLCC, and the Levee District associated with the Interim Flows Program." We entered into a financial assistance agreement with the Lower San Joaquin Levee District during WY 2011 and are currently pursuing extension of time and funding to cover WY 2012 activities. We are also working on completing an agreement with the Central California Irrigation District to provide funding to retrofit Mendota Dam with automated sluice gates to improve the precision of operations to pass Interim Flows. We provided financial assistance to the San Luis Canal Company to retrofit Sack Dam with automated gates in May 2011. We also continue to work on the Arroyo Canal Fish Screen and Sack Dam Fish Passage Project, which will completely replace and/or retrofit the San Luis Canal Company's water diversion facilities on the San Joaquin River. We expect to start construction on this project in early 2013.

We appreciate your continued efforts as we work to implement the Settlement, consistent with Public Law 111-11 and the Order. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 916-978-5464 or [aforsythe@usbr.gov](mailto:aforsythe@usbr.gov).

Sincerely,



Alicia E. Forsythe  
Program Manager

Enclosures (3)