

July 28, 2016

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell,

Impacts of the California drought have demonstrated that California's water system is no longer adequate to sustain the demands placed on it by our state's communities and ecosystems. Significant investment is required to diversify our water supply, including increasing both surface and subsurface water storage, so that California's communities and its ecosystems can weather the future droughts we know are sure to come. Thus, we were particularly concerned when we were made aware that the Bureau of Land Management may have increased uncertainty for the future of a much needed project for California and the San Joaquin Valley; the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation, more commonly known as Temperance Flat Dam.

On December 22, 2014, the Bureau of Land Management issued a Regional Management Plan (RMP) and associated Record of Decision (ROD) for the Bakersfield Field Office. Significantly, in this RMP, BLM determined that 7.25 miles of the San Joaquin River are eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System and suitable for a "wild and scenic river" designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

At the same time, the Bureau of Reclamation is working collaboratively with California stakeholders to complete a feasibility study and to prepare a proposal to the California Water Commission to fund the public benefits of Temperance Flat Dam under Chapter 8 of Proposition I. This study adds to the significant investment made in preparing the technical and feasibility studies for Temperance Flat Project, which the federal taxpayer has invested over \$38,000,000 dollars and more than 10 years of agency staff time to complete.

We are very concerned that a proposed wild and scenic river designation would directly conflict with any potential recommendation by the Bureau of Reclamation to move forward with Temperance Flat Dam and negatively impact the opportunity for project funding before the California Water Commission. Such an outcome would have negative consequences to water reliability for California communities, including those in the eastern San Joaquin Valley, which have been severely impacted by the current drought conditions.

We continue to support the efforts by the Bureau of Reclamation to advance the Temperance Flat feasibility study and urge you to ensure that their efforts are not negatively impacted by the BLM's proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amarpreet Dhaliwal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Amarpreet Dhaliwal, Policy Board Chair  
Fresno Council of Governments