



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Senator Feinstein Welcomes News of More Water for Central Valley Farmers

"I am very pleased to learn that the Bureau of Reclamation today announced a 30 percent allocation for South of Delta Agricultural water users from the federal Central Valley Water Project. This is based on the 50 percent exceedance forecast.

Given all the recent precipitation, and the likelihood that it will continue, I believe this means that South of Delta Agricultural water users will receive at least 30 percent of their contractual federal water allocation. In addition, the Department has confirmed with me that it is working to achieve the equivalent of an additional 8-10 percent further allocation through various administrative actions which are all consistent with, and within, the Biological Opinions. This is very good news.

Many discussions and meetings have been held with members of Congress, state and federal officials at several Departments, Delta interests, and representatives of farmers, fishermen, environmental groups and water contractors.

It is my belief that this effort, when carried out by Interior, means that South of Delta agricultural water users can expect the equivalent of a 40 percent federal water allocation.

Much creative thinking and work has been done by many people to make this happen, for which I thank the many people involved.

In particular, I'd like to extend my thanks to David Hayes and Lester Snow, who represent the federal and state water projects, respectively, and also to Ron Milligan of the Central Valley Project and Mike Conner, commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, and Mark Cowin, director of the California Department of Water Resources. I'd also like to thank a multitude of water users, including Tom Birmingham, representing Westlands Water District, Jeff Kightlinger, representing Metropolitan Water District, and Tom Berliner, representing the exchange contractors; former State Senator Mike Machado, on behalf of Delta interests; Zeke Grader, executive director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations; Gary Bobker, director of the Bay Institute's Rivers and Delta Program; Hal Candee and Kate Poole on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Finally, I would like to thank my friend and colleague Senator Barbara Boxer for her support, and particularly credit Representatives Jim Costa and Dennis Cardoza for their constructive work and eternal advocacy on behalf of farmers in the Central Valley.

I will watch this situation carefully and I am placing my proposed amendment on hold; however, I reserve the right to bring it back should it become necessary."

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