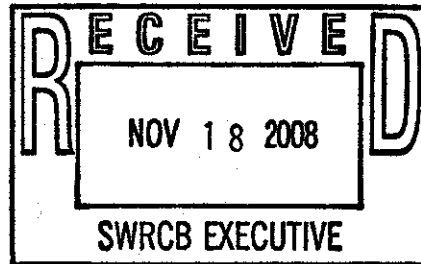




CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

2300 RIVER PLAZA DRIVE, SACRAMENTO, CA 95833-3293 · PHONE (916) 561-5655 · FAX (916) 561-5691



November 18, 2008

Via First-Class Mail & Email
commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4706.

Re: Comment Letter – 12/02/08 Board Meeting: Auburn Dam Project Draft Order

Dear Chairman Dudoc and Members of the Board:

The California Farm Bureau Federation ("Farm Bureau") is a non-governmental, non-profit, voluntary membership California corporation whose purpose is to protect and promote agricultural interests throughout the state of California and to find solutions to the problems of the farm, the farm home and the rural community. Farm Bureau is California's largest farm organization, comprised of 53 county Farm Bureaus currently representing approximately 91,000 members in 56 counties. Farm Bureau strives to protect and improve the ability of farmers and ranchers engaged in production agriculture to provide a reliable supply of food and fiber through responsible stewardship of California's resources.

Farm Bureau appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the Board's Draft Order Revoking Water Right Permits 16209, 16210, 16211, and 16212 (Applications 18721, 18723, 21636, and 21637), which authorize the United States Bureau of Reclamation to divert water from the North Fork American River and Knickerbocker Creek for the Auburn Dam Project in Placer and El Dorado Counties.

In order to protect the interests of all citizens in the food productivity of the county, improve water reliability, and reduce flood dangers, we believe the Auburn Dam should be constructed. Specifically, Congress should reauthorize the Auburn Dam and appropriate funds for its construction, the Bureau of Reclamation should completed all necessary studies (including reformulation of the project, with seismic upgrades and other improvements), Reclamation should obtain all necessary permits and approvals, and a large multi-purpose dam appropriate for the water needs of all Californians should be constructed and water from that dam promptly applied to beneficial uses out of a new unit of the Central Valley Project.

There is an insufficient and increasingly inadequate statewide water supply and the clear need for additional surface water storage as an indispensable element of any long-term water strategy for the State of California. The limited amount of available water and the large and increasing amount of demand in excess of this available water strongly suggests that beneficial uses and the needs of the environment cannot be simultaneously served *without* new surface water storage. Furthermore, current trends and challenges suggest that the balance of dueling societal needs may be gradually shifting:

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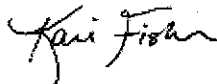
State Water Resources Control Board

12/02/08 Board Meeting: Auburn Dam Project Draft Order

- Current climatic trends in California appear to indicate that our State will require, not only groundwater banking, floodplain management, conservation, recycling and the like, but also significantly expanded infrastructure to capture, store, and release available surface water flows.
- Projected effects of future climate change that strongly support the latter conclusion include reduced snowpack (currently the State's "largest reservoir"); altered patterns of runoff, including increased rain-fed runoff in late winter and spring and reduced late spring and summer runoff; more pronounced and prolonged cycles of alternating droughts and wet-periods; intensifying demands on flood control infrastructure and increasing flood control releases from reservoirs; rising sea-levels and intensifying salinity control requirements associated with the same in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Bay-Delta region and in coastal basins; higher water temperatures and increasing coldwater pool demands for fishery management and recovery; increasing water consumptive use with rising ambient temperatures and increasing evapotranspiration.
- The State's growing population and increasing environmental water demands will compound future climate change effects and make new surface water development all the more critical.
- Long-term, comprehensive solutions for water supply, water quality and ecosystem challenges in the Delta and beyond will require, not only increasing environmental stewardship and water conservation, but also significant new surface water storage.

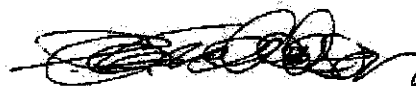
Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments and concerns regarding the proposed permit revocation.

Sincerely,



Kari E. Fisher
Associate Counsel

KEF\JEF\mmm



Justin E. Fredrickson
Environmental Policy Analyst