

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
2125 19TH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95818



(916) 322-8343

In Reply Refer
to: 323:MKL

May 18, 1977

To: Diverters of Water from Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta
Channels

NOTICE OF SHORTAGE OF FRESH WATER

Forecasts of 1977 water supply conditions indicate that runoff from the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins will be only about 20 and 15 per cent of normal, respectively. Thus, severe reduction in natural flow available in the Delta for both diversion and water quality maintenance will result.

Water quality levels for the Delta have been established in the Interim Water Quality Plan for 1977 adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board on February 8. The forecasts of 1977 water supply conditions and estimates of flows required to maintain water quality at levels established in the plan indicate that natural flow available will become deficient commencing about June 1, 1977. Continuance after that date of a supply of water in the Delta of suitable quality depends on maintenance of adequate outflow through release of stored water from the reservoirs of the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project.

Riparian water users are those whose properties are adjacent to lakes, streams, and rivers carrying water from natural runoff. Water diverted under claim of riparian right is to be shared for beneficial purposes coequally with other riparian owners. Please note that release of stored water from reservoirs is not natural flow and is not available for riparian use. Thus, although suitable quality water may be physically present in Delta channels, the quantities subject to diversion under riparian claim may be substantially less than those which are normally diverted. Based on current forecasts, our calculations indicate that natural flow will supply only about 60% of the riparian requirements in June, 40% in July, and 55% in August.

Water diverters under permit or license with our Board have appropriate rights to any unappropriated water present in

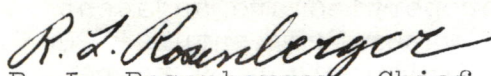
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the Delta. Natural flows are available to appropriators only after riparian demands have been satisfied. Commencing about May 1 of this very dry year and lasting until greatly improved water supply conditions return, water in the Delta channels will not be available for diversion under permits and licenses.

We also wish to advise that in the event complaints of diversion and use of stored water without a contract, or of violation of permit or license terms or conditions are received from affected persons, including users holding higher priority rights, the Board is required by provisions of the California Administrative Code to investigate and if violation of permit or license terms is found, institute such enforcement action as may be appropriate.

The Board is currently considering the adoption of emergency regulations to control all water uses of Delta supplies to ensure the protection of the Delta to the maximum extent possible with limited upstream supplies. In view of the rapidly deteriorating water supply situation upstream of the Delta, it appears that extraordinary measures will be necessary to prevent total exhaustion of stored supplies in early 1978 if the drought continues. A special meeting of the Board has been scheduled for May 24, 1977 to gather information on the current drought. A notice of this special meeting has been mailed separately to you.

We urge you to take all possible measures to cooperate in the conservation of water within the estimated available supply. An engineer from the Division of Water Rights is available to answer questions at (916) 322-8343.


R. L. Rosenberger, Chief
Division of Water Rights