

From: Steve Bass <steve@bassque.com>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 1/25/2010 6:14 PM
Subject: Kern River Water

To the State Water Resources Control Board:

The subject and conversations around Bakersfield regarding the dry Kern River bed and the scar it represents has gone from comic to tragic. Snide remarks alluding to the "No fishing from bridge" signs above the sand and T-shirts on sale at the County airport with the logo "Bakersfield: A River Bed Runs Through It" are no longer funny. The time has come to restore a reasonable flow in the river through town and use this water to replenish the underground water supply.

Bakersfield has established, through volunteers and many hours of work and effort, a bicycle and walking path for the length of the river through town and into its outskirts. This public way also includes large parks with beach areas for safe access to the river, recreation areas and wildlife viewing opportunities. However, with no water in the river, the biggest scenic, ecologic, and important piece of the puzzle is missing. My wife and I use this pathway almost daily and it is obvious to us that without the water--since the last years the river flowed--the wildlife, especially, has been impacted the most. It has been a long time since we've seen a bobcat or a kit fox and we rarely see the coyotes, rabbits, skunks and opossums that we used to. The animal population has been drastically reduced for lack of water.

Naturally, the largest benefit of a flowing river would be the recharging of the underground aquifer. As you know, it recharges it as it flows through the City and our municipality also has a large system of recharge basins west of town that it fills when the river is running. The aquifer benefits everyone.

There would be no losers if the flow water is allowed--only winners. Everyone in Bakersfield and the surrounding area will be able to share in all the positives with the return of water to the river.

Please use your expertise, influence and power to turn this "joke" into a great story with a happy ending. Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,
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