



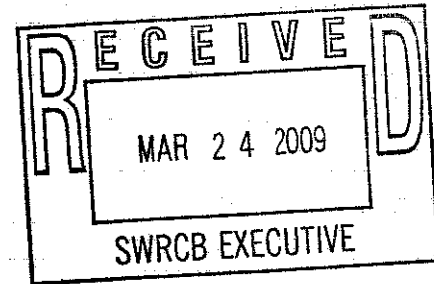
Mendocino County Farm Bureau

Affiliated with the California Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation

4/7/09 Bd Wrkshp
Russian River Frost Protect.
Deadline: 4/2/09 by 12 noon

March 18, 2009

Chairman Charles Hoppin
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100



Regarding: Russian River Frost Protection Prohibition

Dear Chairman Hoppin and Board Members,

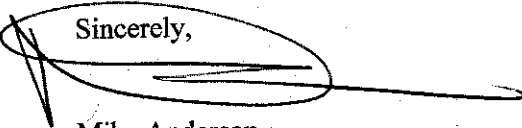
Mendocino County Farm Bureau represents some 1,500 people in Mendocino County; we are very concerned with the proposed action regarding the prohibition of diverting water from the Russian River for frost protection. Members of our agricultural community have been meeting with your staff, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and Fish and Game for months developing a reasonable method of accomplishing frost protection while protecting the public trust resource. This process was blind-sided on March 5th by your staff and NMFS when they announced the preparation of "Emergency Regulations" banning the use of water for frost protection in the Russian River Basin in 2009!

Frost protection is a necessary, allowable, permitted and an established beneficial use of water. Stakeholders in the Upper Russian River understand and have agreed to significant water conservation guide lines to insure there will be enough water available for the municipalities, public trust resources and agriculture. Without water for frost protection, there is a very real possibility of over \$67 million in crop losses in Mendocino County alone. This does not take into consideration the ripple effect and impacts to related jobs and revenue, the cumulative impact could easily exceed \$200 million.

The thought of this debate taking place while the State Water Board is mandating non-sustainable releases from Lake Mendocino based on modeling of inflow at Lake Pillsbury is unconscionable. Lake Mendocino sits at less than 50% of capacity with little likelihood of any further significant rain events. The idea of crafting water regulation based on a record drought year has no scientific validity whatsoever.

It is imperative that a reasonable resolution is achieved that insures frost protection while minimizing impacts on all other water needs. In your 2008 Strategic Plan you state your goal is to "*be forward thinking, use best science available... while protecting water quality and balancing the competing demands on our water resources*". If you follow your stated plan, I am confident that you will not move forward with the proposed Emergency Regulation developed by staff, instead direct staff to work collaboratively with water users towards developing a workable and scientifically valid long term resolution to the problem.

Sincerely,


Mike Anderson
President, Mendocino County Farm Bureau