

Water Horizons

August, 2005

Valley Water Alliance Update

Alliance Launches Their Website - www.valleywateralliance.org

Educating and advocating about the impact any water loss from the San Joaquin River would have on the Central Valley is one of the principal missions of the Valley Water Alliance. And making sure we get the word out by every possible means is important to the organization's success. A website where interested members of the public can access information is important so this month we launched our website www.valleywateralliance.org.

The website includes information about the Alliance and data for the public, media and all interested individuals interested in gaining a greater depth of understanding about water related issues and our economy. The site will also be a great resource to the Alliance's membership. Giving members the ability to direct others to points of information and for them to stay up-to-date on Alliance issues.

We hope you will find the website to be user friendly. If there is additional information you would like us to consider placing on the website or to inquire about linking the site to your own website please contact us at info@valleywateralliance.org. We look forward to hearing from you and hope you will encourage your friends, neighbors and colleagues to also check out the website.

California Building Industry Association and Tulare County Farm Bureau Make Their Major Contributions Official

The generous support of the Valley Water Alliance's 501(c)(6) organization from so many individuals and organizations throughout the Central Valley has made a tremendous difference in the organizations ability to educate and advocate to others concerning the impacts on our communities, should there be any water lost from the San Joaquin River. Prior to the July board meeting of the Friant Water Authority VWA secretary/treasurer, Dale Brogan, officially accepted contributions from the California Building Industry Association and the Tulare County Farm Bureau in support

of the organization's efforts. Recognizing the economic impacts the loss of any San Joaquin River water would have on their industries the building industry and agricultural industry in Tulare County came together to support VWA's mission. Dale Brogan, said it was because of the unique partnerships being formed by the diverse membership of the Alliance including labor, agriculture, business and resource interests which would allow them to succeed. Again a big thank you to the California Building Industry Association and Tulare County Farm Bureau for their generous support and recognizing the need to protect our water and our future.

County of Merced, City of Shafter and the BIG Coalition Pass Supporting Resolutions

Throughout the Central Valley cities, counties and local organizations continue to pass resolutions of support for the Valley Water Alliance and protection of our San Joaquin River water supplies. The County of Merced, City of Shafter and the Business Industry and Government (BIG) Coalition of the South San Joaquin Valley recently passed resolutions in support of the Valley Water Alliance and Friant Dam operations. The resolutions acknowledge support of Friant operations, which are consistent with the historic commitments to provide economical and reliable water supplies to agricultural, municipal, and business water users. It is the hope amongst the counties, cities and interest groups supporting the Alliance's efforts that a reasonable balance among all competing interests is achieved to bring water supply reliability to the region.

Concerns over threats to the Central Valley's water supply and efforts to protect and preserve the economic, social and environmental interests of all residents is a common pursuit by everyone issuing supporting resolutions. If you would like to assist the Alliance in having a resolution passed by the City Council or County of Supervisors in your community please contact Alfreda Sebasto at 559-291-0184 or info@valleywateralliance.org.

Momentum Continues to Build *Fall Lobbying Trips Being Planned*

The success of the Alliance's efforts will depend on the members and board of directors working together to continuing building momentum – educating and advocating about the Central Valley's reliance upon San Joaquin River water. To that end, the board of directors of the Valley Water Alliance is busy planning their fall lobbying trips to Sacramento and Washington, D.C. to educate our elected leaders about the economic impacts re-watering the San Joaquin River to the entire Central Valley. It is the Alliance's hope to encourage our elected leaders to take into consideration the social, cultural and economic impacts of re-watering the San Joaquin River as they consider their legislative decisions over the next year. We will not succeed at protecting our water and our future if we do not continue to tell our story. The Alliance's bipartisan partnership between local government, labor, business and agriculture will continue to advocate for the reliable water supply our businesses and jobs depend upon for their success.

Alliance Members Continue to Make Presentations Throughout the Valley

The Alliance would like to extend their appreciation to the Kern County Resources Committee and the San Joaquin River Resource Management Committee for their invitations to make presentations to their respective organizations during the past month. The importance of educating our community about the impact of re-watering the San Joaquin River, as advocated for by the Natural Resource Defense Council, will have on our economy could be devastating. Our water and our future depends on the Alliance educating others. If you know of an organization or neighborhood group who would like a presentation about San Joaquin River issues please contact Alfreda Sebasto at 559-291-0184 or info@valleywateralliance.org to make arrangements.

Mayor Lopez Sends Letter to Los Angeles Times

Over the past month the Los Angeles Times has offered the editorial opinion that the re-watering of the San Joaquin River is necessary despite the impacts it may have on the economy of the Central Valley. They have forgotten the critical interdependence agricultural, business and labor have on one another. Fortunately, the Alliance has members such as the Mayor Victor Lopez of Orange Cove, who are speaking out. Working hard to educate our elected leaders and the media about the critical importance of San Joaquin River water to communities such as his.

Dear Editor:

As the Mayor of Orange Cove, a small community on the San Joaquin Valley's east side, I have watched my community fight and grow. Our population of 10,000 residents' works very hard. We have six major housing development projects underway and a new high school under construction. A new shopping center along with our middle school and community library were just completed.

Many years ago Friant Dam was constructed along the San Joaquin River to provide reliability to our water supply and meet the needs of our growing population. The jobs in my community come from the agricultural industry supported by water from the River. The source of drinking water in my community is the River. If we loose our water, we will loose everything.

We are one of the major food producing areas in the world, but it seems we don't always get credit for what we produce. People forget where their food comes from – it comes from places like Orange Cove. The idea it isn't a big deal to take our water, is sadly mistaken.

Our jobs and our community are in jeopardy. The California State Legislature needs to recognize there are social, cultural and economic impacts river restoration would have on our community.

Let us not rush to judgment, but work together to build new storage and use our scarce water resources wisely.

*Victor Lopez
Mayor, Orange Cove*

(As Submitted to the Los Angeles Times, July 25, 2005)

Please contact the Valley Water Alliance at info@valleywateralliance.org if you have any questions or need additional information. To be placed on the Alliance's mailing list, or to provide edits or submissions for our monthly newsletter please contact Alfreda Sebasto at info@valleywateralliance.org or call 559-291-0184.



Our Water, Our Future.