

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 26, 2008

The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1522 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Committee on Natural Resources  
H2-186 Ford House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Napolitano and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers:

As you know, Governor Schwarzenegger declared a drought emergency for the nine counties in our region earlier this month. We take this opportunity to respectfully request a field hearing in the San Joaquin Valley of California on this dire situation. Considering that California's water infrastructure is operated in part by federal agencies, and the fact that we will be requesting federal crop disaster assistance due to this year's deficient water supply, we believe it is timely for the committee to hear from our constituents on these issues and the need for greater reliability in our water supply.


This spring was the driest on record in Northern California, which supplies most of the water to the state. The culmination of a low snow pack, a previous dry year, and court decisions that restrict water transfers has left the San Joaquin Valley in a disastrous state of affairs. The diminishing water supply has resulted in water diversions and rationing that will devastate the Valley's agriculture production.

San Joaquin Valley agriculture is a \$20 billion industry that accounts for nearly 38 percent of the Valley's employment. With more than 300 crops grown here, some of which are not grown anywhere else in the United States, the San Joaquin Valley represents three of the top producing agricultural counties in the country. Without adequate water, this thriving industry will literally wither and die. Farmers who do not have enough water for their crops have started to abandon ones already planted. Farm workers who depend on the agriculture industry will be unemployed and stand to suffer significant economic hardship. As unemployment rises, more will look to the government for assistance, putting further pressure on our already overburdened welfare system. As representatives of the San Joaquin Valley, we find the current circumstances unacceptable and cannot stand idly by while communities go without water and the Valley's number one industry dries up.


Whether we like it or agree with it, the simple fact is that over the past 16 years, more than 3,000,000 acre-feet of our federal water supply has been reallocated by judicial decisions and legislative changes to other areas of California to benefit fisheries and water quality. We have no water left to give. Our current service water supply is deficient to meet our existing needs, not to mention those of our growing population.

Hard working individuals in the San Joaquin Valley deserve to have their voices heard. For the reasons outlined above, we respectfully request that the Natural Resources Committee act by scheduling a field hearing in the San Joaquin Valley to address the impacts of this drought. Because agriculture and water are intrinsically linked, we are also sending a hearing request letter to the Agriculture Committee and ask that you consider, if feasible, holding a joint hearing on this important issue. Thank you for your timely consideration of this request.

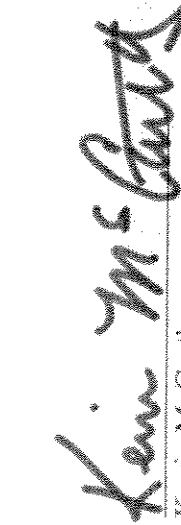
Sincerely,



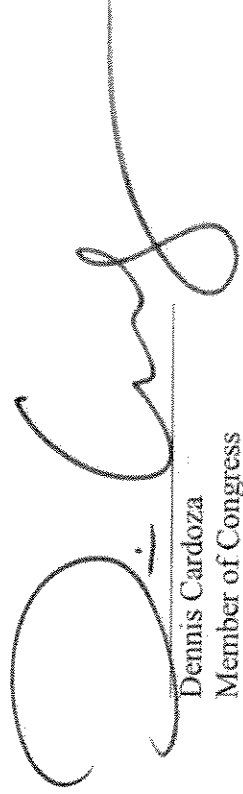
George Radanovich  
Member of Congress




Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



Kevin McCarthy  
Member of Congress



Dennis Cardoza  
Member of Congress



Devin Nunes  
Member of Congress