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Contact: Steve Knell, OID general manager, (209) 840-5508 or srknell@oakdaleirrigation.com
Peter Rietkerk, SSJID general manager, (209) 249-4645 or prietkerk@ssjid.com

OID, SSJID statement on voluntary settlement negotiations for Stanislaus River flows

The Oakdale and South San Joaquin Irrigation Districts have diligently tried to strike a deal with state officials, the Bureau of Reclamation, and regional irrigation district partners as an alternative to the State Water Resources Control Board's proposed Phase 1 unimpaired flow proposal. Unfortunately, after continued discussions late into the day Dec. 11, the districts were unable to craft an agreement on the Stanislaus River.

The Stanislaus River is unique in the San Joaquin basin. The river is already flowing at 30 to 35 percent unimpaired flows -- significantly more than most rivers in the state. And while we see some marginal benefit to additional flows, we've also experienced water supply impacts and fishery declines because current river operations cannot sustainably manage for both.

Despite that backdrop, the districts were willing to offer an additional and relatively large pulse flow contribution, along with habitat commitments, in hopes of getting to a voluntary settlement agreement on the Stanislaus River.

The districts' commitment to working with the Bureau of Reclamation and the state to settle these continuing issues does not end with the lack of agreement Dec. 11. There were many points of consensus. Settlement discussions since last night provide encouragement that a lasting solution on the Stanislaus River is near.

We encourage the state board to provide a bit more time to foster continued dialogue toward reaching settlements. In doing so, we believe we can get to "yes" and be in a position to implement improvements on our river relatively quickly as opposed to a protracted stalemate.

About Us: The [South San Joaquin Irrigation District](#) was established in 1909 and is located in Manteca. It provides agricultural irrigation water to about 55,000 acres in Escalon, Ripon and Manteca. In 2005, the district expanded into providing domestic water service to selected cities within its territory. The [Oakdale Irrigation District](#) was created in 1909 and provides agricultural water to about 62,000 acres in northeastern Stanislaus County and southeastern San Joaquin County.

OID and SSJID hold senior water rights on the Stanislaus River. For more than 100 years, our agencies have responsibly delivered surface water to farms in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties, and for SSJID, thousands of homes in San Joaquin County. We are committed to sensible water policies, innovative irrigation techniques, prudent conservation practices, and important investments in biological studies of the river and fish habitat.

Save the Stan is a public education effort by SSJID and OID to inform Californians about the threat posed by increased flows on the Stanislaus River. For more information, go to www.savethestan.org or our [Facebook page](#).