



SAVE
THE **STAN**



SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN
IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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OID, SSJID: Analysis shows state's plan on river flows would lead to \$12.9 billion in economic damage

Any reasonable and impartial cost benefit analysis of the state's proposal to unfairly divert billions of gallons of water a year from the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced rivers would quickly reach the same conclusion as tens of thousands of Californians: the plan fails on virtually every measurable level.

It seeks to flush more than an extra 300,000 acre-feet of water down the three rivers – enough to serve about 1 million families – in a myopic and scientifically unsupported effort to create an additional 1,100 salmon.

The Oakdale and South San Joaquin irrigation districts' analysis of the state's unimpaired flows plan reaffirms what other regional water experts, business and political leaders, organizations representing farmers, independent economists and average citizens all agree on – the state's scheme is a full frontal attack on agriculture in the Central Valley.

The State Water Resources Control Board took eight years and spent more than \$70 million to create its plan without once considering input from the people in the region directly affected. Regional interests, including our districts, had less than six months to respond by the March 17 deadline.

Here is what our analysis, sent last week to the state, shows:

- The state's plan is an economic catastrophe for San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced counties. Our analysis forecasts an economic loss of **\$12.9 billion** in the first year higher flows would be required. That includes significant losses in ag output (\$2 billion), total income (\$4.78 billion) thanks in part to 4,000 fewer jobs, property values (\$4.94 billion) and taxes (\$1.18 billion). The state minimizes the regional economic impact at \$106.2 million.
- Ag and residential customers in the OID and SSJID service areas face **20% annual reductions** (from 600,000 acre-feet to 480,000 AF) in water allotments during "normal" years; cuts would be more severe during times of drought. The districts would go from 535,000 AF to 236,000 AF in "dry" and "critically dry" years.
- New Melones Reservoir **would go dry 12 times out of every 95 years.**
- Groundwater pumping across the region would increase dramatically, to as much as **1.57 million acre-feet** in sequential dry years. The state estimates cities and farmers would only pump 105,000 acre-feet a year.

- More than **132,000 acres of farmland would be fallowed** across the region because surface water deliveries would be lost or reduced and growers with access to groundwater couldn't afford to pump it. The state's estimate is less than 24,000 acres.
- OID and SSJID would forfeit key revenue streams that help keep rates affordable for all our customers. Combined, there would be a loss in the ability to produce as much as **\$10 million in clean hydroelectric power** a year from facilities at New Melones and Tulloch reservoirs. In addition, there would be no opportunity to transfer surplus surface water from our districts to other water agencies, a \$3 million to \$5 million annual hit for each district and a reduction in critical water supply for areas of need in California.

It is unfortunate that so much of the practical water management history our districts and other water agencies have on our rivers has been disregarded. The state water board should objectively evaluate all the public comments it has received from our region and produce a plan that seeks viability for both local fisheries and the regional economy.

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 began providing wholesale domestic water service to various cities within San Joaquin County. 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](#).