

Hicks-Ray Associates



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TO: WESTCAS Membership
FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray
FROM: California Water Woes

It's impossible for anybody connected to WESTCAS to ignore what is going on at present in California. For its part, the general public is focused on news stories like the one today that the State Senate is locked up inside its chamber until it breaks the budget impasse and that the State will issue "IOU's" for its tax refunds.

But for those focused on the water future of the arid west, a much more serious concern is the announcement of the Bureau of Reclamation that on Friday it will announce that available water deliveries will be reduced by 25% for the Sacramento River Settlement [North of the Delta] and 77% for the San Joaquin River Settlement [South of the Delta]. We will report full particulars to you on Friday.

Congressman Devin Nunes [CA:R, 21st Congressional District] has been fighting hard for his constituents in the San Joaquin Valley, most recently in the Stimulus bill where he unsuccessfully attempted to insert a waiver of the ESA which would have allowed additional deliveries of water controlled by the Bureau of Reclamation to enable farmers to begin spring planting.

Without this concession, Mr. Nunes warned that job losses in his area of California will exceed those lost in connection with the troubles at General Motors. In the last line of his February 6th letter to President Obama and Governor Schwarzenegger, Mr. Nunes stated:

"Failure to act will simply push the San Joaquin Valley unemployment rate above 20% and result in the collapse of civil society."

A growing number of people fear that he may be correct in his assessment. Stay tuned.

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