



Craig McNamara  
Board President  
Owner, Sierra Orchards

January 9, 2014

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Executive Director

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Secretary Karen Ross  
California Department of Food and Agriculture  
1220 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Chairwoman Felicia Marcus  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Director Mark Cowin  
Department of Water Resources  
1416 – 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 1115-1  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Director Mark Ghilarducci  
Office of Emergency Services  
3650 Schriever Avenue  
Mather, CA 95655

Dear Secretary Ross, Chairwoman Marcus, Director Cowin, and Director Ghilarducci:

At the January 7th, 2014 meeting of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture, we were briefed on the severe dry conditions within the state by federal and state water officials. The significant below average snowpack, current reservoir conditions, and projected weather modeling leave us with a sense of urgency to do all that is possible to mitigate the impacts to our farming communities, the economy and the environment. We were encouraged to hear that the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is considering recommending an emergency drought declaration to the Governor which we urge you all to support for implementation as soon as possible.

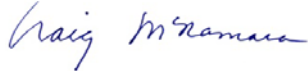
At a minimum the emergency proclamation should direct the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) within the California Water Code (Section: 13247) to allow for a temporary urgency change on Delta water quality standards. As it was explained at the board meeting, the state's water quality control plan does not allow for the use of a temporary urgency change provision on Delta water standards. This restriction is in place based on court precedent, and not originally envisioned within water quality plan operations. This precedent prevents the flexibility needed in this extraordinary situation. A temporary urgency change in Delta water quality standards could occur quickly and directly assist efforts to balance the allocation of our very limited water resources for all beneficial purposes, including the potential to facilitate water conveyance south of the Delta.

Further, an emergency proclamation will allow the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to further request federal assistance through the United States Department of Agriculture by means of a USDA Secretarial Disaster Declaration. A secretarial declaration would allow California farmers and ranchers to access federal agricultural disaster programs.



It is always difficult to project the socio-economic and agricultural impacts of a drought, but past events provide a reliable guide. Rural agricultural communities will be impacted, land will be fallowed, and workers will be displaced. California needs to be in a position to respond to these impacts with our federal partners. An emergency proclamation will help to achieve this as well as reflect the current conditions within our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Craig McNamara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Craig McNamara  
President

cc: Nancy McFadden, Executive Secretary, Office of the Governor  
cc: Dana Williamson, Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor  
cc: John Laird, Secretary, California Natural Resources  
cc: Matt Rodriguez, Secretary, Environmental Protection Agency  
cc: Diana Dooley, Secretary, California Health and Human Services  
cc: David Lanier, Secretary, Labor and Workforce Development Agency