

Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 11, 2010

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Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority Files Area of Origin Lawsuit:

Seeks to Compel the Federal Government to Operate the CVP in Accord with State Water Law.

Willows, CA – Today, the Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority (Authority) announced the filing of an action in federal Court alleging that the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is not operating the Central Valley Project (CVP) in accordance with federal and state law.

Specifically, the Authority asserts that Reclamation's operation of the CVP has failed to comply with state law protections of the Sacramento Valley watershed by exporting water outside that watershed without first satisfying the needs within the area of origin. Those obligations include the water supplies of the Authority's seventeen member districts.

"Water is the life blood of agriculture and just like every other water user in California, we're seeking a secure, reliable water supply," the Authority's Board President, Ken LaGrande, stated. *Our previous discussions with Reclamation asking them to conform to area of origin laws have not been successful and we believe only a court decision can resolve this issue once and for all,"* LaGrande concluded.

"Reclamation promised long ago when these water projects were built that we'd have the water we need," said Doug Griffin, an Authority Board member and Colusa County farmer.

"Reclamation must follow state law and state law is clear – the areas of origin will have the water they need before one drop is exported," said Griffin.

In 1933, the California Legislature passed a law specifically directed at the CVP that prohibits depriving any watershed of water that is required to adequately supply the beneficial needs of watershed users. The Legislature was responding to concerns that CVP water exports to the San Joaquin Valley would deprive the water supplies needed by water users within the area of origin. However, for years the federal government has ignored this legal obligation and exported water outside of the Sacramento Valley watershed for use elsewhere, without first fulfilling its obligations to the Authority's members.

The Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority (TCCA) is a joint powers authority consisting of 16 water districts that delivers water to 150,000 acres of irrigated agriculture throughout four Northern California counties (Tehama, Glenn, Colusa, and Yolo). The TCCA operates and maintains a 140 mile long dual-canal system. The system supports a variety of crops that contribute over \$1 billion annually to the regional economy.