



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
South-Central California Area Office  
2666 N. Grove Industrial Drive  
Suite 106  
Fresno, California 93727-1551



IN REPLY  
REFER TO:

SCC-412  
ENV-6.00

MAY 27 1999



FREE & OPEN  
PUBLIC COMMENT  
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Ms. Gina Francis  
Fresno County Public Works and  
Development Services Department  
Development Services Division  
2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor  
Fresno, California 93721

Subject: Bureau of Reclamation Comments Regarding Draft Environmental  
Impact Report for the Fresno County General Plan Update

Dear Ms. Francis:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Fresno County General Plan. The following comments are provided by the South Central California Area Office of the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). There are three main issues we would raise that should be considered within the General Plan's environmental documents:

1. Any effects of long term water contract renewals within the plan area. The long term water contract renewals are a major focus for Reclamation this year. These site specific environmental documents for several districts located entirely or partially within Fresno County, will tier off the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The water needs of individual districts will also be assessed before long term contract renewal. Results of this environmental assessment process may be of value to development of the county plan.
2. Impacts by transfers upon water resources within the plan area. Water transfers are likely to become more common and controversial within the plan area, and may become important to development and use of county water supplies.
3. Any conflicts or opportunities with Reclamation properties, operations, facilities or other environmental commitments, such as endangered species recovery plans.

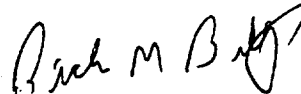
More specific issues are development within the watershed or general proximity to Lake Millerton. Reclamation, together with Parks and Recreation and others, are working on commitments for open space and wildlife corridors by all developers in the foothill communities. This could include providing conservation easements within or surrounding developments.

The County has identified use of the Friant-Kern canal as a bike and hiking corridor. This use would need to be evaluated on its own merits relating to impacts to operation and maintenance, liability concerns and biological resource needs.

The County would need to assess access issues for any development in the foothill areas. The existing public roads across the Friant-Kern Canal are limited and any additional crossings would have to meet Reclamation's criteria.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to the draft environmental impact scoping report. We would be pleased to further comment once the draft environmental impact report is completed, and Reclamation has reviewed it. If there are any questions, or I may be of some assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at 559-487-5049 or for the hearing impaired at (559) 487-5933. (TDD).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick M. Billings", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rick M. Billings  
Environmental Specialist  
South Central California Area Office