

**JIM COSTA**  
20TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA  
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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

December 12, 2011

The Honorable Michael L. Connor  
Commissioner  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Re: Madera Water Supply Enhancement Project

Dear Commissioner Connor:

*Mike,*

As you know, the Madera Irrigation District (MID) has long supported the development of a groundwater bank in Madera County. Thanks in large measure to your efforts in the Senate, Congressman Radanovich, Senator Feinstein and I collaborated to successfully pass legislation authorizing the groundwater bank in 2009, the Madera Water Supply Enhancement Act, Section 9102 of Public Law 111-11.

MID has completed the permitting process and signed a Cooperative Agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) as a prerequisite to securing the \$22.5 million authorized for this project. In 2009, MID proposed selling or leasing to Reclamation shares in the water bank to enable Reclamation to meet some of its varied water storage obligations, which you and I have discussed in the past. On March 9, 2010, you responded to MID's proposal, stating "Reclamation has made it a high priority to work with MID to develop sufficient information and is actively pursuing this proposal . . ." You also noted that "Reclamation agrees that the Water Bank proposals are bold and novel and is actively exploring these possibilities."

Long-term solutions to California's water challenges will be costly and take years to implement, even though we have identified the alternatives and are actively working through the process. In the meantime, interim projects like the MID groundwater bank are needed to boost our water supply and provide more reliability to the region. The MID groundwater bank would allow for the storage of high quality San Joaquin River and Fresno River surface water beneath the Madera Ranch for recovery when needed. In addition to enhancing MID, local and county water supply reliability and flexibility, this storage could also enable Reclamation to meet its water supply obligations related to the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, as well as under the Refuge Water Supply Program.

I am appreciative of Reclamation's decision to provide MID with \$500,000 out of FY 2011 funds and understand that negotiations have been underway regarding additional funding for FY 2012. While \$5 million for FY 2012 would be optimal in terms of moving the project

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forward, it is essential that we continue to build on your actions in FY 2011 to foster MID's partnership with Reclamation.

While I recognize that it is difficult for Reclamation to make funding decisions for FY 2012 until a final appropriations bill is enacted into law, I recommend that you favorably consider MID's funding request for up to \$5 million for FY 2012 once Reclamation's FY 2012 funding is finalized. I also would strongly urge you to support inclusion of a line item for funding Reclamation's participation in the MID groundwater bank in the President's FY 2013 budget request.

Thank you for your past and continued support of projects such as the Madera Water Supply Enhancement Project that is critical to the San Joaquin Valley and California.

Sincerely,



JIM COSTA  
Member of Congress

Cc: Regional Director Donald Glaser  
U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Gary Bursey, Madera Irrigation District

*This is very important; need your HELP !!*