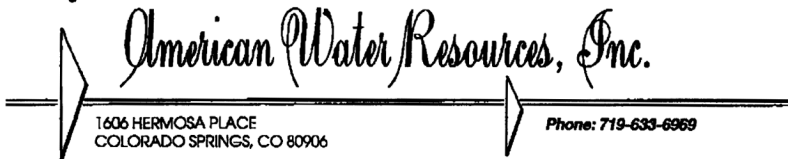


COMMENT LETTER

SEP. 6. 1999 3:42PM

NO. 537 P. 3/3



September 6, 2000

By facsimile 702-293-8042

Jane Harkins
Lower Colorado River Office
Bureau of Reclamation
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470

Dear Ms. Harkins:

I am writing this letter to express my deep concerns on the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Colorado River Interim Surplus Criteria, currently being considered for adoption. The DEIS is concerned with the determination and distribution of surplus water conditions in the Lower Colorado River Basin during the next 15 years.

1 While environmental impacts must be carefully considered, it is my position that the process for adoption is negative to the Upper Basin states and the real possibility for a train wreck is substantial. In my view, it is unwise for the Upper Basin to enable California's insatiable desire for water by, in effect, putting California on what amounts to water welfare for the next 15 years, a period commonly referred to as the "interim." What happens in the interim in California, as is the case with any recipient of welfare, a term which denotes "helping the disadvantaged," is that a disadvantaged California's claim to the water is actually strengthened. The state's promised reductions in Colorado River water use will not be realized. California's 15-year reliance on water welfare will put it in a powerful position to show that its needs are greater, its population larger, its economic prowess stronger and more valuable than that of all the other states in the compact.

The truth is that a 15-year interim water welfare state will be a runaway train, unable to slow down and at considerable risk of derailing if any state should try to do so. California is not disadvantaged, but by signing the DEIS, the Upper Basin states would be. There are other solutions which should and must be considered.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. Let's work towards an agreement that will be favorable to everyone, including California.

Very truly yours,

Judith Alberti
Judith Alberti
Vice President

JA/aa

1: Comment noted.