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Environmental Impact Statement
for Remanded Biological Opinions
on the Coordinated Long-Term Operation
of the Central Valley Project
and State Water Project

Tuesday, May 22, 2012
Los Banos Community Center
645 7th Street
Los Banos, California
6:00 P.M.

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REPORTED BY: NATALIE DUARTE CSR. 13563

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LOS BANOS SCOPING MEETING

MAY 22, 2012

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MS. FRY: Thank you for your patience tonight as we get everyone signed in. We are happy that you're here. Thank you for coming tonight. My name is Sue Fry. I'm the area manager with the Bureau of Reclamation in Sacramento.

So we are here tonight to talk about the environmental impact statement for the remanded biological opinion on the coordinated long-term operation of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. That's a lot of words, and Janice is going to now translate that.

(Interpreting in Spanish)

MS. FRY: Bear with us as we deal with the microphone situation.

So first thing I would like to do tonight, is actually introduce our elected officials that are here with us tonight and well, first of all, I'll go down the list here, and then what we'll do later is, when we have public comment, they will be allowed to have some time to speak to the crowd. And also as we go through this -- go ahead. I'm sorry, Janice.

(Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MS. FRY: So, first, we'll start with
2 Congressman Costa with the 20th congressional district
3 representing this area and Central Valley. Congressman
4 Costa, thank you for being here.

5 Next, we have Ms. Shelly Abajian, who is here
6 representing -- I know I was going to botch it.
7 "Abajian," thank you. And Shelly represents Senator
8 Feinstein's office.

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 MS. FRY: Now we have Supervisor Case, with
11 us from the District 4 in Fresno County.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MS. FRY: Next, we have with us Councilman
14 Riofrio from the City of Mendota.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MS. FRY: Javier Marquez, Mayor with the
17 City of Firebaugh.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MS. FRY: Darrel Pyle with the City of
20 Coalinga and Ron Ramsey with the City of Coalinga. I'm
21 sorry, Mayor, I didn't catch you were the Mayor. I'm
22 sorry for that.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MS. FRY: And we have Cruz Ramos, who is
25 representing the Mayor of the City of San Joaquin in

1 western Fresno County.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MS. FRY: Lastly, we have Adam Gray with us
4 who is a candidate for the State Assembly, District 21,
5 which actually covers Merced County.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MS. FRY: Thank you. So there's one other
8 announcement I would like to make, and that is that we
9 have a documentary film crew with us here today. And we
10 just want to make sure everybody knows that because
11 there is a chance that you would be recorded tonight and
12 then used in the documentary. So we want to make sure
13 that everybody understands that.

14 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

15 MS. FRY: Lastly, did I miss any elected
16 officials in the audience?

17 MR. TACHERRA: I'm a candidate as well for
18 the 16th congressional.

19 MS. FRY: 16th District candidate.

20 MR. TACHERRA: Johnny Tacherra.

21 MS. FRY: Johnny Tacherra.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MS. FRY: Anyone else that we missed?

24 MR. JOHNSON: Chris Johnson for Clovis
25 North.

1 MS. FRY: Clovis North student council, high
2 school, I'm sorry.

3 AUDIENCE: Chris Johnson, student council
4 representative for Clovis North.

5 MS. FRY: Thank you.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MS. FRY: All right. Anybody else?

8 Yes, sir?

9 MR. DEL BOSQUE: I'm Joe Del Bosque, member
10 of California Water Commission.

11 MS. FRY: Joe Del --

12 MR. DEL BOSQUE: Del Bosque, member of
13 California Water Commission.

14 MS. FRY: Thank you.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MS. FRY: Thank you for working with us
17 through this process, we appreciate it.

18 So we're going to just -- Janice can translate
19 the presentation. So Gwen Buchholz, who is our
20 consultant program manager on this project, is going to
21 now go through a presentation of what we're actually
22 doing tonight and Janice can translate that. So we want
23 to get a feel from the crowd as to whether we would like
24 to do that. It will add time to the presentation but we
25 would like to know if you would like us to do that?

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Tonight we're going to go
3 through a public scoping meeting for the remanded
4 biological -- for the environmental impact statement to
5 look at coordinated long-term operation and the State
6 Water Project. Our scoping meeting agenda is we're
7 going to go through an overview of the project and talk
8 about the scoping process and what we're going to do
9 tonight. Then we're going to open up for public
10 comment.

11 That's the primary reason we're here tonight, to
12 listen to the public comments.

13 We're hoping that everyone got a packet. And we
14 do have packets still at the back. In the packets there
15 are agendas, fact sheets, comment cards, and speaker
16 cards. We're asking if anybody would like to speak
17 tonight, if you could either use the speaker card or the
18 written comment card, and we'll collect those through
19 the audience and then we'll know that you want to come
20 up and speak to put your comments on record.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MS. BUCHHOLZ: As I said, the purpose is to
23 obtain insights about specific local information that we
24 should include in our studies for the environmental
25 impact statement, which we'll talk about in just a

1 minute. And to obtain input on the alternatives that we
2 will be looking at in the impact statements. It's also
3 very important that people provide written comments on
4 this -- I'll give you more details.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Why is Reclamation here? Why
7 are we doing this environmental impact statement? In
8 2008 -- we're going to break this down into three
9 groups. So first of all, in 2008 Reclamation issued a
10 biological assessment on long-term operations of the
11 Central Valley Project and the State Water Project. And
12 the area that's served by those projects is on the map
13 on the back of your agenda.

14 The US Fish and Wildlife Service also issued a
15 bio -- they used that biological assessment and issued a
16 biological opinion for the delta smelt to determine the
17 delta smelt -- critical habitat. And they developed --
18 Reclamation -- they developed a reasonable and prudent
19 alternative which Reclamation accepted.

20 Those are big words and big phrases. And we're
21 going to talk about each one of those in a few minutes
22 but we want to give a sort of overview first.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MS. BUCHHOLZ: In 2009, we're now in the
25 central part, National Marine Fisheries Service, they

1 issued -- they took the same biological assessment that
2 was done by Reclamation in 2008 and issued a biological
3 opinion for the protection of green sturgeon, and
4 salmonid, and southern resident killer whale populations
5 in their critical habitat, and Reclamation accepted the
6 reasonable and prudent alternative on that biological
7 opinion also in 2009.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MS. BUCHHOLZ: In 2011, in the bottom bar,
10 there were several litigations on Reclamation accepting
11 the biological opinion and on biological opinions the US
12 District Court ruled that US Fish and Wildlife Service
13 or portions of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and
14 National Marine Fisheries Service biological opinions
15 were remanded or sent back to those agencies to be
16 clarified and reconsidered in certain portions of them.

17 The court also said Reclamation should review the
18 potential impacts to the human environment including
19 economics of the communities prior to accepting and
20 implementing the RPA's. Reclamation is now initiating
21 the National Policy Act process for EIS to evaluate US
22 Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fisheries Service
23 RPA's or alternatives to RPA's.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MS. BUCHHOLZ: So what is a biological

1 opinion? That's going to be the next part. There's a
2 portion of the federal Endangered Species Act that says
3 that federal agencies in consultation with US National
4 Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries
5 Service must ensure those actions those federal
6 agencies, that any action they authorize, fund or
7 implement are not likely to jeopardize the continued
8 existence of federally listed threatened or endangered
9 species or result in the destruction or adverse
10 modification of those designated critical habitat.

11 And this is associated with the delta smelt, many
12 of the salmon and green sturgeon, and the resident
13 killer whale.

14 Biological opinion is a technical document that
15 evaluates just the effects of the federal action on
16 those species. If jeopardy is likely, the Fish and
17 Wildlife Service and National Fisheries Service may also
18 include a reasonable prudent alternative suggestion.

19 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

20 MS. BUCHHOLZ: I'll do this slide in halves.
21 So what is an EIS? What is an Environmental Impact
22 Statement? The purposes for an Environmental Impact
23 Statement is to evaluate a reasonable range of
24 alternatives for the action, to identify potential
25 benefits and adverse impacts, to propose mitigations to

1 reduce those impacts, and to provide information for the
2 public for review and comment so that they can provide
3 information for the decision making process by the
4 federal agency. It's prepared in accordance with the
5 National Environmental Policy Act.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MS. BUCHHOLZ: On the second part of the
8 slide, we're going to address -- talk about the EIS that
9 addresses more information than the biological opinion.
10 Remember the biological opinion is a technical document
11 for threatened endangered species. But EIS looks at
12 many other things; the water resources, other physical
13 resources such as air quality, the biological resources
14 for nonlisted species, and human resources, land use,
15 economics, and cultural resources of the community and
16 of the area that could be affected.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MS. BUCHHOLZ: So what will this EIS
19 consider? It will consider conditions through 2030. It
20 will consider the operational components that are in the
21 US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine
22 Fisheries Service as reasonable, prudent alternatives
23 and other alternatives to those RPA's. The EIS will
24 include both site specific and problematic analyses
25 based upon the definition of those alternatives as we

1 listen to you and the other people and all the comments
2 we obtain in this process.

3 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

4 SMS. BUCHHOLZ: When will the EIS be
5 complete? We started EIS process on March 28th with a
6 publication of the notice of intent in the Federal
7 Register and the public -- and the beginning of the five
8 scoping meetings. This is the fifth scoping meeting.
9 The court gave us deadlines of December 2013 to finalize
10 the Environmental Impact Statement for the US Fish and
11 Wildlife Service biological opinion and April 2016 for
12 the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the
13 National Marine Fisheries Service biological opinion.

14 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

15 MS. BUCHHOLZ: So how are we getting public
16 input and what are we doing with it? Your public input
17 will help shape the Environmental Impact Statement. We
18 need to understand what alternatives we should consider
19 for that range, what environmental issues should be
20 evaluated in detail, when and how you would like to be
21 informed of the progress of this document.

22 I also want to say that what happens to all the
23 comments we receive during the scoping process, verbal
24 and written, will be compiled in a scoping report, which
25 will be made available to the public on Reclamations web

1 site.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Actually, this is a wrong
4 one. The scoping comments are now due June 28th, so not
5 May 29th, we extended the comment period. So I
6 apologize. We can obtain -- June 28th is the new number
7 instead of May 29th, it's now June 28th.

8 We will accept comments today. You can write
9 them on the comment cards, make verbal comments, we have
10 a transcriber here to record those comments. We also
11 have individual -- after the meeting, if you don't want
12 to stand up in front of everybody, we can meet with her
13 separately and she can take down individual comments.
14 And we have e-mail address, faxes, regular mail
15 addresses that are on all of these handouts or most of
16 the handouts. So each one of you have a packet with
17 those addresses on it.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MS. BUCHHOLZ: We have a big group here
20 today and because we have a big group, we have set a set
21 of scoping meeting guidelines that we use at all of our
22 scoping meetings. We want to make sure we can ensure
23 everyone's participation. And we want to make sure that
24 everybody here that wants to participate and has a
25 comment has that opportunity.

1 We want to respect everyone's comments and listen
2 carefully. And you guys have listened very carefully to
3 our long presentation. So place all cell phones and
4 pagers on vibrate. We want to honor time limits and
5 keep those comments concise so everyone has an
6 opportunity. And when you're speaking for the public
7 comment process, if you could identify your name and
8 affiliation, that will help the transcriber,
9 Reclamation, and the audience.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Last chart. The guidelines.
12 One is we asked everyone to fill out either a speaker
13 card -- and I think we ran out of speaker cards so you
14 can use the written comment card. We'll have people
15 going through the aisles to collect those. We just need
16 that so we can sort of organize the speakers. And we'll
17 be doing, after elected officials, first-come
18 first-serve, or first submitted. Everyone will be
19 heard. We'll be here.

20 Please be respectful of each other's comments and
21 in general, try to limit them to three minutes so we
22 have enough time for everyone. All comments will be
23 recorded, as I said, and we are asking you to introduce
24 yourself. And bottom line is Reclamation is here to
25 listen.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MS. BUCHHOLZ: We would like to at this
3 time -- that's the completion of our presentation. We
4 would like to at this time have Congressman Costa, if
5 you have anything to say, you can come up. After the
6 Congressman's presentation and comments we'll be taking
7 a few minute break to collect speaker cards.

8 MR. COSTA: Do you want to translate?

9 THE INTERPRETER: Okay.

10 MR. COSTA: Good evening, ladies and
11 gentlemen. I want to thank everyone in attendance for
12 coming here today, the farmers, the camposinos, the
13 citizens from throughout our valley who are
14 participating in a very important process that complies
15 with the National Environmental Protection Act, NEPA.
16 Your opinions, our collective experiences are invaluable
17 to this process.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: I also want to thank regional
20 director Don Glacier for holding this additional scoping
21 session. The scoping session that was held in Madera
22 several weeks ago did not get ample notification and,
23 unfortunately, there were a very small attendance. The
24 rescheduling of this scoping session in Los Banos has
25 allowed an opportunity for everyone to come here and

1 make their voices heard. And I want to thank Don
2 Glacier and Bureau of Reclamation at my request for
3 scheduling this additional meeting.

4 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

5 MR. COSTA: And this is a very good
6 attendance.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. COSTA: Among the highest priorities in
9 our valley is water, water for farmers, for our
10 camposinos, for our farm communities, and that's why we
11 have such good attendance here today.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MR. COSTA: All of you know our valley has
14 some of the richest agricultural land in the entire
15 world. It supplies our nation with fresh fruits, and
16 vegetables, over 300 agricultural products, but without
17 water, it is not possible.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: Due to below average rainfall
20 and court ordered restrictions and, in my opinion,
21 severely misguided regulations, farming communities in
22 my district and throughout the valley face some of the
23 most trying times of their lives in the last three
24 years.

25 THE INTERPRETER: I'm going to ask for your

1 help.

2 MR. COSTA: Okay.

3 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

4 MR. COSTA: Severely misguided regulations
5 that we saw in 2008 and 2009.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MR. COSTA: Created some of the most severe
8 water shortages in westside communities in the last
9 three years.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. COSTA: Starting with a zero water
12 allocation, zero percent, in 2009.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MR. COSTA: Some of the hardest working
15 people you will ever meet, many of you in this room --

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MR. COSTA: -- stood in food lines, unable to
18 have work because there was no water, and it should have
19 never happened.

20 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

21 MR. COSTA: Thousands of jobs were lost and
22 unemployment reached, in communities like Mendota and
23 Firebaugh, over 40 percent.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MR. COSTA: Because of the flawed

1 regulations that were formed in 2008 and 2009, blame was
2 placed on our valley for the decline of fisheries in the
3 Sacramento and San Joaquin River delta.

4 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

5 MR. COSTA: Only in recent times, through
6 the National Academy of Science and other studies that
7 have come out, has it demonstrated that there are many
8 other factors, stress factors that are contributing to
9 the decline of fisheries in the delta.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. COSTA: Our water -- our local water
12 agencies are working together and over the last three
13 years developed a strategy to bring more water for our
14 valley.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MR. COSTA: Our strategy has been
17 legislatively, legally and administratively.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: The legal strategy has paid off
20 with Judge Wanger's decision, which is one of the
21 reasons we are holding the scoping session today.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MR. COSTA: The administrative strategy, to
24 create more flexibility in the operations of the
25 projects, have also provided results this year, going

1 from a 30 percent water allocation on the west side to a
2 40 percent, going from 45 percent water allocation among
3 Friant water users to 55 percent, but that's not enough.

4 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

5 MR. COSTA: For the Friant water users it's
6 45 percent to 55 percent.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. COSTA: But our valley cannot live with
9 half of it's water supply on a year to year basis.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. COSTA: And that's why we're here. And
12 that's why your T-shirts that say "water means jobs" is
13 so important.

14 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

15 (Audience clapping.)

16 MR. COSTA: Thank you. We also are working
17 on other projects with the local water districts.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: For example, just last month we
20 dedicated the intertie project that had been placed on
21 the back burner for over 20 years.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MR. COSTA: It's an interesting project. It
24 connects the California aqueduct to the Delta Mendota
25 Canal below Tracy.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MR. COSTA: On the average it will provide
3 over 35,000 acre feet of water per year to the San Luis
4 unit.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MR. COSTA: From 35,000 acre feet.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. COSTA: This year it will bring over
9 60,000 acre feet of water.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. COSTA: It's been operational for three
12 months.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MR. COSTA: But the bottom line is more
15 water equals more jobs.

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MR. COSTA: An example of this was recently
18 reported in the Fresno Bee in April of this year.

19 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

20 MR. COSTA: Fresno County, in April, added
21 9,000 new jobs in Fresno County.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MR. COSTA: 8,200 of them were agriculture
24 related.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MR. COSTA: This is a good sign of what the
2 agricultural industry can do when they have sufficient
3 water.

4 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

5 MR. COSTA: But as we saw on the
6 presentation here a moment ago --

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. COSTA: -- the Environmental Impact
9 Statement is critical.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. COSTA: I know all of you will tell in
12 your testimony the hardships that the lack of water
13 brought to you and your families.

14 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

15 MR. COSTA: The remanded court decision
16 must, as Judge Wanger said, take into account the social
17 and economic impacts to our valley.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: Your presence here tonight
20 proves that.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. COSTA: These regulations were called
23 into question by Judge Wagner.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MR. COSTA: As part of our legal strategy

1 the judge found --

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MR. COSTA: -- that key provisions of the
4 biological opinion --

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MR. COSTA: -- were arbitrary --

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. COSTA: -- were capricious --

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 MR. COSTA: -- were bad.

11 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

12 MR. COSTA: And were not in accordance with
13 the law.

14 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

15 MR. COSTA: And that's why the judge
16 remanded the Bureau of Reclamation in essence to go back
17 to the drawing board.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: Judge Wanger also held that
20 balancing the need of protected species --

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. COSTA: -- and the needs of people --

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MR. COSTA: -- are important public policy
25 choices and judgments that should be made.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MR. COSTA: As one of your
3 representatives --

4 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

5 MR. COSTA: -- I remain committed to
6 fighting the daily fight to bring a reliable, clean, and
7 sustainable water supply to the people of our valley.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MR. COSTA: Reliable --

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. COSTA: -- long term supply.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MR. COSTA: So I urge all of us here today,
14 as well as my colleagues in Congress --

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MR. COSTA: -- to ask the administration to
17 take a hard look at these flawed regulations.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: We must work together in a
20 bipartisan fashion --

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. COSTA: -- at the federal, state, and
23 local agencies.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MR. COSTA: -- to bring both short-term and

1 long-term solutions to our water needs in this valley.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MR. COSTA: Once again, I want to thank all
4 of you for coming here tonight to express your concerns.
5 They are extremely important to me, to the people of
6 this valley, and to our nation.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. COSTA: Our fight is far from over.

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 MR. COSTA: But it's one that I've been
11 working on with many of you for years.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MR. COSTA: I am convinced we can fix our
14 broken water system.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MR. COSTA: I have spoken to the governor
17 and he wants to fix our broken water system.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. COSTA: But we can only do this if we
20 work together.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. COSTA: Thank you very much.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MR. COSTA: And give a large applause to our
25 translator. She has done a terrific job.

1 MS. BUCHHOLZ: We're going to take a few
2 minutes here so we can collect cards. Patty is going to
3 collect some. Cristine will pick up some. So Patty
4 here with Reclamation. Cristine is going to be on that
5 side. Just sort of pass them to the middle aisles here
6 and they'll walk around and collect the speaker cards.
7 We just need to get a little organized here.

8 (Whereupon, a short break was taken.)

9 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Do we have any more speaker
10 cards that anybody would like to hand in? Then we'll
11 get settled here and start the presentations -- or the
12 comments, not the presentations, the comments.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MS. FRY: All right. Well, I think we'll
15 get started again. Thank you so much for the comment
16 cards. We do appreciate that.

17 What I would like to do is just continue with
18 some of our elected officials that are here. And Ms.
19 Judy Case, county supervisor with the County of Fresno,
20 will be speaking next.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MS. CASE: Thank you. Good evening,
23 everyone. I'm Judy Case, a Fresno county supervisor.
24 My district includes western Fresno county as well as
25 eastern Fresno county.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MS. CASE: And I want to first start by
3 thanking the elected officials from communities on the
4 west side that suffered with the residents to try to
5 bring services during a time jobs were lost and if I --
6 I'll tell you the names.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MS. CASE: Joseph Riofrio, councilmember and
9 also former mayor.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MS. CASE: Javier Marquez, mayor of
12 Firebaugh.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MS. CASE: Ron Ramsey, mayor of Coalinga.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MS. CASE: Representing the San Joaquin, the
17 city manager, Cruz Ramos.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MS. CASE: We're here to talk about what
20 happens when there is no water on the west side.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MS. CASE: Workers lost their jobs.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MS. CASE: And they not only lost their
25 jobs, they had lost jobs that had become permanent, with

1 benefits, so they had health care for their families.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MS. CASE: Unemployment in Fresno county --
4 we had unemployment up to 43 percent.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MS. CASE: And people who had worked really
7 hard to purchase their first home had lost it in
8 foreclosure and were put in food lines in which there
9 was foreign food provided.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MS. CASE: As a county we provide safety net
12 programs to help people that are in a position they
13 can't help themselves and our requests for services
14 soared.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MS. CASE: Some families were forced to
17 leave the area to look for jobs and for work. And they
18 left with their children, which affected the local
19 schools, which lost students and the revenue that came
20 to support those students.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MS. CASE: Families, to survive, they left
23 the house they had just bought and been so hopeful for
24 and moved in with relatives with two and three and four
25 families living in the same house or apartment.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MS. CASE: Our farm businesses suffered and
3 a large industry that supports farms, farmers, farm
4 workers, from grocery stores to car dealers to suppliers
5 for working on the farms, many of them suffered, many of
6 them ended up closing because they couldn't survive.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MS. CASE: We also had farmers that when
9 they didn't receive surface water, they turned to ground
10 water to be able to sustain permanent crops. As a
11 result, we continued to have our water tables lower,
12 which has very long term impacts for all of us.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MS. CASE: So as we studied further what
15 happens to people, people need jobs and incomes to
16 support their families. And we hope you're able to
17 fully quantify the impacts on all of the people when we
18 don't have a reliable water supply so that they can feed
19 their families and make sure their kids get educated and
20 have all the things we all want.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MS. CASE: And I do believe there is one
23 environmental impact that hasn't fully been studied and
24 that is when you take water away from the west side, the
25 potential for dust effects that harm human health is

1 much greater. And I think that would be a good place to
2 also get additional information. We have a higher
3 incidence of valley fever on the west side, and when the
4 dust is kicked up, the risk is much higher for
5 everybody.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MS. CASE: Thank you to everybody for being
8 here.

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 (Audience clapping.)

11 MS. FRY: Mayor Ramsey, did you want to make
12 a public comment? You gave me a written but I wasn't
13 sure if you wanted to come up.

14 MR. RAMSEY: My name is Ron Ramsey. I'm the
15 mayor of Coalinga. I would like to talk on what Judy
16 just said about the air quality too.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MR. RAMSEY: Valley fever, a lot of people
19 don't know what valley fever is.

20 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

21 MR. RAMSEY: It's in our ground around
22 Coalinga. It's in the whole valley here. And when you
23 have crops on that land, the dirt doesn't come up.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MR. RAMSEY: I'm trying to stay with my

1 thought, it's hard to do. When you do have crops on
2 there, the land keeps the crops -- the dirt down. And
3 it really helps the quality of life there. I have
4 valley fever myself. There's people I work with that
5 have died of valley fever. It goes to your brain. It's
6 like a cancer. It eats you. It eats you up and it's
7 not good at all.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MR. RAMSEY: Water is our life blood. Our
10 economy is heavily driven by agriculture.

11 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

12 MR. RAMSEY: For our city to flourish, we
13 need agriculture to succeed.

14 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

15 MR. RAMSEY: And I -- air quality suffers
16 greatly when water is reduced.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MR. RAMSEY: And we would like Reclamation
19 to look at ways to avoid these impacts where possible.

20 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

21 MR. RAMSEY: Thank you.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 (Audience clapping.)

24 MS. FRY: Next I would like to have Cruz
25 Ramos with the city of San Joaquin, representing the

1 Mayor's office with the city of San Joaquin.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MS. RAMOS: Good evening, ladies and
4 gentlemen. My name is Cruz Ramos, city manager for the
5 city of San Joaquin. I'm here this evening to represent
6 our community and specifically my mayor, who couldn't be
7 here today, Amarpreet Dhaliwal.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MS. RAMOS: I wish I could go ahead and
10 translate for myself but she does it so well that I'm
11 going to refrain.

12 We're all here this evening to speak on a very,
13 very critical and very urgent topic. I don't profess to
14 tell you all of the things that occurred in my community
15 because of the lack of water. Because water in itself,
16 as you can see here in our audience, water means jobs.
17 But water means more than just jobs.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MS. RAMOS: The city of San Joaquin is a
20 very, very small community on the west side of Fresno
21 county.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MS. RAMOS: Under normal circumstances, that
24 means the water, where we -- when we have water, our
25 population, three-quarters of our population, either

1 meets or exceeds the poverty guidelines that the federal
2 government dictates.

3 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

4 MS. RAMOS: Our economy is based on
5 agriculture. And agriculture is our life blood. Our
6 people, when they don't have jobs, line up for food. We
7 have a feeding kitchen. The feeding kitchen -- and it
8 is promoted for us through water for foundation and
9 Salvation Army. Congressman Costa has been at one of
10 our sessions.

11 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

12 MS. RAMOS: The feeding kitchen is once a
13 week, every Thursday. No one is turned away from the
14 feeding kitchen. The feeding kitchen has fed up to 600
15 people in just one session.

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MS. RAMOS: We share the same story as many
18 of our other west side as well as our east side
19 neighbors. And I'll try to keep comments brief but I
20 want all of us to look around, you see the faces,
21 wearing the T-shirts "water means jobs."

22 When you drive through the valley, what do you
23 see see in midday on hot days with temperatures of 90
24 degrees and higher? These are the same people that are
25 here today pleading for consideration, for the right

1 allocations of water to be able to provide the jobs that
2 we need to sustain our community and beyond our
3 community, beyond that, it just is salvation for
4 individuals that have a great deal of pride, as
5 Congressman Costa has indicated.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MS. RAMOS: So in closing, I want to leave
8 you with the same words that Supervisor Case had
9 indicated. I was one at those long lines for food
10 distribution in the city of San Joaquin. And I was
11 shocked. The irony of us living in an agricultural
12 community, agricultural valley, and we're feeding --
13 we're giving food to the farm workers, food that comes
14 from China. What a shame. Thank you.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MS. FRY: Lastly, for the elected, Joe, if
17 you would like to come up.

18 MR. DEL BOSQUE: Good evening. I'm Joe Del
19 Bosque. I'm a farmer on the west side of the San
20 Joaquin valley.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. DEL BOSQUE: I grew up on a farm on the
23 west side first as the son of a migrant farm worker and
24 later became a farmer.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 (Audience clapping.)

2 MR. DEL BOSQUE: I'm very proud of that.
3 I've seen the west side develop from when I was a boy of
4 a place that grew dry land green and a little bit of
5 cotton on well water.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MR. DEL BOSQUE: I saw the west side develop
8 now into an area that is a huge agricultural power in
9 the state and the nation.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. DEL BOSQUE: And I've also seen some
12 very damaging effects from the lack of water.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MR. DEL BOSQUE: 2009 is a year that is
15 engraved in my mind and it's there because it should
16 never happen again.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 (Audience clapping.)

19 MR. DEL BOSQUE: The impacts were severe on
20 our farm.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. DEL BOSQUE: On my farm alone, I idled
23 over 900 acres of land, very productive land.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MR. DEL BOSQUE: On those 900 acres were

1 losses that were huge, in farm gate prices, in the
2 millions of dollars of losses, in wages, in hundreds of
3 thousands of dollars, and in food, food enough for
4 millions of people in the country.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 (Audience clapping.)

7 MR. DEL BOSQUE: But the worst effect of the
8 drought -- and the affects were terrible on our farms --
9 but the effects were more severe on our farm workers.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. DEL BOSQUE: We saw people without jobs,
12 we saw people who were working and they were under
13 employed. People that instead of working 60 hours a
14 week were working 40 and 45 hours a week. We tried not
15 to lay people off so we just reduced their hours.
16 Because our farm was cut down from 2200 acres to
17 approximately 1300 acres.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MR. DEL BOSQUE: There were other impacts in
20 my area. We saw many of our people that lost jobs move
21 away. These are people that are skilled at what they
22 do, driving tractors, irrigating, harvesting.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MR. DEL BOSQUE: Many of these people didn't
25 come back. We saw in my area, the little grammar school

1 out in the country that I went to since I was in first
2 grade, closed down for lack of enrollment.

3 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

4 MR. DEL BOSQUE: So it hurts us a lot to
5 think about that year. And we should never forget that.

6 And we should be here to let these folks know
7 that we want the ecosystems to be improved in the delta.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MR. DEL BOSQUE: But we have to look ahead.
10 It's very important that we look at how do we resolve
11 some of these issues.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MR. DEL BOSQUE: In the delta we have other
14 stressors, we have invasive species. We have partially
15 treated waste discharge into the delta that harm the
16 ecosystem. We have unscreened pumps, over a thousand
17 pumps in the delta with no screens pumping at will. And
18 you can't tell me that there's no smelt or salmon that
19 are swimming by those pumps.

20 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

21 (Audience clapping.)

22 MR. DEL BOSQUE: So we also have to look at
23 other things. We have to look at the infrastructure.
24 We have a system that was made in the 50's and 60's and
25 this system is not keeping up with the state. The state

1 is probably twice the size and population and it is
2 grown tremendously. And if we don't catch up with our
3 infrastructure, the state is going to be headed for
4 disaster.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MR. DEL BOSQUE: So I urge the people at
7 Bureau of Reclamation to remember about some of these
8 impacts that we had in 2009 and that we plan for the
9 future so this never happens again. Thank you.

10 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Thank you. We're now going
11 to take the comments that we've received. We have
12 twelve comment cards.

13 I'm actually going to turn this around to help
14 the transcriber.

15 We're going to definitely go past 8:00, which was
16 our stated closure of this meeting, but we want to make
17 sure we hear everybody. So don't worry about 8:00, but
18 we are going to try to keep people moving. So try to
19 keep it close to three minutes, if you get close to
20 three minutes Louis will hold up a card. You'll be able
21 to see it because you will be turned that way to try and
22 help the transcriber.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MS. BUCHHOLZ: The first speaker we have is
25 Amanda Carbajal from Merced County Farm Bureau.

1 AUDIENCE: She had to leave.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MS. BUCHHOLZ: The next one is Pamela
4 Sweeten from Sweeten Consulting, California Women for
5 Agriculture, Ag Women.

6 MS. SWEETEN: Being raised in the Central
7 Valley, my grandparents came here from Nebraska and
8 Oklahoma during the dust bowl. I had a grandfather
9 actually work on the pumps, building the pumping
10 stations. And I, as a person involved in agriculture
11 with my consulting business, buying almonds from various
12 farmers up and down the state of California, have seen
13 the tremendous impact that the lack of water has on our
14 Central Valley.

15 Suffering economic losses, both farmers and
16 vendors, due to lack of water, consulting companies,
17 trucking companies, and fiber companies, and PCAC's,
18 contractors, workers, land that was left with no need to
19 purchase supplies from the suppliers. Other
20 instrumental people lost their jobs as well.

21 And without farmers generating sales tax,
22 California is going to be in worse shape than ever. Not
23 that today is any better. But without farms, we have no
24 food, no national security, and an issue also, air
25 quality for our valley. Thank you.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Darryl Pyle from the city of
3 Coalinga.

4 MR. PYLE: Good evening, and thank you. I'm
5 Darryl Pyle, city manager, city of Coalinga. In our
6 city, economic development and job creation are a high
7 priority.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MR. PYLE: Our attempts to diversify our
10 economy are also limited by our unpredictable annual
11 water delivery.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MR. PYLE: We fear that we will succeed in
14 attracting new industries to town but then lose them due
15 to our inability to deliver them water.

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MR. PYLE: Agriculture is key but we do need
18 to diversify the economy, and it's also impacted the
19 same as ag. Based on water limitations. Thank you.

20 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

21 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Chris Hurd from Circle A
22 Farms.

23 MR. HURD: Don't worry, I'm not here running
24 for office so I'll be brief.

25 I'm Chris Hurd, the farmer from about 30 miles

1 down the road here. I'm a landowner. I also sit on a
2 couple water boards here in San Luis District. And I'm
3 Joe's neighbor. We have a lot in common. And I'm going
4 to touch a couple of different things from what Joe did.

5 First of all, the water coming through the delta,
6 CVP water is applicable to federal and state contractors
7 of over five million acres.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MR. HURD: My range is from almonds and
10 pistachios. And when there is water available, we also
11 have tomatoes and other crops. I'm a fourth generation
12 farmer. My son is working with me and he has a couple
13 of kids that we're hoping to keep in family also. So it
14 is in family.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MR. HURD: Thank you. The hardship was
17 apparent with all of us on the west side, the cities,
18 the ranchers, the workers, the vendors. It is estimated
19 that it was somewhere between a three and five billion
20 dollar implication to everyone involved because of the
21 biops in '09.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MR. HURD: The commissioner of the Bureau of
24 Reclamation a couple of months ago at a conference made
25 this statement, "In order to get more water to the

1 farms, we have to have good science, easier legal
2 including transfers and accountability." Those are words
3 from the leader of the department of -- under the
4 Department of Interior, of Bureau of Reclamation.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MR. HURD: As farmers and our communities,
7 we are now challenged as the world is going to go from
8 eight to 12 billion people. We are being asked to feed
9 the world.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MR. HURD: And if long-term investment for
12 all of us involved with farming is to be made by
13 agriculture, then direction, leadership, and
14 sustainability is job one.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MR. HURD: We need hard decisions made.
17 This is not easy. And this is not just for 2009 and
18 2010. This is the next generation. Communities,
19 states, and well being of all of us within the state's
20 borders.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. HURD: And finally, the biological
23 opinions in their remand, must reflect the truth, exact
24 science, and all stressors.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MR. HURD: Thank you.

2 (Audience clapping.)

3 MS. BUCHHOLZ: The next card we have is from
4 Piedad Ayala, Water 4 All.

5 MR. AYALA: Thank you for giving me the
6 opportunity to be here today.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. AYALA: We understand how hard this
9 fight has been. The problem that we have is that we,
10 the farming industry, is getting blamed for what they
11 are doing up north in Sacramento, Tracy and Stockton
12 area. They're dumping all the sewage into the delta and
13 then blaming the farming industry. The reality is, they
14 need water to keep flushing all the problems they create
15 up north. That's the reality.

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MR. AYALA: It's very important for the
18 community to understand what's really happening out
19 there. Because the problem is we've been impacted by
20 the water in our Central Valley.

21 We hear all the testimony from these people. We
22 hear all these people talking about jobs, talking about
23 economy, everything, but we, only one day, and just
24 because one decision was done blaming pumps, pumping the
25 water to our valley, when the reality is totally

1 different.

2 The reality, we talking to clean up the
3 environmental, let's do it. Let's clean it up. We like
4 to fish. We love to fish. We want to be part of the
5 participate to have this fish to give better life, but
6 what about humans?

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. AYALA: A lot of farmers have lost
9 everything and with them we, as farm workers, have lost
10 everything too because without farming, there's nothing
11 here in this valley.

12 When we find out the problem, we're not. When
13 they blame that the pumps were killing the fish and
14 that's why they put the stop water into the delta, we
15 notice something else was behind it. When we find out
16 these millions and millions of gallons of sewage dumping
17 into the delta.

18 The biological opinions -- we're talking about
19 biological opinions. We have biological opinions from
20 the University of Brooklyn what they show how they
21 really hurt the fish but they did the biological
22 opinions based on fish. What about humans? Why haven't
23 they done any studies, what it's doing to humans?

24 They got 23 million people drinking this water.
25 This is humans problem. They try to cover the sun with

1 one finger, it's not going to happen. This problem is a
2 lot bigger and they keep blaming the farming community
3 when the reality is a lot bigger than that. We need to
4 understand that when we flush that water into the ocean,
5 we got a problem.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MR. AYALA: The use in our delta like a
8 toilet. They flush everything in and want to throw it
9 to the ocean. They need our water to keep flushing
10 that.

11 The problem is up north and, once again, the
12 problem where they need to change these regulations in
13 Washington.

14 We have some representatives here this afternoon.
15 Unfortunately they already left. They -- they
16 understand. When they are campaign, we get lots of
17 promises but the problem is here. Our families have
18 been hurt. Our families lose everything they have.

19 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

20 MR. AYALA: Our -- the judge, when he ruled
21 against our project, he mentions to all of us that we
22 are not going to change those regulations here, it's
23 going to have to be done in the Constitution in
24 Washington, and the only way that's going to happen is
25 going to be our representatives in the Congress, in the

1 Senate and Sacramento, because this is Federal issues.
2 That's what they keep saying.

3 So I really appreciate if we can get more
4 together to keep relating this message. But let's try
5 to get the right message because we get informed wrong.
6 I love fish. I want to see everything green but here in
7 the west side we got nothing but dust. Nothing but
8 dust, that Congress creates the dust.

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 MR. AYALA: Last year we have 180 percent
11 rain, normal rainfall. We only received 80 percent. In
12 a normal year like that we should be expecting at least
13 what we pay for, 100 percent. We paid 100 percent for
14 our water, in which we only receive 40 percent this
15 year. 2009, everybody is talking about it, we got 0
16 percent.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MR. AYALA: I don't think it would be fair
19 for us to walk into a store and give them \$100 and just
20 get \$40 in groceries. That's what's happening here.

21 So we appreciate you guys coming out here to take
22 this inventory back to whoever can do something.
23 Because our families been hurt. Everybody's been
24 talking about it.

25 Our representative is here, Judy, she's been our

1 hero here but it's only so much she can do. She's
2 local. We need to have the message in Washington, in
3 the senate, in the Congress. We got a representative
4 here from Feinstein. Feinstein needs to understand, to
5 help us, because we do need help. We know the bill
6 passed in Congress, not pass for water, it's going to
7 the Congress, to the senate, I'm sorry, so we hope you
8 can do something about it.

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 MR. AYALA: If that bill go through the
11 Congress we go applause to our senate.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 (Audience clapping.)

14 MR. AYALA: With this I like to thank
15 everybody because I know we should be with our families
16 today and we here and not the meeting. So I know my
17 time is limited. So I really appreciate your time for
18 everybody to come here and relay the message. It's very
19 important that we don't concentrate just on the water,
20 let's concentrate on human issues.

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. AYALA: Thank you all.

23 MS. BUCHHOLZ: We're now looking for Gracy
24 Villavazo.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 (Audience clapping.)

2 MS. VILLAVAZO: I've been asked to go ahead
3 and translate myself so I'll do so.

4 My name is Gracy Villavazo. I am with Water 4
5 All. And I really don't need to go over this, but I
6 spoke about the importance of having our Congressman,
7 Jim Costa, to be here to listen to our message because
8 as he says, he is our representative and it is very hard
9 to represent people when you're not here to listen to
10 the message.

11 We all sat here very patiently and listened to
12 his 30 minutes but he can't dedicate that time to us.
13 That's ironic and wrong, I think. I also spoke about a
14 slide show that we were presented here and the fact that
15 this scoping effort is brought on to find reasonable
16 alternatives.

17 As I said once in Spanish I will now convey to
18 you. "Reasonable" is a tricky word because what may be
19 reasonable to me may not be so much for Judy. And I
20 wasn't badmouthing you, that's what I meant earlier.

21 And they also spoke about -- or printed up here
22 on our slide show March 2012 as the initiating date of
23 the scoping efforts and a concluding date was given of
24 April 2016. If I do my math correctly, that's four
25 years. That seems like an awfully long period of time

1 to go out in search for reasonable alternatives when the
2 answer is here today.

3 Joe mentioned it. Cruz mentioned also how --
4 Edward, let me see your shirt. "Water means jobs."
5 Water means more than jobs is what Cruz said and I
6 couldn't agree more with her. Water means lives. Water
7 means our opportunity to grow and to better this economy
8 in this crisis that we're facing today.

9 And I'm glad that everyone who showed up is here
10 representing most of the sectors who are being affected.
11 We have Joe here, who is a rancher, we have elected
12 officials here, we have farm workers who are doing all
13 of the work, and you have common citizens, law abiding,
14 tax paying citizens, such as myself, who demand to be
15 represented and represented well, not by this man, Jim
16 Costa, who left.

17 And I know he's not here today -- well, not any
18 longer. But I do hope that someone will get him the
19 message and Costa, let me tell you, it's going to cost
20 ya my vote because I'm now voting for Johnny Tachera
21 because he's still here. And that's what I need. I
22 don't know about you but I need someone who's going to
23 be there and represent me and my needs and the valley's
24 needs because we are all part of the valley.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Our next -- the next
2 commenter I have is Jeff Bryant from Firebaugh Canal
3 Water District.

4 MR. BRYANT: I'm Jeff Bryant. I'm the
5 general manager of the Firebaugh Canal Water District.
6 My comments and I will be on behalf of the Central
7 California Irrigation District, however.

8 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

9 MR. BRYANT: Due to ground water pumping
10 necessary to augment reductions in water supplies in the
11 San Luis unit, the Central California Irrigation
12 District has spent approximately 4.5 million dollars to
13 rehab their conveyance facilities, and that was done --
14 the damage was done due to subsidence.

15 In addition to the 4.5 million dollars that CCID
16 has spent, they will undertake a program with the county
17 of Fresno to the tune of 2.5 million dollars to study
18 and replace a damaged bridge that has also settled due
19 to the same effects of subsidence.

20 Basically, it looks as though, on your fact sheet
21 here, Reclamation is looking for public comments to
22 identify topics covered under the EIS. I think I've
23 covered those topics, the damage and so forth, and you
24 would like a recommendation from me. And I did have a
25 personal recommendation that I would like to give, and

1 basically it's very simple. You want to look at
2 alternatives to be considered, I don't think there's any
3 other alternative to be considered but restoring the
4 water supply to the Central Valley Project.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Next commenter is Maricela
7 Rodriguez from Family Ranch. Maybe they left. John
8 Garza from Family Ranch and Doubler and Sons. John
9 Garza.

10 And I apologize this has gone longer than we
11 thought. People have had to leave.

12 Dayatra Latin from Community Food Bank.

13 MS. LATIN: My name is Dayatra Latin and I'm
14 with Community Food Bank.

15 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

16 MS. LATIN: The end of July 2009 is forever
17 etched in my memory.

18 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

19 MS. LATIN: We held our first drought
20 distribution providing food to over 680 families in the
21 city of Mendota.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MS. LATIN: At that point, Community Food
24 Bank had distributed about seven and a half million
25 pounds of food every year.

1 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

2 MS. LATIN: After everything is said and
3 done, Community Food Bank was distributing thirty
4 million pounds in food.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MS. LATIN: I can tell you all day about the
7 numbers, about the stats, about the increase of staff
8 that we had to have to be able to feed people because of
9 the drought.

10 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

11 MS. LATIN: I can tell you I never heard of
12 a smelt until July 2009.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MS. LATIN: But my job is so to feed people.
15 And generally, up to that day we fed people who were
16 under employed, they were just struggling to make ends
17 meet but I never had to feed someone who just didn't
18 have something to eat because of something like a smelt.

19 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

20 MS. LATIN: So what I want to share are the
21 stories of the people that I had the opportunity and the
22 blessing just to be able to be there for.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MS. LATIN: Imagine this, we're in the city
25 of Huron. It is 105 degrees outside. And me outside in

1 105 does not work very well. But in the crowd there is
2 like 400 people.

3 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

4 MS. LATIN: And in the crowd you hear a baby
5 crying. And it's a heart wrenching cry, a cry that
6 every mother can't stand.

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MS. LATIN: I took the time to search out
9 that cry and talk to the mom and someone who would be
10 able to translate for me. What I found out was that the
11 baby was sick all night long.

12 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

13 MS. LATIN: Maria's baby was three months
14 old the baby was suffering from diarrhoea and severe
15 vomiting and that mom who was standing there was soaked
16 with vomit and the baby's diarrhoea.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MS. LATIN: And the heartbreaking part was I
19 asked her, she could go home, we'll make sure you get
20 food. What she said is I can't leave because if I leave
21 we don't eat tonight.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MS. LATIN: See, her husband who was sole
24 provider was laid off that year in April.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MS. LATIN: And he was able to finally get
2 small work and she was able to stand in line for that
3 food.

4 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

5 MS. LATIN: And that is something I can't
6 forget. Even as a mom, I can't forget that. That
7 someone will stand, in this country, and in this valley
8 where we feed the world, to stand in line for food.
9 Food that we had to get from some place, you guys heard,
10 it didn't come from places that are grown right here.
11 And to have to do that was heartbreaking.

12 And it's the whole reason why I had to stand
13 there and do that and meet Maria is behind water issues.
14 We really need to fix that because in this country, it
15 shouldn't be that way.

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MS. LATIN: So I just want to thank you guys
18 for actually having this meeting and just for listening.
19 And I will be more than welcome to submit the more
20 detailed version nontranslated so we can really talk
21 about the issues that we see every day.

22 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

23 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Martin McIntyre, San Luis
24 Water District.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MR. MCINTYRE: Good evening. When these
2 biological opinions were implemented, the water supply,
3 the federal water supply at San Luis Water District and
4 other federal contractors was reduced almost 50 percent.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MR. MCINTYRE: There is absolutely no doubt
7 that this water supply reduction had serious unmitigated
8 human, social, and economic impacts.

9 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

10 MR. MCINTYRE: I'm glad the courts
11 intervened but I'm concerned about the bias continuing
12 to affect the process as we revisit these opinions.

13 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

14 MR. MCINTYRE: Let me give you one of the
15 most glaring examples of that bias and then I'll be
16 finished.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MR. MCINTYRE: When the National Marine
19 Fisheries was preparing the biological opinion governing
20 commercial fishing --

21 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

22 MR. MCINTYRE: -- they found that fishermen
23 could kill 10 to 25 percent of adult endangered salmon
24 without jeopardizing the species.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MR. MCINTYRE: These are the adult salmon
2 returning up the streams to spawn.

3 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

4 MR. MCINTYRE: When the same agencies, the
5 agency, the National Marine Fisheries Service prepared
6 the biological opinion for the pumps --

7 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

8 MR. MCINTYRE: -- they found that any take
9 by the pumps of more than one percent of the return in
10 juvenile salmon would jeopardize the species.

11 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

12 MR. MCINTYRE: So I would ask, and my
13 request tonight is, that during the preparation of these
14 opinions that the responsible agencies reconcile the
15 difference between these numbers, 25 percent taken on
16 one hand, 1 percent taken on the other.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MR. MCINTYRE: Thank you very much.

19 MS. BUCHHOLZ: Luis Moreno from Harris
20 Farms.

21 AUDIENCE: He left.

22 MS. BUCHHOLZ: I'm sorry. That's the last
23 speaker card we have.

24 Does anybody else have a speaker card? If not --
25 oh, we do.

1 I'm sorry. I'll let you introduce yourself.

2 MS. BETTENCOURT: My name is Aubrey
3 Bettencourt. I'm the executive director of the
4 California Water Alliance and I'm also a proverbial
5 farmer's daughter.

6 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

7 MS. BETTENCOURT: I have pages and pages of
8 notes and thoughts because I think anyone who has lived
9 here can write their own book. And maybe one day we
10 will.

11 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

12 MS. BETTENCOURT: I can't add any more to
13 the very vivid description that has been given to you of
14 the very real and human effects of regulations of 2009
15 and 2010.

16 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

17 MS. BETTENCOURT: Many have felt slighted by
18 the regulations of those years because it's seem that
19 the acting agencies -- or that the agencies acted
20 autonomously in a vacuum implementing theory based
21 regulations that never actually accomplished their
22 intended goal of restoring the species but rather had
23 the real life effect of destroying a community.

24 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

25 MS. BETTENCOURT: If there's anything that

1 the representatives from the Bureau should take away
2 from this evening, it's that these biops and RPA's, they
3 aren't just acronyms, that they have true human impacts
4 and they have a face and you've seen them here today.

5 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

6 MS. BETTENCOURT: I firmly believe that the
7 Bureau wants to do its job. It wants to deliver water
8 to its water users. And it doesn't want to be here
9 taking public comment to make up for a mistake of a
10 sister agency.

11 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

12 MS. BETTENCOURT: But you see, as long as
13 the environment is broken, government agencies will
14 continue to regulate in an attempt to fix it, shutting
15 another farm, another family, another fishing fleet,
16 another American dream down.

17 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

18 MS. BETTENCOURT: In the 21st century I
19 refuse to believe that we cannot provide, we cannot
20 develop a comprehensive solution which provides an
21 equitable and reliable supply for agricultural, urban
22 and environmental water users.

23 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

24 MS. BETTENCOURT: Such a solution can only
25 be developed if we all have the will to see it through

1 thoroughly and fairly.

2 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

3 MS. BETTENCOURT: So any recommendation or
4 request that I can pass on as I see it is one of
5 transparency throughout the process. Take the time to
6 do it right once and for all. We don't want to be back
7 here doing it once again.

8 And develop a comprehensive solution examining
9 comprehensive stressors. Don't look at one thing.
10 Because we will be back on your front door. We will be
11 back at the capital in Sacramento. We will be back in
12 Washington, DC. because we have one thing that we have
13 learned and that is that we have to keep an eye on
14 everything. And that this is our government to be a
15 part of. And this is our government to be doing
16 something and to be participating in and that's what
17 we're doing here tonight.

18 And, finally, having earlier allocations more
19 accurate number -- allocation numbers developed earlier
20 on helps in crop plannings. This is where the farmer's
21 daughter bit comes in. We know how many people we can
22 hire year to year the earlier we get our numbers and
23 more accurately we can get our numbers, which comes into
24 that reliability factor. So thank you again.

25 (Interpreting in Spanish.)

1 MS. BUCHHOLZ: We want to thank all of you
2 for taking the time. We all know, we've gone to
3 meetings of our own, it takes a lot of time and effort
4 to get ready for these, to coordinate and organize, and
5 we appreciate it.

6 We are looking forward to not just these comments
7 but written comments. Please submit them in by June
8 28th, if I remember the right number. And we will then
9 be accomplishing the scoping. We will be back out again
10 throughout this process for public outreach. This is
11 not the last time you will see us. Thank you.

12 (Whereupon, the scoping meeting
13 concluded at 9:39 p.m.)

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1 State of California)
2 County of Fresno) ss.
3

4 I, Natalie Duarte, a Certified Shorthand
5 Reporter, License No. 13563, for the State of
6 California, do hereby certify:

7 That the foregoing proceedings were taken
8 before me at the time and place herein set forth; that a
9 record of the proceedings was made by me using machine
10 shorthand which was thereafter transcribed under my
11 direction; that the foregoing transcript is a true
12 record of the testimony given.

13 I further certify that I am neither
14 financially interested in the action, nor a relative or
15 employee of any attorney of any of the parties.

16 In witness whereof, I have subscribed my
17 name.

18
19
20 _____
21 NATALIE DUARTE, CSR NO. 13563
22
23
24
25