MEMORANDUM

To: Cecil Carey
FROM: Gil Stamm
DATE: October 26, 1983
SUBJECT: Water Development and Flood Control Statement

As agreed in Tulsa, it is suggested you mail copies of this statement to the Joint Committee with a covering letter signed by you.

For Gil Stamm
By Garlane Freer

Encl.
- DRAFT -

Water Development
and Flood Control

My name is Gilbert G. Stamm.¹ I am appearing here in behalf of the San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Users Association. The association membership includes 36 irrigation and water districts located primarily on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley and extending from Antioch to Kettleman City. The association is interested in and vitally concerned with all aspects of water development.

In the absence of effective and reliable means for weather modification, flood control efforts must be confined largely to somewhat limited mechanical methods. Those that are most effective involve:

1. means by which surplus or excessive watershed runoff and surface streamflow can be captured in reservoirs and catchment basins and held for carefully managed releases when and as downstream channel capacities can safely accomodate them;

2. means for diversion of excessive stream-flows into established off-stream flood-ways or by-passes; and

3. within fairly narrow limits, diversion of excessive stream-flows into established irrigation canal systems as water spreading devices.

Of these methods for controlling floods flows, the most effective is reservoir storage, coupled with watershed and

¹Water development and management experience includes 30 years with the Bureau of Reclamation, nine of which were as Assistant Commissioner (1964 to 1973) and four as Commissioner (1973 to 1977).
reservoir management which coordinates runoff forecasts; maintains adequate, vacant, reservoir storage space within physical limits; and schedules reservoir releases to alleviate or eliminate flood damage.

Virtually all western reservoirs contributing to flood control are in fact multiple-purpose facilities. That is, they were planned, authorized, constructed, and are operated under multiple purpose criteria which may include two or more of the following functions: irrigation, municipal and industrial water supply, flood control, hydro-electric power production, fish and wildlife mitigation or enhancement, recreation, water quality control, and navigation.

Obviously, these enumerated functions are not all mutually beneficial nor compatible. The flood control function standing alone would benefit most by maintaining maximum vacant storage space to protect against the extremes of nature's unpredictable vagaries of precipitation. The irrigation function standing alone would lean toward capturing all allowable reservoir inflows to maximize water storage to meet current agricultural needs and protect against unpredictable drought. Hydro-power interests would like to schedule power generation to maximize production and income. Recreationists usually prefer stabilized reservoir levels, and fishermen favor regulated, adequate downstream flows to facilitate fish production and angling success. Almost all interests want adequate water quality as required for their particular purposes; however, the quality parameters for the diverse functions are not necessarily uniform.
Costs of the flood control function has traditionally been a general obligation and not reimbursable by the direct beneficiaries. Costs of the functions related to instream water uses except for hydro-power, have also been wholly or substantially non-reimbursable. However, the capital costs of facilities for irrigation, municipal and industrial water supply, and hydro-power generation have traditionally been fully reimbursable by the functional direct beneficiaries either separately or jointly. Power and M&I water supply costs are interest bearing while irrigation costs may be interest free or interest bearing depending on how and by whom the costs are financed.

The general objective of all prevailing water development projects in the West has been to provide multiple benefits to people, directly and indirectly, socially and economically, and in so doing to enhance western and national stability and prosperity. In virtually all cases, existing projects have become in total more valuable and successful with time. The opinion and philosophical differences which prevail between and among various interest groups relate primarily to the degree of emphasis placed on each of the functions that each project can serve.

Thus it is obvious that some give-and-take among knowledgeable people is essential if they are to reach agreement on acceptable development and management criteria which become matters of issue in almost all proposals for water resource development in today's world.
The State of California has amply available water supplies within its borders to more than satisfy all of its current and long-range legitimate needs—both consumptive and non-consumptive. However, nature seldom provides its bounty in the right places, at the right times, and in the right amounts to satisfy the wide variety of functions and uses required by man and nature. In this light, if we are to meet growing needs of expanding populations, and a correspondingly expanded economy, along with justifiable protection and preservation of the environment, it becomes the responsibility of man, in exercising his dominion over the earth and the resources thereof, to seek common ground among divergent interests in his efforts to cope with and facilitate progress.

In the opinion of the San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Users Association, it is both possible and essential that our government leaders recognize their opportunities and responsibilities to support justifiable needed water development programs for development of the State's bountiful resources in ways that will adequately serve man and nature currently and in perpetuity.

It is urged that the committees and membership of the State Senate and the Assembly approach each of the many water development issues on which they must act, with open-mindedness in diligently searching for and evaluating well-balanced factual information pertaining to needs, benefits, and impacts of each proposal and related issue.

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to express our views at this hearing.