

California Department of Water Resources NEWS

October 25, 2000

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State Petitions Supreme Court To Review Water Contract Ruling

SACRAMENTO - The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) today filed a petition asking the California Supreme Court to review an appellate court decision on a complex State Water Project agreement.

The Department asserts that the Monterey Agreement provides significant water management and conservation benefits to the State Water Project (SWP). The SWP's 29 contractors serve about 20 million Californians and irrigate about 600,000 acres of farmland.

The Monterey Agreement was negotiated in December 1994 and implemented via an amendment to SWP water delivery contracts during 1995.

The petition for review stems from a suit filed by the Planning and Conservation League and others in 1996, claiming, among other points, that the environmental impact report (EIR) for the agreement was inadequate.

On September 15, the Third District Court of Appeal reversed a trial court ruling for DWR in Planning and Conservation League v. Department of Water Resources and Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA), ordering a new EIR and a trial on the validity of the agreement. The Court of Appeal said the EIR was not adequate and should have been done by DWR rather than the regional water agency, CCWA.

The goal of the Monterey Agreement was to modify 35-year-old contracts between the state and the water

agencies to increase water supply reliability, provide greater flexibility in water operations, and provide greater financial stability.

Today's filing makes possible a State Supreme Court review of the case, but the Department is also exploring the possibility of a settlement.

For more details, see [background information](#).

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs. The State Water Project provides water to two-thirds of California's population.

For more on-line information, see [Find DWR Info](#) or return to the [DWR California Water Page](#)