



## **Westlands Water District**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Statement by Thomas W. Birmingham, General Manager, Westlands Water District *Trinity River Releases***

Westlands Water District general manager Thomas Birmingham issued the following statement in response to an August 20, 2013, protest at the District's Fresno office concerning the District's action against the United States Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation's proposal to release water to supplement flow in the lower Klamath River:

"No one wants to see a repeat of the loss of Chinook salmon in the lower Klamath River that occurred in 2002. However, achieving a reasonable balance among competing uses of water involves more than simple slogans that can be fit easily on a protest banner.

Any action undertaken by Reclamation has to be consistent with its statutory authority, and prior to making a decision to release up to 100,000 acre-feet of water from the Trinity Division to augment flow in the lower Klamath River, Reclamation was obligated to undertake analyses of the potential impacts to resources outside of the Trinity River basin. The action Reclamation proposes to take is beyond its authority and its analysis of environmental effects was almost non-existent.

Westlands did not make up the rules as it relates to the operation of the Trinity Division; those rules were made by the federal government. Westlands did not make the decision about how water would be managed in the Trinity River basin; that decision was made by the federal government. The federal government does not get to ignore those rules and prior decisions, and Westlands is merely trying to enforce the rules and the decisions previously made by the federal government."

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