



Water News

WESTLANDS WATER DISTRICT

JUNE 2017

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

HR 23: An Effective Solution to a Failed Water Policy

For the near future, the quickest, easiest and most cost-effective solution for restoring water to California communities, particularly Westside growers, would be the reform of laws, regulations and court opinions that were passed to protect the environment, but have failed miserably. It's not simply that the laws have failed, but they have also harmed agricultural communities throughout the state. If these laws remain as written, it could mean the loss of hundreds of thousands of acres of prime agricultural land and the continued hemorrhaging of family farms. Westlands farmers need relief now and that's why the District is supporting the HR 23, the Gaining Responsibility on Water Act (GROW Act).

HR 23 is a major policy effort moving forward in Congress to support California farmers, farmworkers, and related industries. The legislation was introduced by Representative David Valadao and co-sponsored by Representatives McCarthy, Nunes, Costa, Denham, Rohrabacher, Cook, Issa, Royce, Walters, Calvert, Knight, Hunter, LaMalfa, and McClintock. According to Congressman Valadao, "the GROW Act will enact policies to expand our water infrastructure and allow for more water conveyance while protecting the water rights of users across the state."

HR 23 will accomplish two major improvements to the management of water resources that will improve water reliability and reverse failed policies that have, ironically, harmed the environment and wildlife, and created water shortages in California communities. HR 23 affirms the dual goals of environmental protection and improved water supply and requires that the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project be operated consistent with the Bay-Delta Accord, reversing decades of ineffective policies and damaging legal decisions. HR 23 amends the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) to ensure water resources are "reliable, predictable, and available to fulfill supply promises."

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IN THE NEWS

MANAGING WATER UNDER CALIFORNIA'S BROKEN WATER SYSTEM

California Farm Water Coalition:

The current system hinders suppliers from doing the most important part of their job—managing and delivering the water used to grow the food and fiber we all depend on.

[READ FULL POST](#)

DRONES PROVIDE BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF FIELDS

Ag Alert: Modern technology allows farmers to continually increase water efficiency.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

CALIFORNIA FARMS ARE THIRSTY AND IN DANGER

Sacramento Bee: Former Secretary of Agriculture, A.G. Kawamura, explains why CA farms are at risk and why it's important to address these concerns.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

WATERWISE: LOANS OFFERED FOR FARMERS HIT BY DROUGHT

Visalia Times-Delta: The United States Department of Agriculture, after reviewing loss assessment reports, named Tulare, Kings and Kern counties as primary natural and continuous disaster areas. The deadline to apply for emergency loans is Oct. 23.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

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CALENDAR

JUL
4

WWD Offices Closed

JUL
18

WWD Board Meeting

Independence Day Office Closure

Westlands Water District will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, 2017, in observance of Independence Day.



Westlands in the Community

Westlands Announces 2017 Scholarship Recipients

Six outstanding high school seniors from communities on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley have been selected to receive scholarships offered by the Westlands Water District. Congratulations to:

Katelyn Pedersen, Lemoore High School

Yasmin Olvera, Riverdale High School

Nicole Quezada, Coalinga High School

Jasmin Valdez, Tranquillity High School

Fatima Escobar, Mendota High School

Paola Gonzalez, Firebaugh High School

The 2017 scholarships are offered by Westlands under a program to recognize and reward exceptional academic achievement and leadership by graduate seniors at six area high schools. Each scholarship recipient will receive \$1,000 to be used for community college or university expenses. Applicants were judged on their academic performance, school activities, community leadership and an essay on an agricultural-related topic.

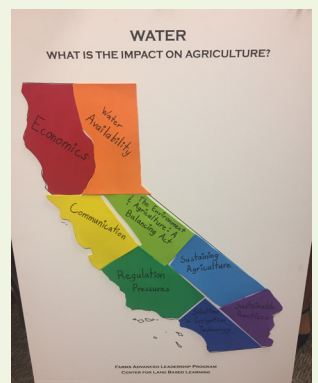
[Read the Full Release](#)

FARMS Leadership Program

The Center for Land-Based Learning sponsors a youth leadership and career development program called FARMS Leadership which targets high school students as sophomores to seniors in a two-stepped training of FARMS and FARMS Advanced Programs. Both programs work to develop job and life skills, build industry knowledge and provide career path exploration.

The FARMS Leadership Program is a seven-month program in which students from several high schools are put together in groups of 30-35 students. Each month they attend one field day at a farm and agriculture business to engage in hands-on experiences, learn about real-life agriculture, and understand the jobs that sustain vitality of the industry.

This year, the 2016-2017 FARMS Advanced class was comprised of 11 students from five Fresno and Madera county high schools. Their focused issue was "Water; the impact on California Agriculture." In their final wrap-up event on June 2, 2017, the students presented their findings and analysis to teachers, administrators and industry professionals. For more information on this unique program, visit their website [HERE](#).



PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

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The legislation also seeks to improve the state's water infrastructure by enacting permitting reforms to require federal agencies to cooperate in the permitting process in order to reduce the time and expense of making the water system more efficient and capable of meeting the needs of the state.

The improvements in HR 23 coincide with recent scientific evidence that points to many other stressors, as opposed to only water exports, that have contributed to the decline in fish populations in the Delta. The legislation returns the water system to the intended capacity before the failed policies of the past arbitrarily reduced water supply and established the false choice of requiring the state to choose between supplying water to farms and the environment.

After decades of laws and regulations that have resulted in unnecessary water shortages and an unpredictable water supply, the District believes the enactment of HR 23 is long overdue.

You can read the [entire text of the bill here](#).

Johnny Amaral
Deputy General Manager of External Affairs
Westlands Water District

Boys and Girls Club Annual Gala Recap

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Fresno County 7th Annual Westside Luncheon raised over \$105,000 for three regional clubs.

These funds are dedicated to educational and leadership programming that teach community youth valuable lessons. Westlands is grateful for the hard work the Boys & Girls Clubs do to invest in our region's children and provide opportunities for youth to be successful.