



Water News

WESTLANDS WATER DISTRICT

SEPTEMBER 2017

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

Westlands Releases New Report

In September, Westlands Water District released a report that describes alternative economic scenarios for the future of the region. The report details the economic and community benefit of increased water delivery to growers, and conversely the regional impact of continued water supply reductions. With policies that provide the full amount of water contractually promised to Westlands, California would have over 100,000 additional acres in production, resulting in:

- more than 5,000 new jobs,
- \$561 million increase in economic activity,
- increased opportunity for local residents and small business, and
- food security for California and the nation.

The report also analyzed the economic and community impact of decreased water supply and the likelihood of replacement jobs if the area's agricultural based economy were to decline. The Report showed that more than 25,000 jobs would be lost and the region would experience a decrease of over \$3 billion in economic activity. If agricultural production declines, 80 to 90% of the people impacted by regulatory limitations on water would be Latino families. With the potential for current unemployment rates to double, local government would lose critical revenue needed to fund city and county services such as police and fire.

While some anti-farming activists call for land retirement, the report reveals the difficulty in creating replacement jobs that would fill the void left by reductions in agricultural production. After reviewing manufacturing trends, the report found no evidence that manufacturing facilities would be built in the region or other industry sectors would relocate to the region to fill the gap. With no replacement industry, some residents would be forced to find jobs outside of the region, while others could remain and be forced onto state assistance programs.

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IN THE NEWS

REPORT SHINES LIGHT ON IMPORTANCE OF VALLEY AGRICULTURE

Fresno Business Journal: Loss of agriculture could have devastating effects on state and local economies.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

STUDY EXAMINES BENEFITS OF FULL FARM WATER SUPPLY

Ag Alert: Report shows full surface water supply can boost economy, benefit the nation.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

KAWAMURA, CAMERON: REGULATIONS THREATEN CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE'S SUSTAINABILITY

Western Farm Press: Farmers from opposite sides of the state say water regulations are becoming too hard to overcome, forcing idled land.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

FARMERS EXPECT PARTIAL LOSS TO RAISIN CROP AFTER SUMMER STORM SWEEPS ACROSS VALLEY

ABC30: Untimely storms can prove detrimental to sensitive crops like raisins.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

CDFA, AGRICULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS INVITE FEDERAL TRADE OFFICIALS TO CALIFORNIA

AgNet West: As the nation's largest ag producer, California farmers are an important element to trade discussions.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

CONTACT US

Westlands Water District Office
3130 N. Fresno Street
P.O. Box 6056
Fresno, CA 93703-6056

Phone: 559-224-1523
Fax: 559-241-6277

Email: info@westlandswater.org

Customer Accounting Main Line
Phone: (559) 241-6250
or 1 (800) 266-6574

Media Inquiries:
Phone: 559-241-6233
Email: pubaffairs@westlandswater.org
westlandswater.org



CALENDAR

SEP
19

WWD Board Meeting

OCT
17

WWD Board Meeting

Important Notices

Feed Hope Gala

Westlands is proud to provide an annual sponsorship to the Community Food Bank. Through the years, Community Food Bank has provided necessary resources to our westside rural communities. At the height of the drought, Community Food Bank increased their food distribution locations and frequency to ensure hunger was curbed. In fact, in 2016, they distributed 38,000,000 pounds of food. This year marks their 25th Anniversary; their "Silver Celebration" is set for October 27, 2017 at the Fresno Convention Center. Tickets and sponsorships are available on their [website](#). Please join us in the celebration at the Feed Hope Gala.



Westside son chasing football dreams

Keep your eyes open for local-boy-turned-star, Josh Allen who was recently featured on [ESPN](#). Raised in Firebaugh, Josh is the son of Westlands famer Joel Allen and now star quarterback for the Wyoming Cowboys. The ESPN spotlight focused on Josh's rural upbringing,



PHOTO: Aaron Ontiveroz, The Denver Post

something our Westlands families can certainly relate to. Interviews on the farm included both father and son. The Allen family embodies family farming at its best: producing cotton, melons and wheat in Westlands.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

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The report also raises serious issues about food security and the ramifications of reducing agriculture in one of the world's most productive regions. Westlands growers use the most advanced irrigation technologies and abide by stringent environmental regulations including the use of pesticides, worker protections, and food handling regulations which make California's food supply the most regulated in the world.

Johnny Amaral, Deputy General Manager of External Affairs
Westlands Water District



ECONOMIC STUDY REVEALS IMPACT STATE WATER POLICY HAS ON CENTRAL VALLEY ECONOMY

A recent study¹ commissioned by the Westlands Water District (WWD) highlights the importance of agriculture in the Central Valley region particularly as it relates to the local, regional, and state economies. With more water, the regional economy will thrive; with less water, businesses and families, and the overall community will feel a crushing economic burden.

Westlands Today

The WWD is the largest agricultural water district in the United States and accounts for:

- 29,000 Jobs
- \$3.6 billion in economic activity
- \$1.8 billion in crop value
- More than 351,000 acres of farms
- Provides key fruit, nut and vegetable crops, vital to national security

Westlands with Water

With the full amount of water contractually promised to WWD, over 100,000 additional acres could be serviced, resulting in:

- Over 5,000 more jobs
- \$561 million increase in economic activity
- Increased opportunity for social mobility
- Increased national food security

Westlands without Water

Providing none of the water allocated to WWD would result in:

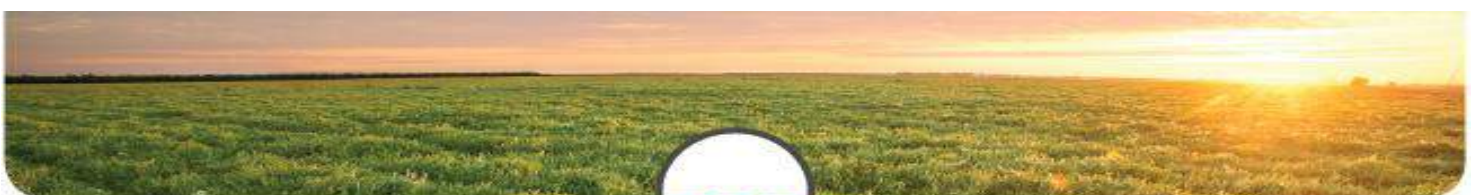
- 25,000 -27,000 jobs lost
- \$3 billion decrease in economic activity
- Decreased opportunity for social mobility
- Massive displacement of Hispanic community
- Decreased school funding

Study Highlights

- The role agriculture plays in California's overall economy cannot be overstated. The industry functions as the primary economic driver of the region, generating billions of dollars in local revenue, delivering high quality produce to people around the globe, and providing much needed jobs to tens of thousands of individuals. Without water, none of this would be possible.
- Hispanic and lower educated workers will be disproportionately impacted by the loss of entry-level/low skill jobs.
- An 80% decline in agricultural associated economic activity would more than double the unemployment rate to almost 21% in both Fresno and Kings Counties.
- Impacts to the regional economy will force an out-migration, which is estimated to impact home values and cause a \$477 million loss of tax revenue, further harming the overall economy.



¹Shires, Michael A., Ph.D. *The Implications of Agricultural Water for the Central Valley*. Report prepared for Westlands Water District, June 19, 2017.



Westlands Water District

WATER POLICY AND THE FUTURE OF THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY



A recent economic impact study, *The Implications of Agricultural Water for the Central Valley* by Dr. Michael Shires, verifies the vital economic role that water plays in the agriculture-driven Central Valley. The results of the study emphasize that agriculture functions as the main economic driver of the region, providing for one of every six jobs. The study then demonstrates the lack of a viable replacement industry for those agricultural jobs and illustrates how policies that reduce water deliveries consequently damage the local economy.

CONTINUED WATER CUTBACKS WILL DEVASTATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY, IMPACT THE STATE

Jobs and economic activity associated with agriculture would fall by at least

80%



HISPANIC, BLUE COLLAR WORKERS WILL BE DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BY THE LOSS OF ENTRY-LEVEL JOBS

80% to 90%



of workers adversely impacted by a reduction in agricultural production will be Hispanic

STATE WILL LOSE REVENUE, SOCIAL WELFARE COSTS WILL INCREASE

\$477 million

Potential loss of tax revenue from people leaving the area, leaving school funding greatly diminished



Alternatively, government assistance programs would strain local and state funding, adding to the **more than 20%** currently living under the poverty level



A FULL WATER ALLOCATION ALLOWS THE LOCAL ECONOMY TO GROW AND THRIVE

A full delivery would provide over

5,000
more jobs

Planted acreage would increase by nearly

30%

REDUCTIONS IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION WOULD MAKE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY THE DETROIT OF CALIFORNIA

Water reductions in San Joaquin Valley will have similar impact to loss of the auto industry in Detroit, **doubling the unemployment rate** to over 20%, with no replacement industry available to compensate for the loss.



REPLACEMENT JOB SOURCE UNKNOWN, UNLIKELY

\$6.2 billion

The **solar investment** required to replace lost jobs with new solar energy jobs – highly unlikely



CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL VALLEY WILL LOSE THOUSANDS OF JOBS



43,000+

Farm jobs could be lost with future water reductions

With no viable alternative job sectors available, **water reductions will force Valley residents to migrate to other states and areas** where opportunities and agricultural jobs exist.



Westlands Water District