

**Washington D.C.** - In response to newly added water restrictions in the Central Valley during a time of severe local drought, Congressman Kevin McCarthy joined several of his California colleagues to request that the House Natural Resources Committee hold a field hearing in the San Joaquin Valley. A hearing would allow Congress to witness first-hand the effect of water restrictions on our local jobs and local economy, and make informed and immediate policy decisions to bring relief. Congressman McCarthy issued the following statement:

*“Water is the life blood for our local farmers and families. The San Joaquin Valley’s man-made drought is avoidable, and unfortunately today’s announcement by the Administration to further restrict water flows exacerbates our local crisis. A field hearing by the House Natural Resources Committee would help open the eyes of our colleagues in Congress to the serious water crisis we face every day and help pass the solutions that can bring relief to our drought-stricken landscape.”*

Congressman McCarthy has also cosponsored the following bills to help alleviate the man-made water crisis in the San Joaquin Valley:

- H.R. 856, which would increase water deliveries to the Central Valley and Southern California urban and agriculture users by waiving regulations regarding the smelt fish at Delta pumps during times of drought.
- H.R. 996, which would increase water deliveries by temporarily exempting the operations of any water supply or flood control project from ESA when the Governor declares an emergency.

In addition, through hearings and press conferences in Congress, Congressman McCarthy continues to work to highlight and raise awareness of our local crisis and advocate for common-sense relief measures.

Related:

[NOAA Biological Opinion Finds California Water Projects Jeopardize Listed Species; Recommends Alternatives](#)

Letter Text:

*We write to follow-up on our earlier request for the House Natural Resources Committee to hold a field hearing on the man-made drought in the San Joaquin Valley.*

*At the time of our March 31, 2009 request, the San Joaquin Valley and southern California faced crippling job losses and economic disaster because of a Biological Opinion on the three-inch Delta Smelt. Today's proposal by the Obama Administration to curtail even more water deliveries to California farms and cities in the name of salmon and green sturgeon protection will make matters even more devastating to California's communities.*

*Very little has been done to help California's San Joaquin water-starved communities in the last few months. Red-tape, bureaucratic inertia and lack of adequate funding have made a bad situation even worse in the San Joaquin Valley. In addition, President Obama's skipping an opportunity to witness the dire economic and social situation in the San Joaquin Valley so he could attend a \$3 million Hollywood fund-raiser on May 24th left the impression that policy-makers in Washington, DC fail to understand the everyday plight of the Valley's farmers and farm workers.*

*The Natural Resources Committee has an opportunity to reverse this perception by holding a field hearing this summer in the San Joaquin Valley where Congress can listen firsthand to impacted citizens and tour the nearby area to begin the process of enacting real change for people. We hope you agree that the status quo of massive unemployment and economic turmoil in the name of fish protection is unacceptable. We stand ready to work with you immediately to ensure a field hearing occurs so the people's voices can be heard.*

*Thank you for your consideration.*