

# Reagan Administration Puts 10 Conditions To Supporting East Side Canal

Gov. Ronald Reagan's administration has taken a stand neither for nor against the controversial \$500 million East Side Canal — while listing 10 concerns whose reconciliation will determine its support or opposition.

The administration's concern was voiced by Norman B. Livermore Jr., Resources Agency secretary, in a communication to US Interior Secretary Walter J. Hickel.

Primarily, Livermore says the administration has grave doubts about the ability of the section of the federal Central Valleys Project to divert 1.5 million acre-feet of water into the San Joaquin Valley.

He informed Hickel of this and nine other major reservations California has concerning the big project.

## To Seek Clarification

And Livermore warned "if the . . . concerns are not satisfied . . . the

state intends to request clarification prior to authorization and will testify at the authorization hearings (in Congress) to insist that they be satisfied."

Chief among the concerns is whether the Sacramento-San Joaquin stream system can provide enough water for the East Side Project without damaging the lower American River and the ecology of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and San Francisco Bay.

"It must be demonstrated to our satisfaction that there is sufficient water available in the Sacramento-San Joaquin stream system (including presently authorized storage projects) to provide the 1.5 million acre feet necessary for phase I of the project . . .

## Additional Releases

"Particular attention should be given to providing additional releases (of water) in the American River . . .



Norman B. Livermore

"We continue to be concerned about insufficient assurances for environmental protection and enhancement in areas on which the project will have an impact, particularly with respect to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the Suisun Marshes."

Livermore offers a reminder that the California Water Resources Control Board currently is holding hearings with respect to releases of water to meet needs of the delta.

Livermore noted there is provision for additional future use of water in Northern California by allowing upstream withdrawals and establishing procedures and funds for providing water to replace such withdrawals.

And he told Hickel "similar provision should be included in the East Side Project plan."

## Carries Weight

Livermore's letter to Hickel is expected to carry considerable weight in the Congress. Presently plans call for diversion of 1.5 million acre feet

of water through the Folsom South Canal, now being built, to benefit farmers and municipal and industrial users in nine counties along the East Side of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys.

Legislators from the counties of the project area had sought the state's standing on it. Three counties, Sacramento, San Joaquin and Contra Costa, have come out in opposition to it. They all have lands which would be affected.

In addition to his doubts concerning whether there is enough water for the vast federal project with still enough to protect the ecology of the rivers, delta and bay, Livermore also is concerned about drainage and financing of the project.

## Notes Provision

He notes Stewart L. Udall, former interior secretary, had originally indicated the East Side Project would not be approved unless the state provided

for construction and operation of the San Joaquin Master Drain.

"Subsequently, you (Hickel) advised the state you would not recommend funding of the East Side Project until the issue of the drain had been resolved," Livermore said. "We are uncertain as to the present position of the Department of the Interior in this matter."

Livermore said he is concerned over the slow 50-year investment return period on the project and on the need for recreational facilities in connection with it.

"It is further noted," said Livermore, "that the irrigation investment in the Central Valleys Project will not be returned by the irrigation revenues without great subsidies from the power and municipal and industrial users, notwithstanding the fact that the irrigation investment is provided on an interest-free basis. We question whether this is in the national interest."