

California Legislature

Honorable Mayor Eric Garcetti
City of Los Angeles
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's Proposal to Dewater Ranches and Habitat in Mono County

Dear Mayor Garcetti:

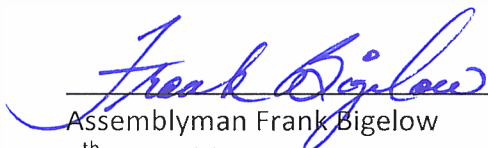
We are writing to express our concern with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's (LADWP) proposal to dewater 6,200 acres of active ranchland in Mono County, and to request your assistance in obtaining an immediate commitment that LADWP provide a water allocation this year based on current snowpack and anticipated runoff and sufficient to support historic ranch operations.

These ranches are critical to the economy, cultural heritage, and identity of Mono County. Many, if not all, of the impacted families have been farming these lands for generations. Their operations contribute to the local economy by generating millions of dollars in commercial activity and supporting hundreds of jobs. In addition, the ranchers are stewards of the land, creating and preserving habitat which supports wildlife and sensitive species – including the bi-state sage grouse. Quite simply, without their stewardship, the local economy will be threatened, pastures and meadows may brown, wildlife and habitat will be lost, and the risk of wildfire will increase. Moreover, these impacts will affect the greater Eastern Sierra region. Because each of the Mono County operations utilizes and relies on ranchland in Inyo County, a change in Mono County that forces ranchers out of business or out of the area will have the same or a similar impact on Inyo County.


We appreciate your assurance that LADWP will analyze the impacts of proposed changes to its water management policies and practices in the Eastern Sierra, and look forward to working collaboratively with your office, LADWP, and Mono County on a process to develop reasonable solutions for the long term management of these lands. In the meantime, however, I ask that you direct LADWP to immediately commit to providing an amount of water sufficient to sustain and prevent serious harm to the economic vitality, wildlife and habitat, and cultural and historic identify of Mono County and the Eastern Sierra. Our understanding is that for well more than half a century the water allocation to these leases has been based on annual snowpack levels and anticipated runoff. LADWP's calculation of the appropriate 2018 allocation to Mono County ranches should be calculated no differently.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact us if you would like to discuss this matter further. We look forward to working with you and your office to ensure a lasting collaborative relationship between the City of Los Angeles and Mono County.

Sincerely,



Assemblyman Frank Bigelow
5th Assembly District



Senator Tom Berryhill
8th Senate District

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cc: Ana Guerrero, Chief of Staff, Office of Mayor Garcetti
Barbara Romero, Deputy Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Mel Levine, President, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Board of Commissioners
William Funderburk, Vice President, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Board of Commissioners
David Wright, General Manager, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Pete Southworth, Chief Deputy Legal Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
John Laird, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
Thomas Gibson, Undersecretary, California Natural Resources Agency
Charlton Bonham, Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Mono County Board of Supervisors
Stacey Simon, Mono County Counsel