

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT
for the
MODESTO SURFACE WATER TREATMENT PLANT**

**Relationship Between Local,
Short-Term Use Of Man's
Environment and Enhancement
of Long-term Productivity**

October, 1989

7. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL, SHORT-TERM USE OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Project construction would consume 30 acres of agricultural land. Agricultural production of the area would decline slightly but not enough to have any county or area-level implications. Without any mitigations, the proposed project could tend to intensify irrigation water shortages during infrequent periods of drought. Agricultural productivity in the area during such periods could temporarily decline as a result.

The project would cause a small, long-term flow reduction in the Tuolumne River. In addition to this commitment of water resources, a slight deterioration in aquatic habitat in the river may result. However the municipal water supply to Modesto would be greatly enhanced by the provision of an additional source of high-quality water. In addition, the project is expected to allow a more effective use of the groundwater supply to meet peak seasonal, rather than total, water needs. As a result of reduced groundwater use, declining groundwater levels are expected to stabilize or even rise, in the case of central Modesto.

With the continued decline in the groundwater levels and quality of the aquifer serving as the sole municipal water supply in the Modesto area, Phase 1 of the proposed project is needed to remedy current water supply problems. Phase 2 would be implemented as continued population growth in the project service area resulted in a water demand that exceeded the safe yield of the local aquifer plus the capacity of the Phase 1 treatment plant. It is estimated that this situation would occur around the Year 2005. However, Phase 2 may be constructed at an earlier or later date, depending upon actual increases in water demand and the results of continuing groundwater monitoring. The future removal of additional municipal wells from the supply system due to water quality problems may also influence the timing of Phase 2 construction.