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From: Paul Muller <paul@fullbellyfarm.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 9:00 PM
To: Clerkoftheboard
Subject: Focus Area well Moratorium

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August 20, 2025

To Chairperson Sandy and members of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors,

I am writing in support of a moratorium for new well permits for the impact area of Hungry Hollow and west Dunnigan Hills. As a Farm Bureau member and Yolo County farmer, I am concerned that there needs to be precedent and policy for clear process to address new wells and increased pumping in farming regions that are experiencing well stress and dropping groundwater levels.

While the Farm Bureau's point of needing to address supply with proactive projects targeting greater water retention, winter infiltration, use of surface water to refill depleted basins, and new looks at storage both above ground and below ground -are important points, the reality of the moment is that the Focus Areas of Hungry Hollow an Dunnigan Hills are identified as being stressed. The continued approach to permitting wells for developing irrigated agriculture on previously non irrigated parcel puts existing wells at risk.

Their argument about scarcity being best addressed with new water development works until there is scarcity. Anticipating scarcity by avoiding processes that exacerbate scarcity is the only salient pathway until new projects can be implemented to bolster groundwater supplies in the area so

that the very real drop in groundwater levels experienced by residents and farmers in this region does not continue.

A moratorium on new wells that are being drilled to provide water to previously unirrigated lands in the Hungry Hollow region allows the Board and Department of Environmental Health time to ascertain that a sustainable and equitable set of policies be developed based on an evolving body of information about the character of underground water strata in this area. The science-based approach will allow consideration of equitable and just access to a limited resource.

Many of the proactive water development solutions for this region will depend upon the movement of excess Cache Creek water north into this basin. This assumes Cache Creeks dependability in providing that excess. Yolo County Flood Control has estimated dependability in 7 of 10 years. If new wells are allowed and the water is sent north to bolster groundwater levels in this area, in those years when there is no excess water from Cache Creek, the new wells will be relied upon to provide even more of the water needed to irrigate planned perennial crops. This will further accelerate the drawdown of ground water being presently experienced.

I encourage the Yolo County Board of Supervisors to create a moratorium on new well development in the Focus area of Hungry Hollow and Dunnigan hills until it is clear that further extraction on previously un-irrigated lands will not exacerbate the loss of critical water resources and threaten the viability of existing irrigated parcels, farms, and homes in this region.

Sincerely,

Paul Muller

Full Belly Farm