

**SOUTH TULE INDEPENDENT DITCH COMPANY**  
**P.O. BOX 1270**  
**PORTERVILLE, CA 93258**

August 1, 2022

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

We are writing on behalf of South Tule Independent Ditch Company in support of the Tule River Tribe's "Tule River Water Settlement" bill. We seek your support to introduce this legislation and see it become law, as it will resolve uncertainty over water rights in our basin and provide necessary funding for actions that will bring wise, long-standing negotiated plans for water allocation to fruition.

The Tule River Tribe, the Tule River Association, and South Tule Independent Ditch Company have been involved in water rights negotiations for over 20 years. Most recently the Tribe and the Federal government have quantified the amount of water the Tribe is entitled to receive in the Tule River Water Settlement. The parties have entered into these negotiations cooperatively and believe that this may be the only tribal water rights negotiations to proceed this far without litigation.

The South Tule Independent Ditch Company has worked diligently and cooperatively with the Tribe in the past to develop water allocation plans to provide a stable water supply for the Tribe, as well as for its downstream neighbors who have historic water rights to the waters of the South Fork of the Tule River, some of which pre-date the 1873 establishment of the Reservation. These plans, in part, will be realized through the passage of the Tule River Settlement. Furthermore, the Tribe remains committed to honor the provisions of a 1922 agreement between South Tule Independent Ditch Company and the Department of the Interior, acting on behalf of the Tribe, regarding the relative water rights of these two entities.

To finalize and implement any agreement, it is critical to settle the federal reserved Indian water rights of the basin, as they are a cloud on the title to any state-based water rights until resolved. In addition, the water rights management agreements we've developed over the years will require adequate funding for the Tribe to construct water storage and distribution facilities to accomplish its water stability goals.

We therefore encourage you to introduce this legislation that will provide certainty and much needed funding to our basin. Without the enactment of the Tule River Water Settlement bill, years of progress will be lost and the chance to be certain of our water once and for all will continue to be an impediment to progress in the basin.

Thank you for your interest and support in this matter. Should you have any questions, please telephone us at (559) 333-1665 or (559) 361-0997

Sincerely,

Jason L. Guthrie, President, STIDC

Handwritten signature of Jason L. Guthrie in blue ink.

Robert C. Mailand, Secretary, STIDC

Handwritten signature of Robert C. Mailand in blue ink.

cc: Tule River Tribal Council