



SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN
IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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Central California irrigation districts sue state water board over curtailment notices

A group of Central California irrigation districts filed a lawsuit Friday morning that challenges the state's authority to curtail their century-old water rights on the Stanislaus River.

Attorneys for the [San Joaquin Tributaries Authority](#) – a group made up of the South San Joaquin, Oakdale, Modesto, Turlock and Merced irrigation districts, and the city and county of San Francisco -- sued the [State Water Resources Control Board](#). On June 12, the water board issued drought-related curtailment notices to SSJID, OID and more than 100 other “senior” rights holders whose claim on water pre-dates the beginning of California’s permitting process in 1914.

The lawsuit was filed in Stanislaus County Superior Court in Modesto.

“The State Water Resources Control Board has a difficult challenge to manage a critically deficient water supply, but that challenge does not trump constitutional protections of due process and property rights,” said Jeff Shields, SSJID’s general manager.

Added OID General Manager Steve Knell: “This is our water. We believe firmly in that fact and we are willing to take on the state bureaucracy to protect that right.”

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