

Sutter County Taxpayers Association

Honesty, Integrity and Cost Effectiveness in Government

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TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION **CRITICAL OF FLOOD CONTROL AGENCY**

The Sutter County Taxpayers Association believes the Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency (SBFCA) has violated its contract with the citizens of Sutter and Butte counties who are paying property taxes to fix 44 miles of levees along the Feather River.

“At its meeting on October 12, the SBFCA board of directors voted to spend up to \$10,000 of assessment money on ‘coalition building and lobbying’ to create a FEMA agricultural zone,” said SCTA president Pat Miller. “While SCTA believes that a FEMA Ag Zone is needed and supports that effort with other funding, we do not believe that expenditure of assessment dollars can be legally justified for this coalition building/lobbying effort. Spending assessment money on anything other than the levee rehabilitation project is a deviation from what property owners were promised when they were asked to assess themselves to repair our levees. The literature put out by SBFCA to encourage a positive assessment vote clearly states that the assessment funds ‘MUST go toward levee rehabilitation and repairs and SBFCA’s costs for administering the program.”

“We are saddened by this breach of trust. SCTA supported the levee assessment last year because we believed then, and we believe now, that fixing our levees is critical to the safety of our citizens, protection of our property and the growth of our local economy,” Miller said. “The SBFCA Board has now opened the door to expenditures that have no bearing on the project to

fix the levees. The \$10,000 was approved for ‘this year’s effort.’ No timeline or projected overall costs were given which means the project is open ended and more funds could be diverted to the FEMA Ag Zone effort next year or, for that matter, to other non project work,” Miller explained.

The SCTA president is encouraging property owners to give the SBFCA Board their views on this issue. Board representatives for Sutter County, Butte County, Yuba City, Live Oak, Gridley, Biggs, Levee District 1 and Levee District 9 can be found on the SBFCA website at <http://www.sutterbutteflood.org>.

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Excerpts from SBFCA Campaign Literature

Will money go toward levee repairs?

The revenues from the assessments MUST go toward levee rehabilitation and repairs and SBFCA's costs for administering the program. Each year, the property tax rolls must be reviewed, and a new roll must be issued. This annual process ensures that assessments are accurate, and that any new development is paying its fair share.

Approximately \$6.5 million will be raised each year to pay the debt on bonds issued for levee construction. Of that amount, approximately \$750,000 will pay for administration, which will include the cost of annual audits and operations of the agency. Independent, professional audits will be conducted and published each year. In addition, the SBFCA Board may choose to create an independent citizens' advisory committee to provide additional oversight.

Can assessment money be used for other projects?

No. The revenues from the assessments MUST go toward levee improvements (design, engineering, environmental, permitting, etc.) and SBFCA's costs for agency administration. Each year, the property tax rolls must be reviewed, and a new Engineer's Report must be issued. This annual process ensures that assessments are accurate, and that any new development is paying its fair share.

Copies of the full documents are available on request.