

Decision No. 30997

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application
of The San Joaquin & Kings River
Canal & Irrigation Company, In-
corporated, a corporation, for
Authority to Enter Into an Agree-
ment with the Gustine Drainage
District, Permitting said Dis-
trict to Pump Drainage Water Into
Its Irrigation Canals.

Application No. 21849

ORIGINAL

J. E. Woolley, for Applicant.
A. L. Cowell, for Gustine Drainage District.

RILEY, COMMISSIONER:

O P I N I O N

San Joaquin & Kings River Canal & Irrigation Company, Incorporated, is engaged in the business of diverting water from the San Joaquin River near the Town of Mendota and distributing and selling said water primarily for irrigation purposes, but also to some extent for domestic, commercial and industrial uses. The canal system extends approximately seventy-one miles through Fresno, Merced and Stanislaus counties, supplying water to a gross area of approximately 146,700 acres.

Gustine Drainage District is a district duly organized and existing under the Drainage Act of March 20, 1903, and was organized in the year 1937 to provide drainage by means of pumping from underground sources in an area of approximately 20,300 acres, located in the northerly section of the service area of the Company and including within its external boundaries the City of Gustine.

In this application the Company asks the Commission to authorize it to enter into an agreement with the above Drainage District providing, among other things, for the discharge of the drainage waters from the District's pumps into the Company's canal system.

A public hearing in this matter was held in Gustine after all interested parties had been duly notified.

In general, it may be said that the District plans to lower the water table in the lands located within its boundaries by the drilling of a large number of wells from which the water will be pumped as necessary to remedy the existing water-logged condition of the land. In its initial stage the District plans to drill a large number of wells near the Company's Main Canal. Additional wells will be located at other strategic points in the future as conditions warrant. The District intends at present to discharge its drainage waters from the wells located adjacent to and above the Main Canal into this conduit for disposal. In the future, should it be considered advisable, drainage waters will be carried away through a separate system of canals and ditches to be installed, maintained and operated by the District.

From the evidence, it appears that the Canal Company has offered no serious objections to permitting the use of its canals for the disposal of the District's drainage waters. However, it did fear that some objection might arise on the part of some consumers as to the possibility of pollution of the canal waters through the introduction of destructive chemical elements in the waters obtained from the underground sources, especially as some of the lands within the District are known to be highly impregnated with alkali and in some instances the lands have developed an alarmingly high boron content which, without dilution, might

prove exceedingly deleterious to certain crops when the canal water is used for irrigation purposes. In this connection, however, it should be pointed out that the analyses of the well water and the testimony presented indicate that when blended with the canal waters, the mineral content of such well water will be so vastly reduced in proportion to the total volume that no serious and injurious consequences will result therefrom. The District contemplates the installation of about twenty-two wells at present which will not produce a maximum flow in excess of two cubic feet per second per well and in actual operating practice only about one-half the combined possible developed flow. The minimum quantity of water which will flow in the Main Canal within the Drainage District is 146 cubic feet per second and the maximum quantity is 361 cubic feet per second. It is clear, therefore, that the blended waters cannot possibly result in a total dissolved solid content deleterious to any class of irrigated crops or for domestic purposes.

No objections were presented against the request of applicant and it appears that the Company should be authorized to enter into the agreement with the District as proposed herein. The Commission, however, should reserve its jurisdiction over this matter so that in the event any serious change should occur in the future in the chemical content of the drainage waters resulting in a pollution injurious to any class of crops or other water use, the further discharge of drainage waters can be stopped immediately.

The following form of Order is recommended:

O R D E R

An application, as entitled above, having been filed with the Railroad Commission, a public hearing having been held

thereon, the matter having been duly submitted and the Commission being fully advised in the premises, now, therefore,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that San Joaquin & Kings River Canal & Irrigation Company, Incorporated, be and it is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Gustine Drainage District for the purpose of disposal of drainage waters arising within the boundaries of said District into the canal and ditch system of said Company substantially under the same terms and conditions as set forth in the copy of the proposed agreement entered into by and between San Joaquin & Kings River Canal & Irrigation Company, Incorporated, and Gustine Drainage District attached to the application herein and Marked Exhibit "A" and hereby made a part of this Order by reference.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED as follows:

1. Two copies of the final agreement by and between San Joaquin & Kings River Canal & Irrigation Company, Incorporated, and Gustine Drainage District shall be filed by said Company with this Commission within thirty (30) days after its final execution.
2. The Commission hereby reserves continuing jurisdiction in this proceeding to the end that it may cancel all or modify any of the terms or provisions in the agreement authorized to be executed in the foregoing paragraph should such procedure be necessary at any time in the future to prevent pollution injurious to any of the utility's water users.

For all other purposes the effective date of this Order shall be twenty (20) days from and after the date hereof.

The foregoing Opinion and Order are hereby approved
and ordered filed as the Opinion and Order of the Railroad
Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 20th day
of June, 1938.

W. L. Ware
Iron Springs
James P. Sevier
Ray Watson
Ray L. Kelly
COMMISSIONERS.