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**To:** Roepke, Craig S., OSE  
**Subject:** AWSA Project Main stream dam on the San Francisco River.doc

AWSA Project Main stream dam on the San Francisco River

My understanding of Tier 1 applications: Approve the concept of the project and follow up with more details under the Tier 2 process. Once the project is approved, I understand there will be AWSA funds available to hire engineers and make an assessment for location and size of the impoundment structure.

I am not an engineer; we have no pertinent data as to location, size and capacity. Furthermore any project will have to pass through the NEPA process to determine the environmental issues.

We do know that the San Francisco River is suffering from a declining in-stream flow. This causes a negative effect for all sorts of biological species that depend on water for their existence. To have an impoundment of water that covers up a very small portion of the river so that the major portion of the river can have in-stream flow is far more advantages.

Most damage to the river dynamics, the environment and economic stability is due to extreme erosion from uncontrolled floods. Every farmer on the river has lost valuable farm land due to floods. Personally I lost 10 acres forever and another 15 acres that lost its top soil. We not only lose our soil, we lose our crops for a time and the cost of rebuilding our levees.

Presently the Forest Service, U. S. Fish & Wildlife and Corps of Army Engineers are reluctant to allow us to rebuild levees that protect our Private land. There is no other choice we have to have flood protection to sustain our economic viability. The San Francisco River has to be impounded for the future of all living creatures including humans. Places in the river are choked with trees impeding water flow and backing up debris. The next big flood will be out of its historic channel and destroying more farm land and residences as well.

All irrigators on the San Francisco River and its tributaries are short of their allotted adjudicated water rights. The impoundment of water will insure these rights into the future. The activity of recreation people using the lake will make jobs and increase the overall economic base of the county and inhabitants.

According to the AWSA, water will be only taken when there is excess water, floods or high snow melt. Using cost estimates of other impoundment structures we can arrive at some comparative figures. 25 million could impound a lake possibly 170 ft. deep and back water up stream 8 miles. We believe that other sources of funds could assist in watershed treatment up stream of the structure.

In the early 60's a site on the San Francisco River was projected 2 miles upstream from the town of Reserve. Another site is 20 miles down stream from Reserve. Dam height and capacities would have to be determined once the site is selected. There has been extensive research on the site above Reserve; we do need help in finding this information in the archives someplace.

It is imperative that our local representatives have input into the decisions that affect us locally. The town of Reserve, Catron County Commission, San Francisco Soil Conservation Service and the Gila San Francisco Water Commission has unanimously approved this project.

The Gila Forest Service management of the San Francisco River watershed continues to grow trees and deplete our water supply. We see no future change in this preservation type of

management. Our only hope for sustaining water in Catron County now and in the future is to impound flood water.

Submitted by Hugh B. McKeen; chairman of the Catron County Commission