

Grand Jury Would Strip Board of Flood Control Duties

Zone 1 Debacle Deplored:

Jury Resolution Asks Quick Action

THE Ventura county grand jury today recommended that the board of supervisors be divested of its power as governing board of the county flood control districts.

In a resolution filed in Judge Louis Drapeau's superior court this morning the grand jury recommended the amendment of the county flood control and water conservation act at the earliest possible date.

The resolution, filed by Jury Foreman Henry J. Borchard, states that "the water problem of zone 1 has not been solved" and that the "act has not stood the test."

The "unfortunate" handling of the Matilija dam construction was pointed out and the resolution stated further that "the other projects included in the over-all plan of water conservation for zone 1 may never be built because of the hesitancy of zone 1 residents to further encumber their property (under bonded indebtedness) after the sad experience in connection with the Matilija project."

Other recommendations of the jury include:

"Provide for the establishment of zone flood control and water conservation districts, each to be governed by a board of directors composed of an appropriate number of qualified electors elected by the voters in the respective zones."

"Confer on governing boards of the zone districts the powers to intervene or take part in or pay the cost of expenses of any action or controversy involving the exportation of water to any point outside of their own zone district."

(In a previous recommendation the grand jury asked that the cur-procedures for the alteration of construction of Matilija dam be brought to trial and that no settlement be made out of court.)

"Provide suitable means and procedures for the alteration of zone district boundaries when such alteration is desired by the land affected and is acceptable to the zone district being so enlarged."

It was the grand jury's opinion that the "over-all county agency for water conservation serves no useful purpose as such. Each zone comprises an area dependent on sources which are separate and distinct from those available in other areas. Each zone has its own problems."

Zone one manager Neil Stiver

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was asked to appear before the jury this morning prior to the filing of the resolution. When he made his exit from the jury room Stiver said "It has been rough."

He said the jury probed into every phase of zone one management. He said this was his fourth appearance before the jury. He stated the jury members had left no question unanswered in their investigation of the zone one problems.