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U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEVADA  
FILED  
JUN 18 2001  
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10 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
11 FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA

12 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
13 Plaintiff,

14 WALKER RIVER PAIUTE TRIBE,  
15 Plaintiff-Intervenor,

16 v.

17 WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT,  
18 a corporation, et al.,  
19 Defendants.  
20

) In Equity No. C-125-ECR  
) Subfile No. C-125-B

) **WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION  
) DISTRICT'S POINTS AND  
) AUTHORITIES IN OPPOSITION TO  
) JOINT MOTION OF THE UNITED  
) STATES OF AMERICA AND THE  
) WALKER RIVER PAIUTE TRIBE FOR  
) CERTIFICATION OF DEFENDANT  
) CLASSES**

21 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, WALKER  
22 RIVER PAIUTE TRIBE,  
23 Counterclaimants,  
24

25 v.

26 WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT,  
et al.,  
27 Counterdefendants.  
28

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1 **I. INTRODUCTION.**

2 The Walker River Paiute Tribe (the "Tribe") and the United States filed their original  
3 counterclaims in this matter in 1992. By Order dated October 22, 1992, the Court directed the  
4 Tribe and the United States to serve their original counterclaims on all claimants to the waters  
5 of the Walker River and its tributaries pursuant to Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Civil  
6 Procedure. By Order dated July 8, 1994, the Court clarified that its October 27, 1992 Order did  
7 not require the joinder of groundwater claimants. From February 23, 1993, through  
8 September 9, 1998, the Court granted the Tribe and the United States 13 extensions of time to  
9 join additional parties and complete service of process.

10 In 1997, the Tribe and the United States expanded their counterclaims to include claims  
11 related to groundwater. As a result of that expansion, the Court entered its Case Management  
12 Order on April 19, 2000. The Court identified nine categories of water rights holders and  
13 directed that "each of the members of each said category shall be named as a Counterdefendant  
14 in this case" and served with the respective First Amended Counterclaims brought by the  
15 United States and the Tribe. Case Management Order, pp. 5-6.

16 Now, more than 8 years after the Court first ordered joinder and service and almost 4  
17 years after filing the First Amended Counterclaims, the Tribe and the United States have filed  
18 the *Joint Motion of the United States of America and the Walker River Paiute Tribe for*  
19 *Certification of Defendant Classes* (the "Class Certification Motion"). Rather than serve "each  
20 of the members of each said category," the United States and the Tribe now seek to have one  
21 entire category and a portion of a second category of water rights holders certified as classes.  
22 The United States and the Tribe assert that "[c]ertification of these two classes will, as a result,  
23 help the Court manage the 'enormity and complexity' of these proceedings." *Memorandum in*  
24 *Support of the Joint Motion of the United States of America and the Walker River Paiute Tribe*  
25 *for Certification of Defendant Classes (Supporting Memorandum)*, p. 3, lns. 11-12. They fail  
26 to support that assertion with either explanation or example. In truth, there is no advantage to a  
27 partial defendant class action in this case other than the obvious benefit to the United States and  
28 the Tribe in avoiding proper service of process upon individual water rights holders as

1 necessary party counterdefendants.<sup>1</sup> The Class Certification Motion cannot satisfy the legal  
2 requirement of FRCP 23. Nor does it serve any of the purposes for which the class action  
3 device was instituted.

4 **II. STATEMENT OF FACTS.**

5 **A. The Claims Of The Walker River Paiute Tribe And Of The United States.**

6 In its 1992 Counterclaim, the Tribe sought recognition of a right to store water  
7 in Weber Reservoir for use on the Walker River Indian Reservation and for a federal reserved  
8 water right for 167,460 acres of land included in the Reservation in 1936. These claims are in  
9 addition to the direct flow rights awarded to the United States for the benefit of the Tribe in the  
10 *Walker River Decree*. The 1992 counterclaim of the United States asserted similar claims to  
11 water for the benefit of the Walker River Indian Reservation.

12 On or about July 30, 1997, the Tribe amended its earlier claim ("Tribe's First  
13 Amended Counterclaim"). In addition to its original surface water claims, the Tribe's First  
14 Amended Counterclaim includes groundwater claims for the entire Reservation. At the same  
15 time, the United States also amended its claim ("United States' First Amended Counterclaim").  
16 In addition to its original surface water claims, the United States' First Amended Counterclaim  
17 includes several specific claims to surface water and groundwater in the Walker River Basin for  
18 other federal enclaves, including the Hawthorne Army Ammunition Plant, the Toiyabe  
19 National Forest, the Mountain Warfare Training Center of the United States Marine Corps and  
20 the Bureau of Land Management. The United States' First Amended Counterclaim also  
21 advances claims for surface and groundwater for the Walker River Indian Reservation, the  
22  
23

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24  
25 <sup>1</sup> The United States and the Tribe reveal that their true purpose in seeking class  
26 certification is to solve or, at least, avoid problems of serving defendants when they advise the  
27 Court that, in the future, "it may be necessary . . . to establish a class for the residual unserved  
28 members of one or more categories." *Supporting Memorandum*, p. 6, lns. 14-15. The class  
action was developed as a device to combine multiple lawsuits for purposes of judicial  
efficiency and consistency of decision making. It was not designed to aid plaintiffs in avoiding  
the requirement of service upon defendants.

1 Yerington Reservation, the Bridgeport Paiute Indian Colony and several individual Indian  
2 allotments.

3 **B. The Case Management Order.**

4 The April 19, 2000 Case Management Order (the "CMO") bifurcates the claims  
5 of the Tribe and United States for the Walker River Indian Reservation (the "Tribal Claims")  
6 from all of the other claims raised by the United States (the "Federal Claims"). It stays all  
7 proceedings related to the Federal Claims and sets forth initial procedures for the prosecution of  
8 the Tribal Claims.

9 The CMO requires the Tribe and United States to serve their amended pleadings  
10 and related service documents on and thereby join numerous individuals and entities who hold  
11 surface and groundwater rights within the Walker River Basin. It groups these individuals and  
12 entities into nine different categories as follows:

13 (a) The successors in interest to all water rights holders under the  
14 Decree (April 14, 1936), modified, Order for Entry of Amended Final Decree to  
Conform to Writ of Mandate, Etc. (April 24, 1940) ("1936" Decree).

15 (b) All holders of surface water rights under the laws of the States of  
16 Nevada and California in the Walker River Basin who are not presently parties to  
this adjudication.

17 (c) All holders of permits or certificates to pump groundwater issued  
18 by the State of Nevada and domestic users of groundwater within Sub Basins 107  
(Smith Valley), 108 (Mason Valley), 110A (Schurz Subarea of the Walker Lake  
19 Valley), and 110B (Walker Lake Subarea of the Walker Lake Valley).

20 (d) All holders of permits or certificates to pump groundwater issued  
21 by the State of Nevada within Sub Basins 106 (Antelope Valley), 109 (East  
Walker), and 110C (Whiskey Flat-Hawthorne Subarea of Walker Lake  
Groundwater Basin).

22 (e) All users of groundwater for irrigation in California.

23 (f) All holders of "vested rights" to the use of groundwater under the  
laws of the State of Nevada within the Walker River Basin.

24 (g) All municipal providers in Nevada within the Walker River Basin  
25 who currently use groundwater.

26 (h) All municipal providers in California within the Walker River  
Basin who currently use groundwater.

27 (i) All industrial users in Nevada within the Walker River who  
28 currently use groundwater.



1 The Tribe and the U.S. now seek to certify two classes, one for individuals and entities within  
2 category (a) and one for some, but not all, of the individual entities within paragraph (c).

3 The CMO divides the proceedings concerning the Tribal Claims into two  
4 phases. Phase I consists of “threshold issues as identified and determined by the Magistrate  
5 Judge.” Phase II will “involve completion and determination on the merits of all matters  
6 relating to [the] Tribal Claims” and may also include in that phase or subsequent phases:

- 7 (a) All other claims, crossclaims, counterclaims, defenses and issues raised  
8 by the pleadings of the parties that included in the threshold issues.  
9 (b) All other issues related to the Tribal Claims.  
10 (c) All issues related to the other Federal Claims.

11 *See*, CMO, pp. 11-12.

12 The identification of threshold issues is left to the Magistrate Judge and those  
13 issues shall “not be finally resolved and settled by the Magistrate Judge until all appropriate  
14 parties are joined.” CMO, pg. 9. The following possible threshold issues are to be considered  
15 for inclusion by the Magistrate Judge:

- 16 (a) Whether this court has jurisdiction to adjudicate the said Tribal  
17 Claims. If so, to what extent should the court exercise its  
18 jurisdiction in these matters. In this connection, what is the scope  
19 of this court's subject matter jurisdiction to adjudicate the Tribal  
20 Claims to groundwater, as well as to additional surface waters?  
21 (b) Does federal law govern the pumping of groundwater on the  
22 Walker Lake Paiute Indian Reservation by the Tribe or the U.S. on  
23 its behalf?  
24 (c) If the Tribe has the right to pump groundwater under federal law,  
25 are such rights, as a matter of federal law, subject to different  
26 protections than those provided by State law?  
27 (d) Whether the court has jurisdiction over groundwater used pursuant  
28 to State law outside the exterior boundaries of the Walker River  
Paiute Indian Reservation if such use interferes with the Tribe's  
rights under federal law to use water from the Walker River  
system. If so, should the court exercise that jurisdiction?  
(e) Whether equitable defenses bar some or all of the said Tribal  
Claims.  
(f) Whether, regardless of the extent of hydrologic connection  
between surface and groundwater, this court is required to accept  
the distinction drawn between surface water rights and  
groundwater rights provided by California and Nevada law.

1 (g) Are the holders of surface water rights established under federal  
2 law entitled to protection from the use of groundwater beyond the  
3 protection provided to holders of surface water rights established  
under state law?

4 (h) If the only jurisdiction of this court with respect to groundwater  
5 issues is to protect surface water rights established under federal  
6 law from interference by junior groundwater users, must the issues  
of interference be decided as a part of the adjudication of federal  
surface water claims.

7 *See CMO, pp. 9-11.*

8 **C. The Class Certification Motion.**

The Class Certification Motion seeks certification of:

9 1) a defendant class of successors in interest to water right holders under the  
10 *Decree (Apr. 14, 1936), modified, Order for Entry of Amended Final Decree to*  
11 *Conform to Writ of Mandate, Etc. (Apr. 24, 1940), ("Decree"), with the Walker*  
River Irrigation District ("District") acting as class representative; and

12 2) a defendant class of all those individuals and entities with a right to use  
13 groundwater for domestic purposes in sub-basins 107, 108, 110A and 110B in  
14 the Walker River Basin in Nevada, with the State of Nevada acting as class  
representative.

15 *Supporting Memorandum* at 1.

16 The certification is sought for purposes of litigating the threshold issues in Phase I and  
17 "addressing the declaratory relief that the United States and the Tribe seek in Phase II of the  
18 proceedings." *Id.*

19 **D. The Water Rights Of The Proposed Classes And Class Representatives.**

20 **1. Introduction.**

21 In order to decide the propriety of granting the relief requested by the  
22 Class Certification Motion, it is important for the Court to understand the scope of water rights  
23 held by the members of the proposed classes and the relationship of the members of the  
24 proposed classes to the proposed class representatives. The Court must also be familiar with  
25 the nature and extent of the water rights held by the proposed class representatives.

26 **2. Water Rights Held By Members Of The Proposed Classes.**

27 The Class Certification Motion seeks to certify a "defendant class of  
28 successors in interest to water right holders under the Decree" with the Walker River Irrigation

1 District acting as class representative. Members of that proposed class hold different  
2 assortments or packages of water rights and have different relationships with the District. The  
3 Class Certification Motion seeks to certify a defendant class of domestic groundwater users in  
4 Nevada with the State of Nevada acting as class representative. Members of that proposed  
5 class also hold different packages of water rights.

6 **(a) Walker River Decree Water Rights Appurtenant To Lands**  
7 **Located In California.**

8 There are approximately 26,000 water right acres in Bridgeport  
9 Valley in California. With respect to those lands, the Walker River Decree provides for direct  
10 diversion rights from the natural flow of the various tributaries to the East Walker River. In  
11 addition it allows for the storage of water in Upper Twin Lake, Lower Twin Lake, East Lake,  
12 West Lake and Green Lake all in California to be used to irrigate some, but not all, of those  
13 lands which also have a direct diversion natural flow rights under the Walker River Decree.  
14 These direct diversion, storage rights and storage reservoirs are owned by individual farmers  
15 and the water rights are established under California law. *See Walker River Decree at pgs 49 -*  
16 *60.* None of the lands to which these water rights are appurtenant are within the boundaries of  
17 the District. However, some, but not all, of these lands may be owned by persons or entities  
18 who also own land with appurtenant water rights within the District.

19 There are approximately 14,600 water right acres in Antelope  
20 Valley, substantially all of which are located in California. The Walker River Decree provides  
21 for direct diversion rights from the natural flow of the West Walker River for irrigation of those  
22 lands. In addition it allows for the storage of water in Poor Lake in California to be used to  
23 irrigate some, but not all, of those lands in Antelope Valley which also have a direct diversion  
24 natural flow right. Those direct diversion, storage rights and storage reservoir are owned by  
25 individual farmers and in some cases by the Antelope Valley Mutual Water Company and the  
26 water rights are established under California law. *See Walker River Decree at pgs 10-18.*  
27 None of the lands to which these water rights are appurtenant are within the boundaries of the  
28

1 District. However, some, but not all, of these lands may be owned by persons who also own  
2 land with appurtenant water rights within the District.

3 Some of the persons within these two California Valleys in  
4 addition to being members of the proposed successors in interest class, may also be users of  
5 groundwater for irrigation in California. Thus, they may have to be joined and served under  
6 Category 3(e) of the CMO.

7 **(b) Lands Within The Walker River Irrigation District.**

8 The surface water rights for lands within the boundaries of the  
9 Walker River Irrigation District, which is entirely within Nevada, are comprised of four  
10 categories. The Walker River Irrigation District was formed for the primary purpose of  
11 constructing, operating and maintaining Bridgeport and Topaz Reservoirs to conserve some of the  
12 surplus waters of the Walker River. The Walker River Decree recognizes water rights of the  
13 District in Bridgeport and Topaz Reservoirs. *See* Walker River Decree at pgs. 63A-65.

14 Those reservoirs are not large enough to store all of the surplus waters of the Walker River. As a  
15 result, lands within the boundaries of the District do not have a single priority, common water right  
16 as do lands in many other irrigation districts.

17 Lands within the boundaries of the District retained their water  
18 right for the direct diversion of water from the natural flow of the Walker River as recognized in  
19 the Walker River Decree. These water rights are owned directly by individual farmers and are  
20 referred to herein as "Decree Rights". *See* Walker River Decree at pgs. 18-70. The Walker River  
21 Decree provides for direct diversion rights from the natural flow of the West, East and Main  
22 Walker Rivers for approximately 45,420 acres within the District. *Id.*

23 Nevada's Irrigation District Act required the directors of the District  
24 to examine each tract or legal subdivision of land within the District and to determine the benefits  
25 which would accrue to each tract or subdivision from the construction or purchase of irrigation  
26 works. The cost of those works was to be apportioned or distributed over the tracts or  
27 subdivisions of land in proportion to the benefits. The amounts so apportioned became and remain  
28 the basis for fixing annual assessments levied against the tracts of land.

1                   As a part of that apportionment of benefits process the flows of the  
2 Walker River system were analyzed, as were the expected yields of the two Reservoirs. As a  
3 result of that process it was determined that lands with a Decree Right having a priority of 1873  
4 and earlier would not require any supplemental stored water. Those lands were not and are not  
5 assessed for the Reservoirs. Lands with a Decree Right having a priority of 1874 and later were  
6 determined to require stored water to supplement those rights. Those lands were allocated a  
7 portion of the stored water from the Reservoirs. Such lands have both Decree Rights and  
8 Supplemental Storage Rights. Approximately 28,930 of the 45,420 water right acres within the  
9 District having direct diversion rights with priorities of 1874 and later, receive supplemental  
10 storage water from Bridgeport and Topaz Reservoirs.

11                   Finally, because analysis showed that there would be additional  
12 stored water available after all Supplemental Storage Rights were satisfied, the remaining stored  
13 water was allocated to land which had no water right at all. This water right is referred to as a  
14 "New Land Water Right." A New Land Water Right provides only 2.0592 acre feet per acre per  
15 season, or approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the amount of water required to irrigate an acre of land.  
16 Approximately 34,370 acres of land within the District with no direct diversion rights receive  
17 stored water from Bridgeport and Topaz Reservoirs.

18                   In addition, because the available surface water is sometimes  
19 inadequate to provide a water right holder with a full duty of water, some, but not all, of the  
20 water right holders within the District also hold underground water rights for purposes of  
21 supplementing their surface irrigation water supplies. In addition, a small percentage of the  
22 underground rights for irrigation within the District are primary rights, rather than supplemental  
23 rights.

24                   Finally, because most of the District is not within an area  
25 supplied by a municipal water purveyor, persons and entities in Smith and Mason Valleys who  
26 would be members of the proposed successor in interest class, would also be members of the  
27 proposed "domestic groundwater users class." Persons in the rural areas of the District have  
28 domestic wells.



1 cfs not to exceed 575,870 acre feet per year with a priority of September 17, 1970. Finally, it  
2 holds a single domestic well.

3 **III. BECAUSE IN ORDER TO GRANT EFFECTIVE RELIEF ON THE MERITS OF**  
4 **THE TRIBAL CLAIMS THE COURT WILL BE REQUIRED TO ADJUDICATE**  
5 **THE RELATIVE RIGHTS TO GROUNDWATER AND TO THE ALLEGED**  
6 **SINGLE SOURCE OF SUPPLY, THIS ACTION IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR**  
7 **CLASS ADJUDICATION.**

8 In contending that class adjudication is appropriate here, the Tribe and the United States  
9 place principal reliance on *United States v. Truckee-Carson Irrigation District*, 71 F.R.D. 10  
10 (D. Nev. 1974). In *Truckee-Carson*, before the Court even considered whether the  
11 requirements of Rule 23 were met, it first examined whether the case could be distinguished  
12 from a general stream adjudication, recognizing that it is the rule that in such adjudications  
13 each individual appropriator must be brought before the court. *Truckee-Carson*, 71 F.R.D. at  
14 14. After the *Truckee-Carson* court decided that the action was not a general adjudication, it  
15 addressed (1) whether all class members would be affected equally by the claims made by the  
16 Pyramid Tribe and the United States, and (2) whether members of the proposed class held  
17 water rights which could be applied against each other based upon priority. *Id.* at 14-15. Only  
18 after determining that all class members would be affected equally and that no class members  
19 had conflicting claims was the class certified.

20 Depending on the outcome of the threshold issues, the merits of the Tribal Claims have  
21 the potential to make this action a general adjudication with respect to groundwater and with  
22 respect to relative rights to the "single source" of supply. The United States and the Tribe seek  
23 declaratory and injunctive relief with respect to the Tribal Claims and the Federal Claims.

24 With respect to the Tribal Claims, the Tribe asks the Court:

- 25 1. To recognize and declare and quiet title to:
  - 26 A. The right of the Tribe to store water in Weber Reservoir for use on the  
27 Reservation including the lands restored to the Reservation in 1936;
  - 28 B. The right of the Tribe to use water on the lands restored to the  
Reservation in 1936;
  - C. The right of the Tribe to use groundwater underlying and adjacent to the  
Reservation on the lands of the Reservation including the lands restored  
to the Reservation in 1936;

1 D. The right of the Tribe to use groundwater underlying and adjacent to the  
2 lands restored to the Reservation in 1936 on the lands of the reservation  
including the lands restored to the Reservation in 1936.

3 2. Declare that the defendants and counterdefendants have no right, title or other  
4 interest in or to the use of such water rights.

5 3. Preliminary and permanently enjoin the defendants and counterdefendants from  
6 asserting any adverse rights, title or other interest in or to such water rights.

7 Tribe's First Amended Counterclaim, pp. 17-18. The United States seeks similar relief with  
8 respect to the Tribal Claims and the Federal Claims. *See* United States' First Amended  
9 Counterclaim, pp. 31-33.

10 As the Court recognized in the CMO, an essential element of the Tribal Claims and  
11 Federal Claims is the contention that "underground and surface waters [within the Walker  
12 River basin] constitute a single source." CMO p. 3. Thus, if the Court ultimately reaches the  
13 merits of those claims in order to arrive at a judgment which can administer all of the rights to  
14 that "single source," the Court will have to determine the relative priority and relationship of all  
15 such rights, surface and groundwater, to each other. That determination can only be made if  
16 persons whose rights to that "single source" which have not been previously adjudicated are  
17 joined and allowed and required to assert and prove those rights through appropriate  
18 counterclaims and crossclaims.

19 Although the Walker River Decree represents a comprehensive adjudication of the  
20 relative rights to use the surface waters of the Walker River and its tributaries in Nevada and  
21 California, there has never been a similar comprehensive adjudication of the relative rights to  
22 use underground water within the Walker River Basin in Nevada and California. There  
23 certainly has never been an adjudication which determines the relative rights to use water from  
24 the alleged "single source" within the Basin. Thus it cannot be said that this action will never  
25 be a general [underground water or single source] adjudication or a "fight among all  
26 appropriators on the [underground or single source] to establish their rights." *Truckee-Carson*,  
27 71 F.R.D. at 14.  
28



1 Even absent that potential, it is not true here that each class member will be affected  
2 equally by a "proportionate quantitative reduction of their water rights" as was the case in  
3 *Truckee-Carson*. Assuming arguendo that rights to undergroundwater are not regulated based  
4 upon priority, that does not mean that one who hold such rights in subbasins near or within the  
5 same basins as the Tribal Claims, basins 110A (Schurz) or 110B (Walker Lake) will be affected  
6 exactly like one who holds such rights in subbasins 107 (Smith Valley) and 108 (Mason  
7 Valley). Geographically and hydrologically the former are much closer to the Reservation than  
8 the latter and thus the potential for users in those basins being affected by the Tribal Claims  
9 may be far greater. Moreover, the fact that a permit is not required for a domestic well does not  
10 mean that, in appropriate circumstances, the prior appropriation doctrine would not be used to  
11 regulate conflicts among such wells.

12 Plaintiffs themselves acknowledge that the members of the proposed successors in  
13 interest class will not be affected equally by the Tribal Claims. Since each of those persons or  
14 entities has a water right with a priority date, those with senior water rights could defeat junior  
15 rights and mitigate or eliminate the effect of the Tribal Claims. Depending on the outcome of  
16 the "single source" issues, the members of the successors in interest class who have  
17 supplemental underground water supplies may also be affected differently by the Tribal Claims  
18 than those who have no such supplemental supply.

19 Contrary to the situation which existed in *Truckee-Carson*, the rights of members of the  
20 proposed classes are not identical with each other as against the Tribal Claims and they are not  
21 fixed *inter se*. Therefore, they are not appropriate to class adjudication. The holders of those  
22 rights must be joined.

23 **IV. THE CLASS CERTIFICATION MOTION MUST BE DENIED BECAUSE**  
24 **PLAINTIFFS CANNOT SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS OF RULE 23(a).**

25 **A. Introduction.**

26 Rule 23(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, provides:

27 One or more members of a class may sue or be sued as  
28 representative parties on behalf of all only if (1) the class is so  
numerous that joinder of all members is impracticable, (2) there  
are questions of law or fact common to the class, (3) the claims or  
defenses of the representative parties are typical of the claims or

1 defenses of the class, and (4) the representative parties will fairly  
2 and adequately protect the interests of the class.

3 Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a). These requirements apply to both plaintiff and defendant class actions.  
4 *Kline v. Coldwell Banker & Co.*, 508 F.2d 226, 230 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.), cert. denied, 421 U.S. 963  
5 (1975). Plaintiffs have the burden of establishing with specific facts that all the class action  
6 requirements are met with respect to each proposed class. *See, General Telephone Co. v.*  
7 *Falcon*, 457 U.S. 147 (1982); *see also Valentino v. Carter-Wallace, Inc.*, 97 F.3d 1227, 1234-  
8 1235 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1996); *In re Hotel Telephone Charges*, 500 F.2d 86, 88 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1974); *Sherman*  
9 *v. Griepentrog*, 775 F.Supp. 1383, 1388 (D.Nev. 1991). The failure of proof as to a single  
10 requirement means class certification must be denied. *General Telephone, supra*. The trial  
11 court must make a “rigorous analysis” to determine that the requirements of Rule 23 have been  
12 satisfied. *Id.* It does not take a “rigorous analysis” here, however, to determine that the Tribe  
13 and the United States have not met their burden with respect to either proposed class.

14 **B. Joinder Of 950 Persons And Entities In The Proposed Successor In Interest**  
15 **Class And 725 Or Fewer Persons In The Proposed Domestic Well Class Is**  
16 **Not Impractical Where They Have Been Or Can Be Identified, Where They**  
17 **Are Located In A Limited Geographical Area And Where Those Proposed**  
18 **Classes Overlap With One Another And With Other Categories Of**  
19 **Defendants Who Must Be Identified And Joined.**

18 The question of what constitutes “impracticability” depends on the particular  
19 facts of each case and no arbitrary rules regarding size, or “numerosity,” of the proposed class  
20 have been established. 7A Wright, Miller, Kane, Federal Practice and Procedure § 1762 at  
21 151-153 (1986); *see also Andrews v. Bechtel Power Corp.*, 780 F.2d 124, 131 (1<sup>st</sup> Cir. 1985),  
22 cert. denied, 476 U.S. 1172 (1986). Each class certification decision regarding the  
23 “numerosity” requirement is unique. *Griepentrog*, 775 F. Supp. at 1388. The basic question is  
24 practicability of joinder, not the number of members of the proposed classes. “Practicability of  
25 joinder” depends not just on the size of the class but also on the ability to identify its members  
26 and serve them and their geographic dispersion. 7A Wright, Miller, Kane § 1762; 5 Moore’s  
27 Federal Practice, § 23.22. Joinder is considered practicable when all members of the class can  
28 be identified and are from the same geographic area. *Andrews*, 780 F.2d at 131-32.

1 Plaintiffs have not established and cannot establish that joinder of members of  
2 each proposed class here is impracticable. As this Court stated in its recent order denying the  
3 joint motion for an order requiring identification of all decreed water rights holders and their  
4 successors:

5 [T]he United States and the Tribe . . . have access to the necessary  
6 information, even though it may be difficult to obtain. It is not as though  
7 finding the water rights holders is an impossible task. It does involve  
work, but the resources are available to the parties.

8 Doc. 522 at pg. 9, Case No. C-125.

9 The United States and the Tribe have obtained information from the District and  
10 the Board of Water Commissioners concerning the identity of the successors in interest under  
11 the Decree. They have access to county recorder and county assessor records. Domestic users  
12 of underground water can be identified from well log, county recorder and county assessor  
13 information. Except for residents of Yerington and Hawthorne, persons living in the  
14 groundwater basins in question must obtain their domestic water from wells.

15 To support a finding of "impracticability," plaintiffs argue that the members of  
16 the proposed classes are geographically "dispersed". *Supporting Memorandum*, p.5, ln. 24.  
17 "Dispersion" throughout Smith Valley, Mason Valley, Schurz and Walker Lake, or even  
18 throughout the entire Walker Lake basin, is not the kind of "geographical dispersion" that  
19 justifies class certification. *See, e.g., Lynch v. Rank*, 604 F. Supp. 30, 36 (N.D. Cal. 1984)  
20 *aff'd*, 747 F.2d 528 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1984) (joinder impracticable in nationwide action by Medicaid  
21 beneficiaries). For the most part, the successors in interest are farmers and ranchers living  
22 within four valleys in a single watershed. The domestic users of underground water are also  
23 within a compact geographic area within the same watershed.

24 As an additional reason for finding that joinder is impracticable, the United  
25 States and the Tribe assert that "membership" in the proposed classes fluctuate. *Supporting*  
26 *Memorandum* p. 7. They rely on two plaintiff class action cases, *Arthur v. Starrett City*  
27 *Assocs.*, 98 F.R.D. 500 (E.D.N.Y. 1983) and *Folsom v. Blum*, 87 F.R.D. 443 (S.D.N.Y. 1980).  
28 In those cases, however, the fluctuation did not result from one "member" succeeding to the

1 interest of another "member." Thus, the solution which the Court has adopted here for dealing  
2 with changes in ownership was not available there. Because of that solution, the assertion that  
3 joinder is impracticable because of "fluctuation" in class members simply does not apply here.

4 Finally, it is clear that many of the persons who are among the 950 successors in  
5 interest identified by plaintiffs' paralegal are included in the persons with domestic wells. The  
6 converse is also true. Moreover, many of the successors in interest and domestic users of  
7 groundwater are also holders of permits or certificates to pump groundwater for irrigation in  
8 Nevada and holders of vested rights in Nevada (Category 3(f)). Some may also be users of  
9 groundwater for irrigation in California (Category 3(e)). Some may also be holders of surface  
10 appropriations subsequent to the Decree (Category 3(b)). Those are all categories for which  
11 class certification is not sought and persons within them must be identified, joined and served.  
12 It simply cannot reasonably be argued that joinder is impracticable here.

13 **C. The Claims And Defenses Of The Class Representatives Are Not Typical**  
14 **Of Those Of The Class And The Class Representatives Cannot Fairly And**  
15 **Adequately Protect The Interests Of The Class.**

16 Rule 23(a)(3) and (a)(4) require that the "claims or defenses of the  
17 representative parties be typical of the claims or defenses of the class" and that the  
18 "representative parties will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class." At times  
19 courts combine their discussion of these requirements. Both govern the relationship between  
20 the class representative and other class members. Moore's Federal Practice § 23.24[3] (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.).  
21 They are considered together here because the facts relevant to both are the same.

22 The typicality requirement is intended to insure that the interests of the  
23 class representative are aligned with those of the absent class members. *Hanon v. Data*  
24 *Products Corp.*, 976 F.2d 497, 508 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1992). The adequacy of representation  
25 requirement is designed to protect the due process rights of absent class members.  
26 *Crawford v. Honig*, 37 F.3d 485, 487 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1994). A class representative should not  
27 have interests which conflict with the interests of members of the class *Mayfield v.*  
28 *Dalton*, 109 F.3d 1423, 1427 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1997).

1 Plaintiffs have proposed that the District be named as the class representative for  
2 the successors in interest class. The District would be an inadequate representative as a matter  
3 of law because of the fundamental differences between the District and the proposed class.  
4 First, unlike the successors in interest, the District is not a user of water. It is not an irrigator.  
5 Second, the District is not a membership organization. It is a Nevada irrigation district  
6 established and operating pursuant to NRS Chapter 539. It is like any other special district  
7 under state law. It has boundaries and real property within its boundaries is subject to  
8 assessments and, in certain cases, taxes. *See, e.g.*, NRS §§ 539.020; 539.023; 539.025;  
9 539.043; 539.055; 539.667 *et seq.*

10 Third, the boundaries of the District lie within the State of Nevada. Successors  
11 in interest under the Decree who own land with appurtenant water rights in Bridgeport and  
12 Antelope Valleys in California cannot be adequately represented by the District and the District  
13 does not levy assessments on that land pursuant to the provisions found in the Nevada  
14 Irrigation Act, NRS Chapter 539. Clearly, the District cannot use monies received in  
15 connection with the levy of assessments on Nevada lands to defend the interests of California  
16 successors in interest.

17 Fourth, the District holds water rights for purposes of delivery to some, but not  
18 all of the lands within the District. The assortment of water rights held by the District for that  
19 purpose is different than the assortment of water rights held by the successors in interest and  
20 each successor in interest also has a unique assortment of water rights. The District holds  
21 rights to store water in California for use in Nevada. It holds direct diversion rights for use in  
22 Nevada and underground rights for use in Nevada. Except to the extent that it has acquired  
23 lands as a result of delinquent assessments, the District is not a "successor in interest" to water  
24 right holders under the Decree.

25 Nevada is proposed as the class representative for the domestic ground water  
26 users. There are also some fundamental differences between Nevada and the proposed class it  
27 is to represent. First, Nevada, through NDOW, holds a unique assortment of water rights  
28 which is different than the assortment of water rights held by the domestic groundwater users.

1 NDOW would be a member of the successors in interest class. It also holds rights for the use  
2 of effluent and underground rights. In addition it holds a right issued for the benefit of Walker  
3 Lake. As noted above members of the proposed classes overlap with categories of persons to  
4 be joined and served under other provisions of the CMO and therefore have unique assortments  
5 of water rights.

6           Because the threshold issues are not yet identified, it is difficult to anticipate  
7 whether the positions of the proposed class representatives on them will be typical of those of  
8 the classes they are to represent. What is certain, however, is that the position of a member of  
9 either proposed class will be based upon their unique and total water rights package and not on  
10 whether they are a domestic user of groundwater or the holder of a Decree Right. Because of  
11 those facts, there is potential for conflict within the proposed classes themselves and with their  
12 proposed class representatives, even on some of the potential threshold issues.

13           Admittedly, there is likely to be unanimity on any defense which is a complete  
14 bar to all of the Tribal Claims. However, unanimity may end there. Most of the other potential  
15 threshold issues relate to the "sole source" theory and the extent to which the Court should  
16 become involved in regulating the use of underground water within the watershed. It is  
17 possible that the position of persons in each class on those issues will turn on whether they do  
18 or do not hold rights to supplemental underground water for irrigation. Those who do not may  
19 embrace the "sole source" concept as a means to access to a larger source of supply. Those  
20 who do may oppose it. Neither the District nor Nevada can adequately represent the members  
21 of the proposed classes on those issues. *See Mayfield*, 109 F.3d at 1427.

22           The potential for conflict between the District and members of the successors in  
23 interest class increases if the Court reaches the merits of the Tribal Claims. Again that  
24 potential is shaped by the total water rights package of each class member.

25           First, successors in interest who own land with water rights solely in California  
26 may have a position different from those who own land with water rights solely in Nevada.  
27 Water from interstate streams needed to satisfy uses on federal reservations is sometimes  
28 charged to the allocation of the water of the state in which the reservation is located. In other

1 words, California successors in interest may assert that they should not be impacted by the  
2 Tribal Claims at all. Certainly, a Nevada irrigation district which supplies water solely for  
3 irrigation in Nevada cannot represent that interest.

4           Second, there is potential for conflict between the District and some members of  
5 the successors in interest class based upon the junior water rights, both surface and  
6 underground, held by the District to supplement the supplies of water right holders within the  
7 District who have Decree Rights with priority dates later than 1873 and New Land Water  
8 Rights. There is similar potential for conflict with the same water right holders, based upon the  
9 District's Nevada permit for the yet to be built Hoye Canyon Dam and Reservoir.

10           Third, differences in priority dates of the surface water rights of the successors  
11 in interest may dictate a difference in position on the Tribal Claims. Successors in interest with  
12 senior water rights may be less affected or possibly not affected at all.

13           Fourth, differences in the overall water rights assortments of members of the  
14 successors in interest class may also result in differences in position on the merits. Those who  
15 have supplemental storage or groundwater supplies may be affected differently from those who  
16 do not.

17           Fifth, with respect to issues related to the Tribal Claims for underground water,  
18 successors in interest with underground water supplies for irrigation may be affected differently  
19 based upon priority, geography and hydrology. Thus, their positions on the merits of those  
20 Tribal Claims may also be different.

21           Finally, if the Court decides the threshold issues in a way which embraces the  
22 Tribes Claims to underground water, the Court cannot grant effective injunctive relief without  
23 adjudicating the relative priority and relationship of some or all the underground water rights  
24 within the Basin. Similarly, if it decides the threshold issues in a way which embraces the  
25 "sole source of supply theory," it will be required to adjudicate the relative relationships of all  
26 users to that sole source of supply. Those relationships may have more to do with hydrology  
27 than with priority. At that point, every member of the proposed successor in interest class has a  
28

1 conflict with every other member. The same is true of the members of the proposed domestic  
2 groundwater user class.

3 Nevada, in its opposition, has stated the reasons why Rule 23(a)(3) and  
4 Rule 23(a)(4) are not satisfied with respect to the proposed domestic groundwater users  
5 class. Those reasons will not be repeated here.

6 **V. THE CLASS CERTIFICATION MOTION MUST BE DENIED BECAUSE**  
7 **PLAINTIFFS CANNOT SATISFY ANY OF THE SECTIONS OF RULE 23(B).**

8 In addition to meeting the four requirements of FRCP Rule 23(a), a proposed class must  
9 satisfy the requirements of at least one of the three subdivisions of FRCP Rule 23(b) in order to  
10 be certified. The United States and the Walker River Paiute Tribe argue that this action meets  
11 the requirements of all three subdivisions of Rule 23(b). *Supporting Memorandum*, p. 14, lns.  
12 12-13. A closer analysis shows that it, in fact, satisfies none.

13 **A. This Action Does Not Meet The Requirements Of Rule 23(B)(1) Because**  
14 **Plaintiffs Cannot Establish The Risk Of Incompatible Standards Of**  
15 **Conduct.**

16 In order to satisfy the requirements of Rule 23(b)(1), the United States and the  
17 Walker River Paiute Tribe must prove that:

18 The prosecution of separate actions by or against individual members of  
19 the class would create a risk of . . . inconsistent or varying adjudications  
20 with respect to individual members of the class which would establish  
21 incompatible standards of conduct for the party opposing the class. Rule  
22 23(b)(1)(A).<sup>2</sup>

23 This means that, for a class to be certified under 23(b)(1)(A), there must, first of all, be a  
24 realistic possibility that there will be separate litigation if the proposed class is not certified.

25 *See, e.g., Eisen v. Carlisle & Jacquelin*, 391 F.2d 555, 564 (2nd Cir. 1968), *rev'd on other*

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26 <sup>2</sup> As explained by Moore, "Rule 23(b)(1) is divided into two parts: clause A addresses the risk  
27 posed to the party opposing a class; clause B addresses the risk posed to the individual  
28 members of a class." 3D Moore's Federal Practice §23.40[1] pp. 23-152 --23.152.1. As parties  
opposing the proposed class, the United States and the Tribe attempt to justify a class action  
only under clause A. They do not and cannot act here on behalf of the defendant members of  
the proposed classes. In any event, for a defendant class to be certified under 23(b)(1)(B), there  
must be a risk of separate adjudications that would impair or impede the interests of individual  
defendants. No such risk obtains here.



1 grounds, 417 U.S. 156 (1974); *Roper v. Conserve*, 578 F.2d 1106, 1111 n.3 (5th Cir. 1978);  
2 *Eliason v. Green Bay & W. R.R.*, 93 F.R.D. 408, 412 (E.D.Wis. 1982), *aff'd*,  
3 705 F.2d 461 (7th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 464 U.S. 874 (1983); *In re Dennis Greenman Securities*  
4 *Litigation*, 829 F.2d 1539, 1544-1545 (11th Cir. 1987); 7A Wright, Miller, and Kane §1773, p.  
5 427 (1986); 5 Moore's Federal Practice 3d §23.41[1]. Furthermore, not only must there be a  
6 genuine possibility of other litigation, such other litigation must be likely to produce  
7 incompatible standards. *See, e.g., McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. United States District Court*,  
8 523 F.2d 1083, 1086 (9th Cir. 1975), *cert. denied sub nom., Flanagan v. McDonnell Douglas*  
9 *Corp.*, 425 U.S. 911, (1976); *National Union Fire Ins. Co. of Pittsburgh, Pa. v. Midland*  
10 *Bancor, Inc.*, 158 F.R.D. 681 (D.C.Kan. 1994).

11 Plaintiffs fail both requirements. They make no claim that, in the absence of  
12 class certification, there is any likelihood of separate litigations here. Nor could such a claim  
13 be sustained. This Court has required the plaintiffs to join as counterdefendants "each of the  
14 members of each such category." *CMO*, p. 5, lns. 1-7. The plaintiffs' argument, accordingly, is  
15 not that there is a risk of incompatible standards set by multiple litigations but rather that this  
16 Court may itself in this single lawsuit make inconsistent and incompatible determinations as to  
17 factual and legal issues.<sup>3</sup> This argument is mere hypothetical nonsense. There is no realistic  
18 risk in this case of either separate litigation or incompatible standards.

19 The plaintiffs rely exclusively on *United States v. Truckee-Carson Irrigation*  
20 *District*, 71 F.R.D. 10 (D.Nev. 1975), to support their argument for class certification under  
21 23(b)(1)(A). The *Truckee-Carson* decision, however, is both wrong and distinguishable. The  
22 Court in *Truckee-Carson* did not require that there be a realistic possibility of separate litigation  
23 creating incompatible standards. It based its certification of the class under 23(b)(1)(A) on the  
24 totally hypothetical possibility of inconsistent adjudications within the same case. 71 F.R.D. at  
25 17. That is contrary to the established jurisprudence governing class certification under

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26  
27 <sup>3</sup> Apparently plaintiffs are also arguing that the Ninth Circuit would not correct any  
28 incompatible determinations on appeal.

1 23(b)(1)(A). *See* cases cited *supra*.<sup>4</sup> The *Truckee-Carson* Court was primarily concerned with  
 2 achieving a "unitary adjudication" of the rights at issue. 71 F.R.D. at 17. Such a "unitary  
 3 adjudication" will be achieved in the instant case under the terms of the CMO providing for  
 4 joinder of each of the defendants in each of the identified categories.

5 For subsection (b)(1)(A) to apply, plaintiffs must show that, if the defendant  
 6 classes are not certified, they are subject to the risk of inconsistent adjudications that would  
 7 establish incompatible standards of conduct. Plaintiffs have not made and cannot make that  
 8 showing. Accordingly, certification of the defendant class under Rule 23(b)(1) is  
 9 inappropriate. *See, In re Seagate Technologies Securities Litigation*, 115 F.R.D. 264, 273-274  
 10 (N.D.Cal. 1987) (court found it "difficult to conclude that plaintiffs would be subjected to  
 11 incompatible standards of conduct' absent certification of defendant class"); *In re Activision*  
 12 *Securities Litigation*, 621 F.Supp. 415, 437 (N.D.Cal. 1985).

13 **B. Rule 23(B)(2) Is Unavailable Because It Does Not Authorize The**  
 14 **Certification Of Defendant Classes.**

15 Under Rule 23(b)(2), an action may be maintained as a class action if the  
 16 prerequisites of subsection 23(a) are met and in addition:

17 [T]he party opposing the class has acted or refused to act on grounds generally  
 18 applicable to the class, thereby making appropriate final injunctive relief or  
 corresponding declaratory relief with respect to the class as a whole.

19 As written, Rule 23(b)(2) requires that the injunctive or declaratory relief must be requested  
 20 against the party opposing the class. It does not apply to defendant class actions because the  
 21 declaratory or injunctive relief would have to be requested against the plaintiff. *See, e.g.,*  
 22 *Henson v. East Lincoln Township*, 814 F.2d 410, 413-417 (7th Cir. 1987), *cert. granted*, 484  
 23 U.S. 923, *cert. dismissed*, 506 U.S. 1042 (1993).

24 *Henson* involved an action brought by a legal aid bureau to require local welfare

25 \_\_\_\_\_  
 26 <sup>4</sup> Even if the *Truckee-Carson* Court applied the correct analysis, its decision is distinguishable.  
 27 Neither the successors in interest under the Decree nor the domestic well users in the specified  
 28 sub-basins have identical rights comparable to the certificate holders of *Truckee-Carson*. *See supra* pp. 10-12.

1 departments in various counties of Illinois to establish written standards for welfare eligibility  
2 and notice-and-hearing procedures for the grant or denial of welfare applications as mandated  
3 by the U.S. Supreme Court. There were approximately 770 such local departments and the  
4 action sought certification under Rule 23(b)(2) of a defendant class of those departments and  
5 their supervisors. 814 F.2d at 412. The trial court denied certification on the grounds that Rule  
6 23(b)(2) does not permit defendant classes. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed.

7 In a comprehensive analysis, the Seventh Circuit found that the language of  
8 23(b)(2) and its drafting history along with considerations of due process<sup>5</sup> and case  
9 management all mandated the conclusion that Rule 23(b)(2) neither provides for nor permits  
10 the defendant class action. 814 F.2d at 413; 417;<sup>6</sup> see also, *Paxman v. Campbell*, 612 F.2d  
11 848, 854 (4th Cir. 1980), *cert. denied*, 449 U.S. 1129 (1981) (23(b)(2) applies only where class  
12 of plaintiffs seek injunctive relief against defendant); *Thompson v. Board of Education*, 709  
13 F.2d 1200, 1203-1204 (6th Cir. 1983); 7A Wright, Miller & Kane §1775, p. 462 ("[T]he  
14 language is clear and the better view is to restrict its applicability to plaintiff classes seeking  
15 injunctive relief."). The Advisory Committee's Notes as well describe the (b)(2) class action

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17  
18 <sup>5</sup> Noting that subsection 23(b)(2) contains no requirement for notifying the members of the  
19 class, the Seventh Circuit Court wrote that "It would be odd if the rule permitted a defendant  
20 class without requiring notice." 814 F.2d at 415; *cf.*, *In re the Gap Stores Securities Litigation*,  
79 F.R.D. 283, 291-292 (N.D.Cal. 1978) ("[I]n the context of defendant class actions due  
process requires notice to each class member.")

21 <sup>6</sup> *Henson* also addresses the extant case law under 23(b)(2), distinguishing both *Marcera v.*  
22 *Chinlund*, 595 F.2d 1231 (2d Cir.), *vacated on other grounds sub nom, Lombard v. Marcera*,  
23 442 U.S. 915 (1979) and *Blake v. Arnett*, 63 F.2d 906 (9th Cir. 1981). 814 F.2d at 413-414. In  
24 *Marcera*, the Second Circuit permitted a defendant class of local public officials without any  
25 significant analysis of the issue. This ruling has not been extended beyond the class of public  
26 officials bound to act in accordance with a statute, regulation or policy under attack by the  
27 plaintiff or plaintiffs. In *Blake*, the issue of a possible bar to defendant class actions under  
28 23(b)(2) was not raised. Furthermore, on the facts in *Blake*, the parties were actually reversed.  
*Blake* involved a declaratory relief counterclaim brought against a "class" of Indians who were  
allegedly being denied the right to cross, hunt and fish upon the counterclaimant's property  
which was located within the Reservation. The true plaintiffs were the Indians and the true  
defendant was the landowner who was allegedly denying them access. Accordingly, when the  
*Blake* case is analyzed, it falls within the general rule limiting 23(b)(2) to plaintiff classes.

1 exclusively as an action by a plaintiff class against a defendant who has done something  
2 injurious to the class as a whole. 12A Wright, Miller, Kane & Marcus, pp. 300-301.

3 By its express language, subsection (b)(2) of Rule 23 simply does not permit  
4 class certification where the plaintiff seeks declaratory or injunctive relief against a defendant  
5 class. The Supreme Court has written with respect to Rule 23 that:

6 [C]ourts must be mindful that the rule as now composed sets the  
7 requirements they are bound to enforce. Federal Rules take effect after  
8 an extensive deliberative process involving many reviewers: a Rules  
9 Advisory Committee, public commenters, the Judicial Conference, this  
10 Court, the Congress. [Citation omitted.] The text of a rule thus proposed  
11 and reviewed limits judicial inventiveness. Courts are not free to amend  
12 a rule outside the process Congress ordered, a process properly tuned to  
13 the instruction that rules of procedure 'shall not abridge. . . any  
14 substantive right.' [Citation omitted.]. *Amchem Products, Inc. v.*  
15 *Windsor*, 521 U.S. 591, 620 (1997); *see also, Henson, supra*, 814 F.2d at  
16 414 (The court should not "create new forms of judicial proceeding in  
17 the teeth of the existing rules.")

18 Plaintiffs simply never address whether defendant classes are permitted by  
19 subsection (b)(2) or the due process issues inherent in such a determination. They support their  
20 argument for 23(b)(2) certification by citing three plaintiff class actions (*Washington v. CSC*  
21 *Credit Services Inc.*, 199 F.3d 263 (5th Cir. 2000), *Allison v. Citgo Petroleum Corp.*, 151 F.3d  
22 402 (5th Cir. 1998); and *Jefferson v. Ingersoll*, 195 F.3d 894 (7th Cir. 1999), in which the issue  
23 involved the pursuit of monetary rather than injunctive or declaratory relief), and *Southern Ute*  
24 *Indian Tribe v. Amoco Production Company*, 874 F.Supp. 1142 (D.Colo. 1995), *rev'd on other*  
25 *grounds*, 119 F.3d 816 (10th Cir. 1997), *aff'd in part on rehearing en banc*, 151 F.3d 1251  
26 (10th Cir. 1998), *rev'd on other grounds*, 526 U.S. 865 (1999).

27 *Southern Ute* was an action brought by the Southern Ute Tribe against various  
28 oil companies and individuals to determine the ownership of coalbed methane gas located on  
land that had been ceded to the United States and then restored to the Tribe. There were 100  
named oil company defendants and another approximately 20,000 individuals with interests in  
coalbed methane gas leases. Plaintiffs argue that "no court ever disturbed the class certification  
and it remained intact through final Supreme Court treatment of the case." *Supporting*  
*Memorandum*, p. 17, lns. 2, 25-26. Plaintiffs, however, omit to advise the Court that the

1 motion for defendant class certification in *Southern Ute* was, in fact, a joint motion brought by  
2 both the plaintiff tribe and a number of defendants including the lead defendant, Amoco, or that  
3 only 3 of the 100 named defendants ever objected to the certification of a defendant class.  
4 *Southern Ute Indian Tribe v. Amoco Production Company*, 2 F.3d 1023, 1025-1026 (10th Cir.  
5 1993). There is no discussion in any of the reported decisions in the *Southern Ute* dispute,  
6 from the trial court to the Supreme Court, of the appropriateness of defendant class certification  
7 or of any basis for that certification other than what was for all practical purposes, the  
8 agreement of the parties. Certification of a defendant class essentially by stipulation provides  
9 no authority whatsoever for the certification of any class of defendants in the present case.  
10 Certification of a defendant class under Rule 23(b)(2) remains unavailable as a matter of law  
11 and the plaintiffs' motion on that ground must be denied.

12 **C. Rule 23(B)(3) Is Unavailable Because Common Issues Do Not Predominate**  
13 **And Because A Class Action Is Not Superior To Other Alternatives.**

14 Plaintiffs also argue that the proposed defendant classes may be certified under  
15 23(b)(3). In addition to the prerequisites of 23(a), certification under 23(b)(3) requires the  
16 court to find:

- 17 (1) that "the questions of law or fact common to the members of the class  
18 predominate over any question affecting only individual members," and  
19 (2) that a class action is "superior to other available methods for the fair and  
efficient adjudication of the controversy."

20 As with all class action requirements, plaintiffs must establish "predominance" and  
21 "superiority" with specific facts. *See, General Telephone Co. v. Falcon*, 457 U.S. 147, 159  
22 (1982) ("predominance" finding requires "significant proof"); *see also Valentino v. Carter-*  
23 *Wallace, Inc.*, 97 F.3d 1227, 1234-1235 (9th Cir. 1996; *In re Hotel Telephone Charges*, 500  
24 F.2d 86, 88 (9th Cir. 1974). Plaintiffs have plainly failed their (b)(3) burden here. They have  
25 not established either the requisite "predominance of common issues" or the "superiority of the  
26 class action." Their Class Certification Motion must be denied in its entirety.

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1                   **1. Common Issues Of Law And Fact Do Not Predominate Over**  
2                   **Individual Questions.**

3                   Plaintiffs allege in the caption that "the common question of law and fact  
4 predominate" and they note in the argument that Rule 23(b)(3) requires analysis of both  
5 "predominance" and "superiority." *Supporting Memorandum*, p. 18, ln. 14, lns. 19-23.  
6 Plaintiffs, however, make no effort whatsoever to support their "predominance" claim or to  
7 compare in any way the individual issues in this action with the allegedly common issues.  
8 There is simply no basis in this record upon which this Court could make a finding that the  
9 common issues predominate.

10                   Irrespective of the failure of plaintiffs to offer any proof, however, the  
11 common issues in this case cannot be found to predominate over the individual issues of law  
12 and fact arising from individually owned water rights. Although certain threshold issues may,  
13 in fact, be common, "predominance" is not determined by the most immediate issues but rather  
14 by a pragmatic evaluation of the whole case. *See, e.g., Rodriguez v. Carlson*, 166 F.R.D. 465,  
15 477 (E.D.Wash. 1996). Nor can "predominance" be "manufactured" by separating out the  
16 common issues for class action purposes. *See, e.g., Castano v. American Tobacco Company*,  
17 84 F.3d 734, 745 n. 21 (5th Cir. 1996).

18                   Considering this case as a whole, the court cannot find that the common  
19 issues predominate over individual issues relating to individual water rights. Taking the  
20 plaintiffs' amended counterclaims to their ultimate possible conclusion, this Court would have  
21 to adjudicate the individual water rights of all groundwater users within the Walker River  
22 Basin. Those individual water rights arise under different facts and circumstances and require  
23 individual proof. At this point, if not before, defendants' "common defenses" become  
24 conflicting claims. It is well established that such cases are not appropriate for class  
25 certification. *See, e.g., Miller v. Jennings*, 243 F.2d 157 (5th Cir. 1957), *cert. denied*, 355 U.S.  
26 827 (1957); *People of the State of California v. United States*, 235 F.2d 647 (9th Cir. 1956).

27                   Plaintiffs acknowledge that "[a]t the appropriate time, the Court may  
28 consider vacating its certification order so that the effect of the United States' and the Tribe's  
claims on individual decreed rights can be ascertained." *Supporting Memorandum*, p. 11, lns.

1 24-26. But that concession only begs the question. Because of these individual issues and  
2 conflicting claims of individual defendants, those same defendants must be allowed to  
3 participate fully in their own defense on the threshold issues as well as the issues of  
4 fundamental declaratory relief sought by plaintiffs. Both sets of issues are critical to the  
5 protection of the defendants' individual claims and rights.

6           The "predominance" analysis must also be made in the larger context of  
7 the public policies which justify the class action device. For example, there is case law which  
8 articulates standards for "predominance" as whether resolution of common issues will  
9 "significantly advance" the litigation or whether "common questions represent a significant  
10 aspect of the case and they can be resolved for all members of the class in a single  
11 adjudication." *See, e.g., In re Agent Orange Product Liability Litigation*, 100 F.R.D. 718, 722  
12 (E.D.N.Y. 1983), *cert. denied*, 484 U.S. 1004 (1988). These standards obviously arise out of  
13 the policy concern of avoiding multiple adjudications which may not only be repetitive and  
14 inefficient but produce inconsistent results. That policy and the standards generated to  
15 implement it have no application here. No matter how "significant" the common issues may be  
16 here, there is but a single adjudication. In fact, the significance of the common issues in this  
17 case actually militates against the certification of a class action.

18           The "predominance" inquiry and analysis here must take into account  
19 that the proposed classes consist of defendants who have not sought certification. Although the  
20 defendant class action must meet the same essential criteria under Rule 23 as the plaintiff class  
21 action, the analysis is necessarily different. A member of a plaintiff class stands to gain from  
22 the litigation. He or she risks only the right to bring a separate lawsuit. A member of a  
23 defendant class, however, stands to lose whatever rights are at issue without having had the  
24 opportunity to personally defend or protect those rights. *See, e.g., Thillens, Inc. v. Community*  
25 *Currency Exchange Association*, 97 F.R.D. 668, 674 (N.D. Ill. 1983). If there are significant  
26 "common" issues in this already unitary adjudication, the individual defendants should not be  
27 precluded from participating fully in the resolution of those issues.

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**2. The Class Action Is Not Superior To Alternative Methods Of Adjudication In This Case.**

The superiority requirement of 23(b)(3) requires the determination that the class action is better than other methods of adjudication for the particular case. *See, e.g., Beebe v. Pacific Realty Trust*, 99 F.R.D. 60, 73 (D. Or. 1983). Thus, even if "predominance" of common issues could be found, certification of the proposed defendant classes here is still inappropriate because, when compared to the joinder of individual water rights holders in this action as outlined in the CMO, the partial class action proposed by plaintiffs is clearly not superior.

Plaintiffs effectively convert the 9 categories of defendants set out in the CMO into 10 and propose that 2 of those 10 categories (mostly farmers and ranchers) be forced into "class" representation for purposes of litigating the threshold issues and the fundamental declaratory relief sought in the amended counterclaims. The members of the remaining 8 categories, including the industrial and municipal users, get to defend their interests individually and determine for themselves how best to protect their rights.

Rule 23(b)(3) directs the Court to look specifically at "the interest of members of the [proposed] class in individually controlling the prosecution or defense of [their claims]."<sup>7</sup> The Advisory Committee for the 1966 amendments further suggests that, in every case, courts must "consider the interests of individual members of the class in controlling their own litigations and carrying them on as they see fit." 12A Wright, Miller, Kane & Marcus,

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<sup>7</sup> In its non-exclusive list of considerations, Rule 23(b)(3) also requires the Court to look at "the extent and nature of any litigation . . . already commenced," the "desirability or undesirability of . . . the particular forum," and "difficulties likely to be encountered in the management of a class action." As plaintiffs concede, the first two considerations are inapplicable on the facts of this case. *Supporting Memorandum*, pp. 19-20. There is no other litigation and no other forum. With respect to "difficulties" in the management of a class action, plaintiffs contend that "[r]ather than create difficulties," a class action here "would help streamline" the Court's management of the case. *Id.*, p. 20, lns. 22-24. No explanation of how the case would be "streamlined" is offered. Presumably plaintiffs have reference to a reduction in the number of directly participating defendants and their lawyers. Certainly there would be no streamlining of the issues. Even the reduction in the number of defendants and their lawyers is more hypothetical than real, given the overlap in the categories of defendants and the



1 Appendices, Advisory Committee Notes, Rule 23, p. 302. Plaintiffs here offer no basis  
2 whatsoever on which this Court could fairly conclude that the members of their proposed  
3 classes -- the successors in interest under the Decree and domestic water users in the specified  
4 sub-basins -- are not as "interested" as the water rights holders in any of the other defendant  
5 categories in "individually controlling" the prosecution or defense of their rights.

6           With respect to this issue of the interest of individual class members in  
7 controlling the litigation of their own rights, plaintiffs only complain that "[t]he present parties  
8 to the proceedings have repeatedly raised the issue of the financial ability of water rights  
9 claimants as justification for requiring the United States and the Tribe to proceed to identify the  
10 potential defendants in this case without any assistance from the parties themselves."

11 *Supporting Memorandum*, p. 19, lns. 4-7. Without acknowledging it is not ordinarily the job of  
12 a defendant to help a plaintiff sue him or recognizing that applying one's financial resources to  
13 helping someone sue you is different from applying those resources to defending your own  
14 rights and interests, plaintiffs suggest that class certification here would help defendants by  
15 relieving their financial burden. *Id.*, lns. 8-10. Plaintiffs argue that "[t]his is especially true"  
16 with respect to the proposed class of defendant domestic groundwater users, because "their  
17 individual interests are small" and they "may lack financial resources to participate fully or at  
18 all in this litigation." *Id.*, p. 19, lns. 10-14; p. 7, lns. 1-7.

19           The notion that plaintiffs are doing defendants any favors here must be  
20 rejected out of hand. In the first place, most of the domestic groundwater users in category 3(c)  
21 are also either successors in interest with rights under the Decree or holders of permits or  
22 certificates to pump groundwater for agricultural use or both so their "individual interests" in  
23 this litigation are not "small." Furthermore, even for the individual whose only interest is a  
24 domestic well, the suggestion that such an interest is "small" and too much of a financial  
25 burden to protect could only be made by someone who has never depended on a well for  
26 drinking, cooking, cleaning and the total array of domestic needs. In this context, what is  
27

28 likelihood that members of the proposed classes will be individual defendants under some other  
category as well as the mandatory "opt-out" provisions of Rule 23(b)(3).

1 "small" to the federal government looms rather "large" to the well owner.

2 Because of its emphasis on the interest of the individual litigant in  
3 controlling his own litigation, subsection (b)(3), unlike the other subsections of Rule 23(b),  
4 requires that each member of the class be given the right to "opt out" of the class if the member  
5 so chooses. FRCP 23(c)(2). With a proposed defendant class, the issue of "superiority," in  
6 fact, often turns on the likelihood that many members of the class will voluntarily exclude  
7 themselves from the action. *See, e.g., In re Arthur Treacher's Franchise Litigation*, 93 F.R.D.  
8 590, 595 (E.D.Pa. 1982) (certification denied as pointless since defendants would likely opt  
9 out); *see also Kline v. Coldwell, Banker & Co.*, 508 F.2d 226, 238 (9th Cir. 1974). In the  
10 present case, the Court can expect that most, if not all, the members of the proposed defendant  
11 classes will "opt out." They will want the same opportunity as the members of other categories  
12 of defendants identified by the CMO to participate fully in protecting their own interests.

13 Furthermore, the extensive overlap among those categories means that many of the members of  
14 the proposed defendant classes will already be participating as individually named defendants.

15 Subsection (b)(3) was added to Rule 23 by amendment in 1966.

16 Although it does not preclude a defendant class action *per se*, subsection (b)(3) was written  
17 primarily to permit the aggregation of claims that otherwise might be too small to pursue. As  
18 noted by the Supreme Court, "the Advisory Committee had dominantly in mind vindication of  
19 'the rights of groups of people who individually would be without effective strength to bring  
20 their opponents into court at all.'" *Amchem Products, Inc. supra*, 521 U.S. at 617. In such  
21 cases, the 23(b)(3) class action may be superior to alternative methods of litigation. It is plainly  
22 not superior to the joinder of all water rights holders in an adjudication affecting those rights.

23 **D. The Proposed Form Of Notice Is Unacceptable.**

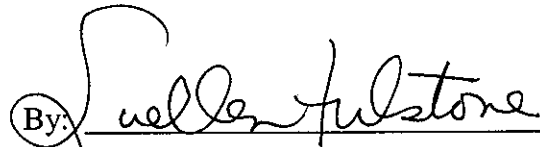
24 Plaintiffs have included a proposed form of notice to be used in the event the  
25 Court grants the motion for class certification under 23(b)(3). *Supporting Memorandum*,  
26 Attachment 2. As proposed, the notice is confusing and inadequate as a matter of law.  
27 Because any discussion of the form of notice is premature at this time, the District requests the  
28 opportunity to address that issue fully if and when it becomes appropriate.

1 VI. CONCLUSION.

2 The class action is intended to promote judicial efficiency and consistency by bringing  
3 many small actions together into a single action. Neither purpose is served by imposing the  
4 defendant classes requested by plaintiffs here. This is already a single action. There is no risk  
5 of inconsistent adjudications and limiting the ability of some individual defendants to protect  
6 their own water rights will produce unfairness rather than efficiency. Plaintiffs' burden of  
7 proof with respect to the requirement of Rule 23 cannot be satisfied in this case. The Class  
8 Certification Motion must be denied.

9 Dated this 18th day of June, 2001.

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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I certify that I am an employee of Woodburn and Wedge and that on this date, I deposited in the United States Mail, postage prepaid, a true and correct copy of the foregoing *WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT'S POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN OPPOSITION TO JOINT MOTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE WALKER RIVER PAIUTE TRIBE FOR CERTIFICATION OF DEFENDANT CLASSES* in an envelope addressed to and where indicated by an asterisk by Federal Express also:

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19  
20 Penelope H. Colter

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