

PUBLIC COMMENTOR 218 - KATHY TRESCH, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

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My Name Is Kathy Tresch. I Live At 1170 Walker Road, Petaluma. Our family has faced condemnation, the taking of our prime ag land for a huge reservoir, for more years than I care to think about. I've not reviewed the whole document yet, of course. It would have been helpful to have an index and a glossary. The EIR's purpose is to evaluate the impacts. In some instances these impacts have been more accurately defined.

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For instance, in the last EIR, when we brought up questions about the impacts of the dam failure at the two rock dam, we were told that the two rock volunteer fire department would respond. This EIR more realistically states in volume 3, 419 that inundation due to dam failure, that worst case dam break scenario -- and I've never seen a best case one -- would result in the estimated maximum water level at two rock by 80 feet.

Maybe one mitigation should be scuba gear and a submarine for the volunteer fire department. In general, the whole tone of the document makes me uneasy. I do not agree that the West County irrigation project with these huge dam sites is crucial to ag well-being. It will hurt some agriculture. We've been there for -- oh -- we've been there for over 100 years without your urban development project in our watershed.

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Volume 1, 1.1 does not acknowledge our purpose and need for the existing dam site lands and the other owners in the West County.

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Many red flags and caution tape are raised in the mitigation measure section, volume 1, chapter 2. For instance, impact after impact is raised with some of the mitigation measures, and some of these measures contain also within themselves impacts that may need to be mitigated. I do not see, and I looked extensively, where the cost to implement these mitigations are listed. These huge reservoirs, capital costs are listed in volume 1, chapter 3, table 3.4.1 -- may seem not to contain the costs of mitigation, which I'm guessing at could effectively double the cost of these huge dam sites.

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These multi-billion-gallon reservoirs are just not going to be easy to implement. Many of the mitigation measures are unproven and unpredictable, such as filter strips.

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Also of concern is the surprise occurrence of the incorporation of the subregional sludge beneficial use project into the long-term wastewater project. This isn't done currently with your irrigation land. Although an EIR on sludge was prepared in 1994, I could not find it included in the appendices. It may be there, and I just couldn't find it. But if it isn't there, it should be included in the Final EIR. Volume 1, page 2.58 states that dewatered biosolids applied to the ag land will be quickly applied and incorporated into the soil da, da, da, da, da. So that's part of the ag plan that I'm concerned about that. I'm concerned about sludge in the esteros watershed.

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I'm also concerned about contingency irrigation, also known as winter irrigation. In the existing ag irrigation area, it means basically that the City controls the application of

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wastewater to protect their system and virtually saturates ag land to the point of demise of intended crops when necessary.]

[As an owner -- co-owner, Joe -- and steward of Tresch Ranch, and Bunton [sic] Ranch, and deer valley dairy, you simply cannot mitigate what you will destroy at Bunton [sic] Ranch by any of your outlying mitigation measures. Disassembly of the Bunton [sic] Ranch or any of the other large reservoir sites in the West County, bulldozing, clear cutting, [the raptor nests, perennial streams] and our way of life as cohabitants in these places is not adequately addressed.]

[The only true mitigation addressed to these dam sites is in your mitigation and monitoring program, which is the first definition, which says avoids the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or part of an action, and that's what you must do in these West County large multi-billion-gallon dam sites. Just don't do them.] And then I'd like to end, if I have a little more time, with something from Gary Snyder, which says that we are the inhibitory people who -- this piece of land is sacred, or all the land is sacred.

It's an attitude that draws on an awareness of the mystery of life and death, of taking life to give, of giving life back not only to your own children but to the life of the whole land. We're the people whose life and economy is centered in terms of the natural region and watershed against those who discovered that it was profitable to spill over into another drainage, another watershed, another people's territory, and steal away its resources, natural or human. Sometime in recent history the best brains of the occident discovered to their amazement that we live in an environment. This discovery has been forced on us by the realization that we are approaching the limits of something. We know once more that we live in a system that is enclosed in a certain way, that it has its own kind of limits, and that we are interdependent with it.

Mayor Wright:

You'll have to wrap. Up, your time is up.

KATHY TRESCH:

Yes.

Mayor Wright:

Thanks.

KATHY TRESCH:

In Wendell Berry's essay "The Unsettling of America," he points out that the way the economic system works now, you're penalized if you try to stay in one spot and do anything well. It's all land that's under the gun, and any person or group of people who

tries to stay there and do some one thing well long enough to be able to say "I really know and love this place" stands to be penalized.

The economics of it works so that anyone who jumps at the chance for quick profit is rewarded. Doing proper agriculture means not to jump at the most profitable chance. Proper management means doing things with the far future in mind, and the future often is unable to pay us for it right now. Doing things right means living as though your grandchildren would also be alive in this land, carrying on the work we're doing right now with deepening delight. Thank you.

Mayor Wright:

Elisabeth Gunther?