

PUBLIC COMMENTOR 239 - FRANCES SHURLIFF, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

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Hi, my name is Frances Shurtliff, and I live at 2331 Chileno Valley Road, and I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to hold up these signs. And I want to know if they mean anything to anybody. "private property." "no trespassing." Okay. I want to respond to the EIR and the EIS. I found it to be a paper full of misinformation and disinformation. Excuse me. I found the EIR report and the EIS report a product of misinformation and disinformation. Okay. Out in the valley where I live, there's no single one public work decision since the construction of the warm springs dam that's held the potential to determine the future of Sonoma County in such dramatic ways. Pending the wastewater outcome depends the health and integrity of the Russian River. And five dam sites on our remaining open spaces and 19,400 acres of -- of farm land that can be condemned.

Where are our rights as property owners? And condemnation. And -- there are so many things that are happening in this report that just -- they make me so angry I want to scream, but I know I can't scream. A little phrase like "threshold of significance." And -- threshold of significance? The significant thing is that I have three wells on my property. One of them is from 1852. The deepest well I have is 30 feet deep. How much water can I take -- and I'm downhill from all this -- before my land is condemned and I can't use my water? In 1992 I had a house fire. I was kept out of my house for 16 months so that the county and state could do tests on my three wells.

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Well, if I have to go through that as a property owner, where does the City of Santa Rosa or anybody else come off coming out of the City and into the country where people are farmers and ranchers and taking our rights away from us so that you can dispose of your wastewater and condemn our land, and also ruin land ?

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You don't take water from one place and dispose of it in another and expect the ecological balance to stay where it is. If -- if it was possible to grow viable high tech crops, in parentheses, out in the lands in West Marin, will the people who are ranchers, end quotes, the people who raise animals, wouldn't be raising animals out there. They'd be raising those crops and making that money .

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It is not viable. It has been tried. Years ago they tried to grow potatoes out there. All it did was strip the land and ruin the creeks with silt and fill it up. All I know is that from one little fire at my house I was kept out for a year and a half. These people are going to be displaced. Their land is going to be condemned. They will not be rightfully compensated for their property, and all these things, as far as I'm concerned, are against anything that is right and real and protected under our rights in the constitution. Not only as people in the state of California, or the county of Sonoma or Marin, just as human beings.

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Where are our rights? And where are the list of the people, the farmers or the grape growers that want this water? Let them have it. Let's see the list. I would like to see it.

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I'm angry. And I am upset. And -- to know that the people who have had four generations or five generations are going to be displaced so that water can be brought from one place to another where it is not wanted, cannot be used, will not be perked.

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Where does it go when the land sucks up what it needs? It goes somewhere else and it drowns somewhere else out. It ruins our balance of our -- our insects, our animals, and our birds, and our trees, and everything else. Why do people come out to west Marin? Because it's beautiful. That's why we -- we live there. That's why we bought our property. Not for it to become a dump site.

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Why don't we just bring stuff in from concord, too, and maybe we can get some -- some stuff from Europe and put it over in west Marin. It's our home. It's not a dump site. And if there are people, like I said, who want the water, let them put their hands up now and say "yea, I want it," because I don't want it, and I don't want it for my neighbors, and I don't want the children and the future farmers that are going to take over that property to have to fight for the right -- the same rights that I am when I thought I bought my property, that I pay my taxes. Why do I have to come here now to protect my water source?

And another thing, I had to put an above ground septic system on my property when my house burned.

Now, if I did not have an extra 6.9 acres to the left of one of my fields, I -- what would I do? If you live in town, are you going to ask your neighbor three blocks away "can I -- put my -- my crap in your septic system?" It doesn't happen. If it can happen to me as one homeowner -- it's happening to these people, and they're being displaced, and I don't like it. Please, don't take our water and ruin it. I only have a 30-foot well and two 20-foot wells. I'm not going to be displaced. Thank you.

Mayor Wright:

Thank you, Ms. Shurtliff. Bob Smithfield followed by Craig Lawson followed by Bob Anderson. Hi.