

June 20, 2016

Dear members of the State Water Resources Control Board

It is clear to me, from reading the EIR documents, that the project proponents did not seriously examine reasonable alternatives to this expensive and destructive project. To them, it's the tunnels or nothing.

They have already diverted the San Joaquin River to the point that it runs dry. Low flows due to lack of upstream precipitation, relentless pumping for export, and ag runoff have created poor water quality in the south Delta, so now the exporters have set their sights on the north Delta and its high-quality Sacramento River water. Diverting the Sacramento River just as it enters the Delta will have severely negative consequences for this degraded estuary.... degraded because too much water has already been diverted from the Delta.

Salinity intrusion is already a problem for the western Delta. Taking freshwater from the top of the Delta system via the tunnels is expected to double the number of salinity violations. This increase in salinity is listed in the EIR as a "Significant and Unavoidable Adverse Impact" and this is *AFTER* mitigation. When you irrigate with salt water, not only do the crops do poorly but the salts build up and the land is ruined.

The Delta is California's oldest and most productive agricultural area. 75% of the Delta's farmland is federally designated Prime Farmland. By comparison the rest of the state has only 18% of agricultural land classified as Prime Farmland. Contaminating Prime Delta farmland with salts so that Sacramento River water can be exported to corporate farms in a semi-desert is a terrible policy choice for California. The State should place a higher value on the Delta's Prime Farmland instead of sacrificing it, along with the rest of the Delta's resources, to benefit other regions.

These new water diversions for the tunnels should not be granted a permit by the Board.

Sincerely,

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