
From: Anne Plummer [<mailto:plummera@caltel.com>]
Sent: Sunday, March 29, 2015 11:19 AM
To: WateBoardsPublicAffairs, OPA@Waterboards
Cc: 'Anne Plummer'
Subject: Water releases from New Melones and Lake Tulloch

Dear Sir or Madam,

We all must make difficult choices during the drought years in California. The entire state is faced with making difficult choices about the wisest use of water, but this letter is focused on a situation that has a direct impact on my family, my neighbors and our community. The situation is a possible loss of our drinking water from Lake Tulloch in Calaveras/Tuolumne County due to a misguided effort to artificially encourage fish into the Stanislaus River.

The Reasonable Use Doctrine requires all diversion and use of water to be reasonable and beneficial. The California Constitution includes the following in Article X, Section 2:

“The right to water or to the use or flow of water in or from any natural stream or water course in the State is and shall be limited to such water as shall be reasonably required for the beneficial use to be served, and such right does not and shall not extend to the waste or unreasonable use or unreasonable method of use or unreasonable method of diversion of water.”

What is beneficial and reasonable in a time of plentiful water may not be beneficial and reasonable during severe drought conditions. Isn't saving water for people a more beneficial and reasonable use of this precious resource than creating artificial conditions for fish? What is our community supposed to do when we turn our taps on and nothing comes out? Is it the government's policy to create ghost towns due to questionable science with no supporting evidence that fish pulses in the Stanislaus River result in larger fish populations?

We urge you to support the Temporary Urgency Change Petition agreed to between the Oakdale and South San Joaquin Irrigation Districts and the Bureau of Reclamation on reduced releases of water from the New Melones reservoir. All concerned parties should pull together to arrive at a policy that allots precious water where it is needed most to support communities of people, our economy and agriculture while still protecting the environment.

Sincerely,

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