

Eggers, Tomas@Waterboards

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Sent: Saturday, February 03, 2018 1:25 PM
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Subject: Urgent !!!!!!! Please Take Permit Action to Protect Strawberry Creek

Jody:

Many of us are very concerned that water is still being taken from the headwaters of Strawberry Creek under increasingly severe drought conditions. All of the streams in southern California are being stressed, drying up, losing animal populations, and having significant environmental impact. Strawberry is no different. We are seeing significant effects in flows. A stream like Strawberry which has, perennial and intermittent reaches are significantly affected by unnatural removal of groundwater. Some reaches could dry completely and others surface flow could be reduced in length and amount significantly. That will significantly affect species populations. Riparian habitat will experience die-off where water levels drop below root zones. Stream conditions will dry and act more like the uplands in wildfire situations. There are numbers of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species that will be affected.

Strawberry is especially impacted due to the ongoing removal of so much spring and groundwater. This year's rainfall and snow are not looking good right now and groundwater will continue to decline. Summer flows are totally dependent upon groundwater.

We know that the Forest Service has the authority under the special use permit to control impacts to National Forest even if Nestle has a real water right. The Forest Service holds other permit holders to standards of environmental protection, even if they are poor cabin owners. The Forest in cooperation with the County and Fish and Game set a standard for stream protection and made everyone follow it. The Forest has many permits where there are resource protection measures taken. Why is this permit any different. They aren't even dependent on it like the cabin owners and municipal water agencies.

The State Water Resources Control Board recently issued their initial report indicating that there is and has been 6 times as much water being taken as is permitted under State water rights. We understand that this is preliminary, but that is there best shot at this time.

Nestle has said that they have sources in the West with better water situations than southern California. We also found Nestle trucks with our water headed to the Pacific Northwest during their drought.

Some of us have noted an increase in the number of Nestle trucks at the pickup point. It appears as if they are increasing their take in response to the 4 inches of rain we got in our only real storm. That 4 inches is what recharges our groundwater and helps our streams make it to the surface in the long, hot summer. This water should be allowed to recharge our groundwater.

Please take permit action. They have probably already taken their State permitted 26 acre feet this year with their accelerated removal. You have the Public, the Press, the State, the law, regulations, Forest Plan, and local Water Agencies on your side to do what the plan, law and regulation give you authority to do. We have begged them to reduce their take for the drought since 2014. They have refused and said they would take more if they could. Please stand up for our National Forest and Public Water. Don't be bullied any longer

Let us know if there is anything we can do to help get this damage stopped.

Steve Loe
Retired Forest Service Biologist
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