

From: Glen Thompson <demnewseditor@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 06, 2018 3:08 PM
To: Vasquez, Victor@Waterboards
Subject: Illegal Nestlé harvest of water

Mr. Vasquez:

The California State Water Resources Control Board has determined that Nestlé is 'harvesting' at least four times what they should be. From the report: "While Nestlé may be able to claim a valid basis of right to some water in Strawberry Canyon, a significant portion of the water currently diverted by Nestlé appears to be diverted without a valid basis of right."

The Forest Service charges only a small fee for the right to pipe the water from horizontal wells running deep into the water table below Strawberry Peak. This is according to a special use permit issued in 1976 which expired in 1988. Nothing has been done in all these years to determine the effects of their water extraction, and it continues while the renewal of their permit is 'being reviewed.' The Forest Service recently refused to respond to the Water Board's findings, stating that Nestlé is 'doing nothing illegal.' The Forest literally owns the water and is supposed to be protecting the environment and the rights of U.S. citizens against misuse. Instead, it is obvious the Forest Service uses Nestlé as a retirement bonus system, with prior officials currently on the payroll as 'paid consultants.'

Under the special use permit, the Forest Service has the authority to control impacts to National Forest plants and wildlife. Standards for stream protection were created in cooperation with the County and Fish and Game, and everyone must follow it, cabin owners and multinational Swiss corporations alike. Why is this permit any different? All of the local streams are drying up, losing wildlife and seeing trees dying or showing signs of drought. A wildfire uses drought stricken areas to 'jump' across ravines and continue uphill, where a healthy stream acts as a fire barrier. How can allowing a foreign company to endanger our community be allowed?

More importantly, our Congressional representative Paul Cook has repeatedly dodged this issue. How can an elected official to the Federal Government be so un-American as to favor the profits of a foreign company over the well being of their constituents? He should side with his neighbors and demand a public hearing between the concerned agencies and Nestlé to create a mutually acceptable path forward. For too long, special interests have kept deals about

our water secret. This precious resource should be fairly used and Strawberry Creek should be allowed to perform its invaluable assistance to the streambed and the water table under San Bernardino.

(signed)

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One should, simultaneously, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise.

F. Scott Fitzgerald, writer