STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD BOARD MEETING/HEARING (Portion)

MAY 20, 2015

Coastal Hearing Room - Second Floor

1001 I Street

Sacramento, California 95814

scribed by: Thresha Spencer, CSR No. 11788



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2	STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
3	BOARD MEMBERS
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5	Chair Felicia Marcus
6	Vice-Chair Frances Spivy-Weber
7	Board Member Tam M. Doduc
8	Board Member Steven Moore
9	Board Member Dorene D'Adamo
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Vernalis all the way to Friant, and if -- what's the
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 2
     geographic boundary of it? And also is there a start date?
     Is it 1906 or 1908? What's -- what's the game plan?
             KATHERINE MROWKA: Yes. Staff has done the analysis
 4
 5
     for the individual tributaries, the Stanislaus, Merced, and
     Tuolumne, and right now they're combining data for the basin
 6
 7
     as a whole to give us a common date at a common location. I
 8
     believe it's Mossdale Bridge.
             TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: So -- but does that -- but will
 9
     that include the -- if it's Mossdale Bridge, you're going to
10
11
     curtail on the mainstay on San Joaquin River on Friday too?
12
             KATHERINE MROWKA: It's common curtailment.
13
             TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: All right. Thank you.
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS:
                                    Say that again.
14
15
             KATHERINE MROWKA: So, basically, it would be a
     watershed-based curtailment like all of our others have been
16
17
    this year.
             TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Well, okay. So it's just going
18
19
     to be the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and the Merced?
20
             KATHERINE MROWKA: No. We've run all the data for
     the individual -- those are the tributaries.
21
22
             TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: I just need to know is it all
23
     three of them --
             KATHERINE MROWKA: Plus, we're running right now the
24
25
     data for the major -- for, like, the combined whole
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TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: So is the curtailment going to include the mainstem San Joaquin?

KATHERINE MROWKA: At this time.

TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Perfect. That's all I need. Thanks. I appreciate that.

I just have two real quick points. I am struck by the irony of this, and actually Terry Erlewine tee'd this up earlier, and it came in the letter that you received last year which started these discussions going forward. Which was the exporters say 35 percent of their water is being mysteriously disappearing in the system. We think it's in the Delta but we need to find out where it's -- where it's currently.

And you got that letter and then you folks started your process to go forward and collect information to do what you do.

So I find it strange that we're in this process now, and the first curtailment that's going to be issued is on the San Joaquin River above Vernalis. And I'm wondering why that is because there's no way that anyone on the mainstem of the San Joaquin River or on the three tribs could ever take stored water from the projects.

So I'm sitting here, and here's my question to you folks, because you're the policy people. And when you do

policy, in my mind, you have a goal in effect. Or what's the goal?

2.2

So I've been asking your staff and people, "What is the goal?" And I hear it's to protect senior rights. Well, that's really not the goal. The goal is, is to protect stored water being released by the projects into the Delta so you can back more water up into Shasta and Oroville and the American River. I have no problem with that. Totally down with that.

So why is a curtailment being issued on San Joaquin because we don't take their stored water and we can't possibly take their stored water? And so it's kind of ironic to us that this is occurring in the fashion that it's going to occur.

The other thing that's ironic is, to me, is there's this discussion, and I applaud Ms. Spaletta on moving forward or trying to get some reduction in Delta water use.

My clients have already been reduced somewhere between 40 and 90 percent. So if the -- if the goal is that we've taken these reductions and you get a hall pass on curtailment and enforcement, then why are we issuing curtailment notices at all of the San Joaquin River of the tribs? We've already reduced. We took those -- we took those voluntary measures already in February and March. So how are you going to do that? And one of the oxymoronic

1.0

2.2

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Wait. What do you mean -- what do you mean by that?

TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Well, all the districts voluntarily reduce their water supply to their growers and have pushed water up into storage and are -- and are taking conservation measurements and, therefore, so why is that any different --

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: But that's the stored -- that's the stored water.

TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: But it doesn't matter. If they're taking -- I mean, think about it this way. If the statement is -- here's the funny thing about this.

If the goal is that, based on the curtailment that we were going to protect stored water in the Delta, and people in the Delta aren't taking water without -- without right, just because you reduce it 25 percent and they're taking 75 percent without right doesn't make it right.

So my question to you and your staff is, who are you -- what is the goal here? Because in the her -- Kathy's presentation, it was ironic. I mean, there is no water in the San Joaquin River system. There is nothing. And, like she said, you go out and do these inspections and it's dry. Like we said last year and we said this year again, people upstream of our reservoirs, we're not concerned about them

diverting. There is no water to divert.

So what -- what are -- I'm asking you. What are you trying to accomplish here? I mean, I get -- I have no problem because I've been fighting this battle for 25 years. I have no problem tee'ing up legal issues that need to be resolved in the Delta, okay? I am fully supportive of that. There's some major -- like, is stored water released to meet Delta outflow protected? I don't know. I've never seen a 1707 on it, I've never seen a State Board Order on it. If that water goes into the X2 zone and it's abandoned, is it subject to appropriation?

I mean, there are great questions to ask, okay? But if you go about it with a curtailment, here's my fear: My fear is we're going to be in a legal procedural morass, which has nothing to do with the substantive issues.

Because it's all going to go to whether you have a notice, whether you have an order, whether you've taken a final action, whether it's an administrative action, can we seek a stay? Can you seek -- can we have a TRO? Are you going to say we have to exhaust our administrative perimeters and come back here and file motions for reconsideration?

I mean, we're going to be playing that dance, and especially if your staff rolls this out in a sequential order where we're going to have curtailments for -- I don't know -- are you going to go all pre-'14 rights all the way

back to, like, 1850, or are you just going to do like 1906?

KATHERINE MROWKA: Staff is still doing that math
for me.

TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Okay. So -- but let's say you do half of them now and half of them later. So now we're going to be staggering these people through these processes with various complaints, then you're going to do riparians, now you're going to do Sacramento.

Now, my clients have claims that they have pre-'14 rights that are superior to pre-'14 rights in the Delta, and you're going to -- so I get the issue and the legal issues involved, but the process by which you're trying to -- and I keep telling your staff this -- the process by which you're trying to get to the point to put the legal issues in play isn't going to get you there.

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: And what's your suggestion?

TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: My suggestion is that if you

truly feel that you want to do -- get to these legal issues,

and I've told your Water Master this and I've told your

staff this, you issue CDOs and ACLs on specific properties

or interests in which you think parties are taking water

without right. It's pretty simple. Because the broad brush

isn't going to get you there and it's not going to give you

the fact patterns and it's not going to give you the issues

that you want.

1	BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: But that just seems to
2	be one aspect of it. So if we were to focus on I guess
3	you're talking about the Delta diverters that may or may not
4	have a right, but the issues are broader than that. And
5	just
6	TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Are they?
7	BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: Well, and okay. So
8	when you say protecting that we're protecting we,
9 -	staff, is wanting to protect senior water right holders.
10	TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Okay.
11	BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: So the Delta diverters
12	are also in the San Joaquin watershed.
13	TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: Yes, they are.
14	BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: And so one would think
15	that, in anticipation of a claim that they would have, is
16	what about folks upstream, such as your folks?
17	TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: And if Mr. Herrick
18	Mr. Herrick is sitting right behind me. If Mr. Herrick ever
19	has a claim that we are improperly diverting his water
20	downstream, bring it on.
21	BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: Well, I just
22	TIMOTHY O'LAUGHLIN: But that's not but that's
23 -	not what happened here. The claim that was made was made by
24	the projects that the restored water was being illegally
25	diverted. It wasn't that the upstream Mr. Herrick didn't

3 4

make a claim last year that we were improperly taking his water upstream. That claim wasn't made. And if he wanted to make that claim, I think that would be a fine claim to bring to the State Board or to a court and we can go through that, but that's not what this curtailment is about.

The curtailment is -- the curtailment is to push more water into the Delta, okay, so that the Delta people can get their water needs met and, therefore, back off taking water that's being released by the projects. That's what's happening, okay? And it's under the guise that they have senior rights.

Now, Mr. Herrick and I have had numerous long discussions about who has what senior rights in the Delta, but like even your staff admits, when the forms came in, people in the Delta claim pre-'14 and riparian rights. Your Water Master sent them a letter and said "Which one is it?" Your staff analysis treats everybody like a riparian. Well, we already know under the Phelps case that everybody isn't a riparian. So that's the issue.

And if you go this route, the problem is going to be you're going to get stuck in this legal mumbo-jumbo world, and you're not going to get to the substantive issues. And the curtailment isn't going to give you additional water in the Delta, if that's what you're hoping for. I don't know if you're hoping for additional water in the Delta or if

The intent of this program is to protect exported stored water. Now, we could find ways to tee that up, we could go after somebody, but that's who is being protected. It's the stored water for future use, whether that's fish or X2 or exports, that's the intent of this process.

Now, I don't know if that's what you think or I don't know if that's what staff thinks to themselves, but nobody's -- there's no senior right holder that's going "Phew, you curtailed everybody from Mossdale up" -- and besides, it can't be Mossdale, it has to Vernalis. Mossdale is in the title zone.

But -- but this is the issue. And it all boils back down to the poor South Delta, which is should they be diverting water when somebody is releasing stored water to meet obligations? Well, we think the answer is clear, but everybody else apparently doesn't. So if you want to tee that up, let's figure it out.

But you're embarking upon a curtailment of, I don't know how many, hundreds or thousands of diverters for no benefit when there's no complaint.

Now, I would say if somebody is complaining that the Delta is -- these illegal diverters, it's odd that they don't bring a complaint for that. They just write a letter that says, "You know, I think they're evil" and then --

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: But, see now you're making caricature of it.

JOHN HERRICK: And then the Board repeats that for two years, but be that as it may.

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Right. Look, I see what you're saying and, you're right, this isn't the best time to have this conversation. What we've been struggling to do is figure out how to tee that conversation up. Because what happens is a caricature of people caricaturing other people's legitimate interests.

So we have two sets of problems, and they are real problems. One is the unsettled legal decisions. Some think they're settled, some think they aren't, the whole set of those. And then there's this issue of the data and the information we have, some of which we don't have because people haven't given it to us and some of which they have now given to us. And so there's a whole hassle of things that people are doing a Rashomon on, and we have to figure out what to do about it.

JOHN HERRICK: But we are not having workshops or hearings to find that.

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Right. And what we need is help in tee-ing up those issues, which is what I was trying to get at before versus a restatement of people's positions and what somebody else's intent is and why they're bad. Which I know is a human thing to do, I just don't find it that useful.

BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: How would you suggest we tee it up on stored water?

JOHN HERRICK: Well, I've been asked -- we, not I. We've been asking for a couple years if you -- if you, as the Board or staff, will give us your factual thought/factual determination of how water works in the Delta and tell us why you think the law that we've quoted to you is wrong, then we could have a workshop and see where, you know, somebody is making something up or not or if it's clear or if it's not resolved or if there's issues or there's conflicting law. And then, from that, we can figure out what to do.

And I've suggested before, you guys will never agree to it, not because of you but because of the Attorney General's Office and your own counsel, you'll never agree to, "Here's the set of facts and the law, and let's get a declaratory relief action quickly."

Now, I don't know why that could ever happen, but that's an easy way to do it, especially if we've all sat

down and said, "Okay. That -- we do agree on that." This one everybody says each other is wrong, and this one is maybe, boom. I mean, that's the easiest and cleanest way. So that's your discussion, no offense, with the AG's office who won't listen to you and your own staff who will listen to you, so -- there are ways to do it. There are many other ways too, but those -- those are the issues.

BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: I have -- I have a question for you. Let's just assume that we have that answer on stored water and that there's the determination that there's a certain amount of stored water that the Delta diverters are picking up. Wouldn't it matter to you at that point about a curtailment process on the San Joaquin and on the Sacramento? You're at the bottom of the system.

JOHN HERICK: Well, stored water is released into the Delta, but the issue is whether there's natural flow absent the stored water for people to divert, whether there are regulatory and statutory obligations on people who are releasing water to the Delta, and whether there are regulations that are ordering people to maintain conditions for those diversions in the Delta. So it's a bigger group of things and, of course, however it all pans out --

BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: Right.

JOHN HERRICK: -- then some day it -- some day a potential curtailment might be important, but it's not now.

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     Anyway, I didn't mean to delay things, but --
 2
             BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: No. No.
             JOHN HERRICK: But this is the heart of the matter.
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     Because the exporters don't want Tuolumne River water --
 4
 5
     well, I said that wrong. I said that wrong.
 6
             (Laughter from the audience.)
 7
             JOHN HERRICK: Thank you for your time.
 8
             UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: They won't sell it.
 9
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: That was interesting, yeah.
10
     Yeah, definitely.
             Other questions, thoughts?
11
12
             BOARD MEMBER TAM M. DODUC: The three takeaway,
     that's just I got were, according to Mr. Herrick, no one
13
     listens to us, not the AG, not anyone else.
14
15
             According to Mr. Nomellini, staff tells us what to
16
     do.
17
             And according to, I forget who the third person was,
     we're actually doing better than we've perceived.
18
19
             (Laughter from the audience.)
20
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: All right. A lot to think
21
     about. I'm trying to figure out --
22
             BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: I would like to better
23
     understand, it's interesting, because I can go back and
     forth on this issue, and there are so many different --
2.4
25
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: (Inaudible.)
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BOARD MEMBER DORENE D'ADAMO: Yeah. There are so many different aspects of it. I -- I do think that, as you said, that the goal is to implement the water rights system.

And one of the things that I am concerned about -- all you have to do is pick up a newspaper and see that there are people that think that our water rights system doesn't work and maybe we ought to scrap it and try something else.

So we've got to collectively figure out a way -personally, I think that it can work, but there are these
ongoing issues that haven't been resolved over a period of
decades. So we need to get to the bottom of it and
demonstrate that the water rights system does work.

Because for those of you that are looking at strictly a legal analysis, there's -- you should also be looking at, you know, the court of public opinion and what could occur if we don't do our jobs.

So I'd like to, you know, maybe, after staff gets some time to sort through the hydrology, how things are going forward from, you know, the sort of the perspective of the math, have a better understanding of if this happens, then what are the options? If we take this action, what are the various options?

Not just our options, but for those that would be filing suit or issuing some sort of counter-complaint. What are the different options as far as how things could play

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Now, one thing I find challenging is the notion that some people hold that we really can't do anything. And the practical impact of doing what some suggest is that if we did it legally the way they said we should do it, we could never get anything done in a drought. Just not -- just not possible because we'd be in court forever.

So it does appeal to me to tee up the issues, and I know that Mr. George and the team have been working through it. But I would like to see, sooner than later, that short list of issues. We won't resolve all 20 of them or 100 of them that are out there. I'd like to see what are the three to five greatest hits that would make progress in this arena, and then where would we make the most progress in implementing the system?

Because just stasis and throwing up our hands is just not an option. And, I know, again, that there are ways that we can and that we plan to, but I would like to see that strategic package for moving forward that we've talked about for a long time, even if it's just in the next couple of days, few days.

And I would like a clearer sense of the timing on things so I know which things we need to decide, what we have to decide before Friday somehow, and what we have to do

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in the next few weeks so that we make the time to be able to
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 2
     the -- the team. Because some of the issues we're
     discussing today, I know that this is eerily familiar, and
 3
     people have brought it up, are the same issues we talked
 5
     about last year. And this year is not last year, this year
     is worse than last year. And just not acting is not good,
 6
     but I want to make sure that what we do is strategic and
 7
 8
     thoughtful but has forward motion.
 9
             Would you like the last word?
             UNKNOWN PUBLIC SPEAKER: Thank you, Chair Marcus and
10
11
     Board. I need to make a correction to a comment I made
12
     and -- and I would like to -- as suggestions you consider
13
    what the gentleman said that we have a forum of experts, we
14
     need more growers to show up there. They say no one listens
15
     to them so they don't come to these meetings, but...
16
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: We've had a lot at other
17
    meetings, I'll tell you.
             UNKNOWN PUBLIC SPEAKER:
18
                                      That's good.
19
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Honestly. This was a quiet
20
    meeting compared to our last meeting.
21
             UNKNOWN PUBLIC SPEAKER: Yeah. Yeah. My -- it's a
22
     lot of -- the correction is that I'm a good -- I'm a good
23
     news choir singer, and the truth is we do have a dying
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we're paid by ton, we have less tonnage. I'm told we need

redwood tree that's almost 70 years old. We do have --

24

25

When I went to county -- a San Joaquin County Board Meeting a year ago, a lady reported that 11 wells have gone dry. My father said we can't put -- the well go any deeper, and our house we have cloudy water and it was clear three years ago, so we're going to have to pay \$4,000 for a soft water system.

It -- we are feeling the result, and any talk of diversion is ridiculous. We don't -- what are they talking about diverting from -- to semi-arid? And the vocabulary. We haven't heard the word aquifer. I heard riparian.

We only have a well. We don't have a canal. And when people say, "Oh, storage," I know that's the Farm Bureau. But, for me, I have to say, and some others, who is controlling the spigots? I mean, I'd like to know more about the aquifer system that we're relying on and that was 100 years ago, it was three feet with watermelon, now it's 50 feet. And it's because it goes to Oakland from the party reservoir.

So people have been borrowing our water since part E 1906, and later San Francisco had an earthquake. I mean, playing with water is pretty serious.

CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: It's complicated.

UNKNOWN PUBLIC SPEAKER: So thank you for your time in doing that, and I hope we can consider more press release

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     in good faith and more forums like this and workshops where
 2
     people -- because there's a lot of vocabulary. I said,
     "What does curtailment mean?" I says, "That's your water
 3
 4
     rights."
 5
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Surface water rights.
 6
             UNKNOWN PUBLIC SPEAKER: Oh, well, we have a well.
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Not groundwater.
 8
             UNKNOWN PUBLIC SPEAKER: I didn't even know that.
     And then we heard some other things. Substitute water.
10
     What do you mean substitute water? We don't want more
11
     cloudy water.
12
             Anyway, thanks -- thanks a lot for letting me
13
     correct my earlier comment.
             CHAIR FELICIA MARCUS: Thanks for spending the day
14
15
     with us.
             So we'll be talking a lot the next few days, but can
16
     we -- I really want -- I feel remiss in not having that
17
18
     schedule laid out, questions tee'd up and figuring out.
19
             All right. With that, more to think about than to
20
     resolve in this meeting, but this actually was very helpful
21
     to me, so thank you for the time that you've all spent.
2.2
     sorry it's so late. It may be an unsatisfactory conclusion
23
     because we haven't wrapped anything up, but it's been
     helpful, so thank you.
24
25
             With that, I will adjourn.
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(Whereupon, end of transcribed portion.)
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KATHRYN DAVIS & ASSOCIATES 916.567.4211

1	REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE	
2		
3	State of California)	
4	County of Sacramento)	
5		
6	I certify that the statements in the foregoing	
7	hearing were transcribed in the within-entitled cause by	
8	audio; that said hearing was taken at the time and place	
9	therein named; that the testimony of said witnesses was	
10	reported by me, a duly Certified Shorthand Reporter of the	
11	State of California authorized to administer oaths and	
12	affirmations; and said testimony was thereafter transcribed	
13	into typewriting.	
14	I further certify that I am not of counsel or	
15	attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing,	
16	nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named	
17	in said hearing.	
18	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this	
19	2nd day of September, 2015.	
20		
21	THRESHA SPENCER	
22	Certified Shorthand Reporter Certificate No. 11788	
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