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JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

September 22, 2005

Ms. Tam M. Doduc, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Chair Doduc:

I write to you concerning the Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project (FERC #2105) Water Quality Certification.

It is my understanding that the State Water Resources Control Board has determined cooler summertime temperatures are necessary in the Rock Creek Cresta reaches of the North Fork of the Feather River. I question whether this requirement is scientifically sound. No evidence has been provided to the community that river temperatures were cooler prior to the construction of the existing hydroelectric facilities.

If the Board persists with this course of action, I further understand that the Board-preferred method for obtaining cooler temperatures is the installation of thermal curtains in Lake Almanor and Butt Valley Reservoir. The Board is no doubt aware of the enormous community opposition to this proposal. I too believe that the benefits of this plan simply do not outweigh the costs. Not only are thermal curtains potentially very costly to install and maintain, the economic impact to nearby communities must be considered. Drawing immense quantities of cold water from these shallow water bodies will undoubtedly upset the ecological balance and corollary recreational and economic benefits these lakes provide. Furthermore, the downstream benefits of this plan are negligible.

I encourage the Board to abandon this ecologically intrusive and economically unstable alternative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Leslie".

TIM LESLIE
Assemblyman, Fourth District

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