

CALIFORNIANS FOR A FAIR WATER POLICY

No Wasteful Water Projects

No Tunnels!

<http://www.stopthetunnels.org>

For Immediate Release Friday, December 11, 2013

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Contacts for all participating groups below.

Farmers, Fishermen, Environmentalists & Consumers Launch Campaign Against BDCP Tunnels:

Too Costly, Create No New Water, Better Solutions Available
***\$50 billion Boondoggle – Urban Families & Businesses Pay for West
Side San Joaquin Valley Mega-Growers' Water***

Sacramento, CA - Californians for a Fair Water Policy, a statewide coalition opposing Gov. Brown's water export tunnels, today launched a statewide campaign by their members (Restore the Delta, Food & Water Watch, Environmental Water Caucus, AquAlliance, Friends of the River, California Water Impact Network, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, and Southern California Watershed Alliance) and allies, including elected leaders, Sierra Club California, the Winnemem Wintu, the Planning and Conservation League, Earth Law Center, the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, First Generation Farmers, California Striped Bass Association, Local Areas of the North Delta, the Butte Environmental Council, the South Delta Water Agency, and a dozen other groups to defeat the BDCP project. The groups rallied at the State Capitol as the Brown Administration released their proposed tunnels project. Opponents pointed out expected damage to water, the environment, fish, farming and water ratepayers.

Opponents pointed out "fatal flaws" of the tunnels they said would be too costly, create no new water and do nothing to increase regional water self-reliance. Experts identified many impacts from the tunnels that would damage water quality, harm the environment, destroy fisheries and sustainable farming, and impose billions of dollars of increases on water ratepayers. Two-thirds of the water would go to huge agricultural operations on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, engaged in unsustainable agriculture, growing permanent crops on arid land.

The opponents assailed the failure to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the proposal, in addition to the lack of a finance plan, and said the costs would fall on water ratepayers to subsidize unsustainable mega-growers.

Organizers also note that as stated in a September [Los Angeles Times](#) article, only 36% of respondents to a poll conducted by the University of Southern California's Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics would support the Bay Delta Conservation Plan when they learned that

it would cost tax payers and water rate payers \$25 billion.

Below please find opposition statements from leaders and organizations across California.

Quotes from Leading Opponents:

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Quotes from Leading Opponents:

“Southern California is on the path to taking less imported water. If we continue with the illusion that there will be more water, we aren’t facing the reality of our water supply, or investing in water conservation jobs for Southern California,” said **Conner Everts, Executive Director, Southern California Watershed Alliance.**

Alex Aliferis, Executive Director for Contra Costa Taxpayers Association, said, “The Delta tunnels project is yet another boondoggle that should have California taxpayers hiding their wallets. In the six years this project has been in the planning stages, the estimated cost has gone from under \$15 billion dollars to nearly \$25 billion dollars. This doesn’t include long-term financing costs, which will push the project over \$50 billion.”

Zeke Grade, Executive Director with Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations said, “The BDCP is going to destroy our state salmon fishery, and the SF Bay estuary.”

“The BDCP EIR/EIS is a 30,000-plus page omelet of distortion, junk science, half-truths and outright lies designed to create an artificial reality that you can restore an estuary hemorrhaging from a lack of freshwater flow by stealing more water from it. BDCP is not a path to restoration; It’s a death sentence for one of the world’s great natural treasures,” said **Bill Jennings, Executive Director of the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance.**

Caleen Sisk, Chief and Spiritual Leader of the Winnemem Wintu said, “The end of salmon would also mean the end of Winnemem, so the BDCP is a threat to our very existence as indigenous people.”

“The BDCP is the wrong plan for California. It will waste scarce tax dollars on a system which will not produce one additional drop of water. There is a better, more cost effective way. Our focus must be on conservation, groundwater banking and other regional self-sufficiency projects if we are to provide water to future generations of Californians,” said **Kathy Miller, Stockton City Councilmember and San Joaquin Delta Coalition Chair.**

“After nearly six years of discussions, it is disappointing that the BDCP still does not meaningfully address local concerns about the project. Instead the BDCP proposes to devastate sustainable farming in our local communities and decimate the natural resources of the Delta for the benefit of other areas of the state,” said **Osha Meserve, attorney with Stone Lakes National Wildlife Association and LAND (Local Agencies of the North Delta)**.

“According to independent economists, the hole in funding the peripheral tunnels is even greater than the hole in funding High Speed Rail, said **Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, Executive Director of Restore the Delta**. “This proposal is fatally-flawed.”

Rebecca Crebbin-Coates, Water Campaign Manager for the Planning and Conservation League, said, “It makes no sense to build extremely risky, multi-billion dollar tunnels when there are cheaper and more effective options to explore. Now is the time to invest in sustainable water solutions and encourage regional self-sufficiency – not gamble with the future of California’s ecosystems and water supply.”

Bob Wright, Senior Counsel for Friends of the River, said "The BDCP Water Tunnels are part of an effort by special interests to dam Northern California rivers that Friends of the River have fought to protect for the last 40 years. With more than half of the water that used to flow into the San Francisco Bay-Delta already diverted, Californians deserve modern water solutions including conservation and recycling instead of simply selling out Californians, the Bay, Delta, rivers and the fish to already subsidized special interests."

Adam Scow, California Director with Food and Water Watch, said, "These tunnels are an abuse of California taxpayer and ratepayer money. It's wrong and unfair to make Californians pay higher water bills and property taxes to secure more water for corporate agribusinesses and oil companies in Kern County and the Westlands Water District."

Alli Cecchini of First Generation Farmers (Contra Costa County) said, “As first generation farmers in the Delta, our future depends on Delta water quality as well as vibrant Delta ecosystems. The proposed BDCP tunnels will increase water pollution, detrimentally impacting thousands of acres of rich farmland and will destroy the agricultural heritage of the Delta region. The BDCP plan will hurt many already struggling farmers and will severely harm our food system."

Nick di Croce of the Environmental Water Caucus said "BDCP is an ill-conceived project, being driven by exporters who want more water from the Delta despite all the science that says we should be reducing exports in order to protect the Delta. And the more we look at BDCP costs, the more it becomes apparent that the tunnels are a bad investment, especially in view of less costly and more sustainable solutions that don't need tunnels."

Bill Wells, Executive Director for the California Delta Chambers & Visitor's Bureau said, "Trying to hide the peripheral canal 150 feet underground still makes it a peripheral canal and it will still devastate the Delta. The BDCP sets standards for how much water will be diverted from the Sacramento River but it does not determine how much water can be removed without destroying fish populations. We have the cart way before the horse here."

Colin Bailey, Executive Director, Environmental Justice Coalition for Water said, "There are communities, both rural and urban, throughout this state without access to clean, safe, and affordable water. BDCP does not address these issues and that must be our first priority."

"What is being left out of the discussion is that to fill the Twin Tunnels, surface water will be increasingly exported from the north and replaced with an already overburdened unregulated groundwater supply. This not only transfers environmental and economic damage north, but puts the existing water supply for the entire state at risk," said **Carol Perkins, Water Policy Advocate, Butte Environmental Council**.

"We are back to 20th century reactions for a 21st century problem. California can do better," said **Linda Sheehan, Executive Director, Earth Law Center**.

Carolee Krieger, California Water Impact Network (C-WIN), said, "Fiscally speaking, it's clear that the tunnels are a runaway train. The BDCP remains vague on the numbers for a very good reason. State officials know the final cost will be exponentially more than their cited figures. Even the project's biggest boosters – western San Joaquin Valley irrigators – are getting cold feet because of the extreme expense. At a recent meeting of the Westlands Water District Board, it was revealed that \$1.2 billion is needed simply to complete the planning process – and this is on top of the \$240 million that already has been spent. Clearly, we can't afford the Twin Tunnels."

"There is little doubt that the massive tunnels will drain the Sacramento River and North State aquifers, diminish vital flows into the already stressed Delta, further stress native salmon runs, and destroy 150-year-old family farms to benefit unsustainable corporate agribusiness on the west-side of the San Joaquin Valley," stated **Barbara Vlamis, Executive Director of AquAlliance**.

San Joaquin County Supervisor Ken Vogel:

"As communities throughout California struggle to find reliable water supplies, sustainability must be made a priority to ensure California's prosperity. Rather than reallocating water shortages, we should examine ways to sustainably create new water both locally and

regionally. A sound water strategy for future generations must include conservation, groundwater recharge, recycling and reuse, desalination and an investment in a variety of water storage systems throughout California. The environmental documents released on December 9th fall short of providing a comprehensive Statewide water solution.”

“If BDCP proponents are serious about developing a Statewide water plan that works for *all* Californians – not just our neighbors to the south - they would be exploring other options in addition to the proposed massive tunnel project. Unfortunately, the State folks in charge of the BDCP are so focused on pushing through their own flawed tunnel plan that they are unwilling or unable to fully understand the benefits of available alternatives that are less costly to the people of this State and less harmful to Northern California and the Delta.”

“California tax and rate payers will be funding the narrowly focused BDCP and should be asking themselves two critical questions as they evaluate this controversial project: Can we, as a State, afford this multi-billion dollar, taxpayer-funded project that will clearly not produce a single drop of new water? Will the project actually restore the Delta’s fragile ecosystem? Ultimately, the BDCP will fail in meeting the co-equal goals of improving both the State’s water supply and Delta ecosystem.”

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