

## **BREAKING NEWS**

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### **Delta Tunnels/WaterFix Broken and in Chaos**

Sacramento – Today petitioners for a “Change in the Point of Diversion” permit before the California State Water Resources Control Board, have requested a second delay in the process, this time for an additional 60 days.

The petitioners, the California Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation were to present, on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 evidence that the Delta Tunnels plan would impose no significant harms to Delta water users or to protected fish and wildlife.

After previously receiving a 30-day extension, the petitioners can’t produce the evidence that the project won’t cause serious harm. Besides pushing endangered fish species into extinction, harming Bay-Delta communities and agricultural water users, the Delta Tunnels do not comply with the Delta Reform Act of 2009. The California State Legislature mandated “coequal goals” of providing a more reliable water supply for California AND protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. However, the tunnels cannot produce the amount of water that the exporters want, especially with climate change.

“We’ve been saying for a long time that there is not a workable project,” said Jonas Minton of the Planning and Conservation League. “The petitioners have spent 10 years, a quarter of a billion dollars, and still cannot produce a plan that meets environmental or economic muster, or comply with tax law. They should admit the project is not defensible and get on with plan B.”

“The Delta Tunnels proponents already got a 30-day extension, now they want another 60-day extension. The Petition was incomplete when they submitted it last August and they are no closer to having a complete Petition today. That is because the Tunnels are unpermissible under existing laws that protect the Delta, the environment and endangered species. After the federal contractors failed to disqualify the hearing officers last week, their only option was to request yet another delay,” said Osha Meserve, an attorney with Local Agencies of the North Delta.

“California WaterFix cannot be fixed,” said Bill Jennings, executive director of California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, adding “The idea that you can divert millions of acre feet of water under an estuary that is already suffering from lack of flow without grievously harming existing water users, communities and already degraded fisheries and water quality is fundamentally absurd.”

“They have tried every way possible to get permits before a long-overdue water quality control plan update for the Delta is finished. The Delta Tunnels are in complete disarray today,” said Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, executive director of Restore the Delta.