



AquAlliance
Butte Environmental Council
California Coastkeeper Alliance
California Save Our Streams Council
California Sportfishing Protection Alliance
California Striped Bass Association
California Water Impact Network
Clean Water Action
Citizens Water Watch
Desal Response Group
Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
Environmental Protection Information Center
Earth Law Center
Fish Sniffer Magazine
Foothill Conservancy
Friends of the River
Food & Water Watch
Granite Bay Flycasters
Institute for Fisheries Resources
The Karuk Tribe
North Coast Environmental Center
Northern California Council, Federation of Fly Fishers
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Planning & Conservation League
Restore the Delta
Sacramento River Preservation Trust
Sierra Club California
Sierra Nevada Alliance
Southern California Watershed Alliance
Winnemem Wintu Tribe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DANGEROUS LEGISLATION FOR CALIFORNIA

Representative David Valadao from Hanford in the San Joaquin Valley has developed Congressional legislation (HR 3964) that he describes as an “Emergency Water Delivery Act.” But instead of dealing with the problems of recurring California drought, Representative Valadao is using the current drought as an excuse to legislatively overturn California and other federal water laws in order to provide more water for his corporate agricultural constituents in the San Joaquin Valley. As stated by Nick Di Croce of the Environmental Water Caucus: “It’s a sample of San Joaquin Valley agriculture’s insatiable appetite for irrigation water, and it would not help the state of California through the current drought; it is not a drought response; it’s politics.”

Here’s what the law will do if it is passed:

- It would strip Endangered Species protections for iconic salmon and other endangered species which is required under both California state law and federal law.
- It would overturn the court approved San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act which, after twenty years of litigation, provided water for the San Joaquin River and salmon. The Settlement and the Act were supported by all parties to the litigation and numerous water districts in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Similar to the defunct HR1837 which died in the Senate two years ago, it would reduce water quality and water reliability for Delta communities and Delta farmers. According to Bill Jennings of the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, and an expert on Delta water quality issues: “It seeks to ensure water flows to agribusiness in the western and southern San Joaquin Valley at the expense of smaller Delta family farmers.”
- It guts the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, which requires compliance with *state* law, encourages water conservation, makes modest reforms to reduce water subsidies, and contributes water for the recovery of endangered fish species.
- The bill overrides current protections for the Merced River under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and modifies water contracts for certain contractors to provide significantly more water than they are entitled to under their current contracts.

Conner Everts of the Southern California Watershed Alliance summarizes HR 3964 as “an unprecedented assault on a state’s ability to enact and support its own water laws, and it is an undisguised water grab in favor of one district to the detriment of other parts of the state, all engineered by the federal government.” According to California Senator Diane Feinstein, it is “dangerous legislation.”

In a letter to the Congress, the EWC has requested that this over misguided legislation be withdrawn.

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