

# MILLION BOAT FLOAT

By Bruce Connelley

**The Fox is guarding the hen house!** Does anyone care what happens to the California Delta Estuary? Our Governor has given marching orders to his appointees to lay out a plan to destroy the California Delta in order to extract more water out of a system that is already over tapped, to feed desert lands in the central valley for farming, and pump more water to southern California. Don't get me wrong, I have the utmost respect for our governor, but he is at the least extremely misguided on the direction to take in regards to the state water woes. I am not talking about the current drought. I am talking about the decade's long challenge this state has faced over water supply and how we go about creating more water for our ever increasing population. In the past half dozen years or more, the ecosystem in the Delta has been in rapid descent. There have been many discussions, many studies as to how and why this has happened. There is no question there are many stressors on the Delta's environment, but the main stressor far above and beyond all has been the excessive pumping of water out of the Delta to the central valley and southern California. While pumping has increased, the ecosystem has decreased. *It's as basic as that!* It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out what the main cause of the problem is. The governor's appointees through the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force, under the auspices of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), claim to have the solution. The BDCP appears to have a very comprehensive conservation and restoration plan of the Delta, but underlining the plan is to put in place a peripheral canal that will tap water from just below Sacramento, divert it *around* the Delta to the pumps in the south. What will happen when the state starts pumping up to 15,000 cubic feet per second out of the river before it gets to the Delta and Bay Area? It will no less than turn the Delta into a muddy marsh and finally destroy the Delta ecosystem

as we know it today. I started with "The Fox is guarding the hen house." Let's take a look at the main players in this game. If you look at the top level of appointees, you have the governor from southern California whose legacy project is to solve, once and for all, the water supply issues of the state, particularly for the south. Number two would be Mike Chrisman, Secretary of Natural

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Resources Agency and a farmer from the Central Valley. Then you have Linda Adams who was instrumental in the beginnings of the now failed CALFED program after which she was the Secretary of Department of Water Resources (DWR) when they started accelerating the pumps into the SWP, and then was promoted to her current position as head of CAL/EPA. Next, there's Lester Snow. Previously he was the head of CALFED, as it went down in smoke. To reward him, the governor appointed him to the head of DWR. It sounds like one big happy family from southern California. Also, for your information, the main steering committee for the BDCP is made up of the southern California water contractors. *What's wrong with this picture?* There have been many organizations that have been weighing in on the issue of the BDCP and the peripheral canal. Local governments have been playing the political game. Various fisheries, environmental, and farming groups have been waging a battle to save the Delta, but the political force at the state capitol continues to press on. *Time is running out!* It's time for the people to come together and show our state legislators and the governor that we are concerned about our resources and will not sit by while they destroy the largest estuary on

the entire west coast of both north and south America. Over the past several months, there have been discussions about this subject at the Sportsmen YC and recently our Club has decided to take a stand and has authorized me to coordinate what I have coined "The Million Boat Float." The idea is to bring this issue to national attention and encourage as many boaters and water enthusiasts to participate in a floatation of boats from the Bay/Delta region up the Sacramento River to Sacramento and proceed to the capitol door steps and let our state government know we won't let them continue this charade. Restoring the ecosystem of the Delta has to be priority number one. There are other means of creating water resources for this state other than destroying the Delta. I'm asking all of you *"Are you willing to contribute to this process and participate?"* What will happen when the state starts pumping up to 15,000 cubic feet per second out of the river *before* it gets to the Delta and Bay Area?

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