



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Central Valley Operation Office
3310 El Camino Avenue, Suite 300
Sacramento, California 95821



DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Division of Operations and Maintenance
3310 El Camino Avenue, Suite 300
Sacramento, California 95821

MAY 24 2013

IN REPLY REFER TO:
CVO-100
WTR-4.10

Thomas Howard
Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: April 2013 Exceedence of Salinity Objectives at Emmaton

Dear Mr. Howard:

On April 28, 2013, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of Water Resources (collectively the Projects) exceeded the D-1641 salinity objective at Emmaton. Project operations staff notified State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) staff of the exceedence by conference call on April 29, 2013, and by e-mail notification to the SWRCB. This letter provides formal notification of the exceedence and background information relevant to the circumstances.

Background information leading to exceedence conditions:

The exceedence of the 14-day running average of 0.45 EC salinity objective at Emmaton for a Sacramento Valley Dry Year type was caused by the interaction of two conditions: low river flows on the lower Sacramento River system culminating at Freeport, and increasing tides during the period of April 21, 2013, through April 25, 2013. Tidal trends and fluctuations are conditions generally anticipated by Project operators as part of salinity objective compliance; however, the low flow conditions on the lower Sacramento River system in late April 2013 was not anticipated by Project operators and is the main factor of the exceedences that have occurred at Emmaton.

Precipitation patterns for water year 2013 have been a scenario of extremes. The months of November and December produced significant rainfall and project reservoir storage correspondingly increased without any significant flood control releases from major project reservoirs. The calendar year precipitation, however, has been dismal. The accumulation of rainfall since January 1 for the long record of the Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Index is

approximately 8.8 inches. Currently, this value represents the driest calendar year period in the long precipitation record--even drier than the very dry single years of 1977 and 1924. Creek and small stream flows that enter the Sacramento River system below major reservoirs are running at historically very low levels in response to this long, dry precipitation period. (Attach 8SI plot)

Historically, the initial diversion for rice cultivation and ponding has generally occurred from late April to early May, depending on farmer cultivation and preparation practices and soil moisture conditions, to allow farmers to prepare their fields. Generally, project operators have observed this diversion to rice fields occur over several weeks from late April to early May, and have monitored river conditions and increased reservoir releases as rice cultivation diversion rates increased. It now appears that in 2013, due to the very dry hydrologic conditions since the first of the year, a very large portion of rice fields were cultivated and ready to begin their initial field flooding on a simultaneous schedule during the third week of April. This diversion to rice cultivation, although expected to occur, was unanticipated by Project operators for the sheer size and magnitude of simultaneous initial diversion for rice cultivation that actually occurred valley-wide.

Project operators responded to the increasing diversion rates during this period; by increasing reservoir releases in an attempt to catch up to the lower Sacramento River flow conditions. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the Projects' reservoir release response to flow conditions in the lower Sacramento River during this period of unprecedented diversions. The first illustration shows Keswick's releases in response to the flow pattern at the Wilkins Slough river gage location. This section of the Sacramento River Basin is controlled exclusively with Shasta/Keswick reservoir releases with an approximate lagged travel time of 2.5 days between Keswick and Wilkins Slough. The second illustration indicates the reservoir releases in response to the flow pattern at the Verona river gage location. Verona flow is influenced by reservoir releases from Keswick Reservoir as well as Oroville Reservoir's releases to the Feather River. The approximate lagged travel time from Keswick is 3.5 days and just over one day from Oroville. Both illustrations show the dramatic increases from project reservoirs in response to low flow conditions observed along the lower Sacramento River. The dramatic increase in overall depletion rates experienced over a period of about ten days was simply not anticipated by project operators and is extreme from a historical perspective. Reservoir release rates of 11,000 cfs from Keswick Reservoir and 5,250 from Oroville Reservoir are more typical of late May than late April even in a dry condition. Folsom Reservoir releases were increased from 1,000 cfs to 1,250 cfs on April 25, 2013, to also contribute to lower Sacramento River flows.

The result of this unusual condition and timing is that Freeport flows entering the Delta were very low for a period of a week to ten days. (See Operational Report). At the same time, pulse flows were entering the Delta from the San Joaquin River at Vernalis as part of the annual pulse flow management from the San Joaquin River Basin. Due to the low flow conditions at Freeport, salinity conditions in the vicinity of Collinsville and Emmaton along the extreme lower Sacramento River and western Delta increased dramatically as tidal conditions increased. (See Operational Report). Project operators responded to the changing conditions by reducing scheduled exports that were anticipated to be near a 1:1 ratio with Vernalis flow in order to

maintain Delta outflow conditions necessary to meet X2 objectives at Collinsville. Without adequate flows at Freeport to repel salinity conditions in the lower Sacramento River, salinity levels near Emmaton inevitably exceeded the dry year objective of the maximum 14-day running average of mean at 0.45 salinity. Project reservoir releases stabilized Freeport flows at greater than 10,000 cfs beginning April 28, 2013, and averaged above this rate until compliance of the 14-day 0.45 EC objective at Emmaton was re-established on May 19.

Challenges facing project operations for the remainder of year:

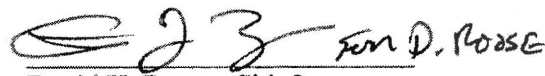
By D-1641 criteria, water year 2013 is classified as a "Dry" year as published in the last Bulletin 120 update for May 1st hydrologic conditions. As previously mentioned, water year 2013 has been a year of extremes with generally wet conditions in November and December and retention of storage in upstream reservoirs, followed by extreme and possibly record dry precipitation conditions since January 1. This pattern of hydrologic conditions will very likely bring challenges for the remainder of this water year. Reservoir storage in Shasta and Oroville is in reasonably good shape, but will be relied upon heavily under adverse hydrologic conditions to balance the goals of Sacramento Valley diversion/depletion, Delta objectives, water supply delivery, and coldwater management. Folsom Reservoir management will be challenged by the overall availability of water and limited coldwater availability. The hydrologic conditions of 2013 and the early advent of significant depletion rates in the Sacramento Valley may indicate that historic high levels of Sacramento Valley depletions are likely during this year's irrigation season. (Projecting seasonal Sacramento Valley depletions, as compared to projecting full natural river flows in Bulletin 120, could be a difficult extrapolation from historic values, and uncertainty in depletion values is always a challenge to project operations.)

If you have any questions or would like more information regarding this notification, please contact Mr. Paul Fujitani of Reclamation at 916-979-2197 or Mr. John Leahigh at 916-574-2722.

Sincerely,



Ronald Milligan, Operations Manager
Central Valley Operations Office
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation



David H. Roose, Chief
SWP Operations Control Office
Department of Water Resources

Attachment -2

cc: See next page.

Subject: April 2013 Exceedence of Salinity Objectives at Emmaton

4

cc: Mr. John Herrick, Esq.

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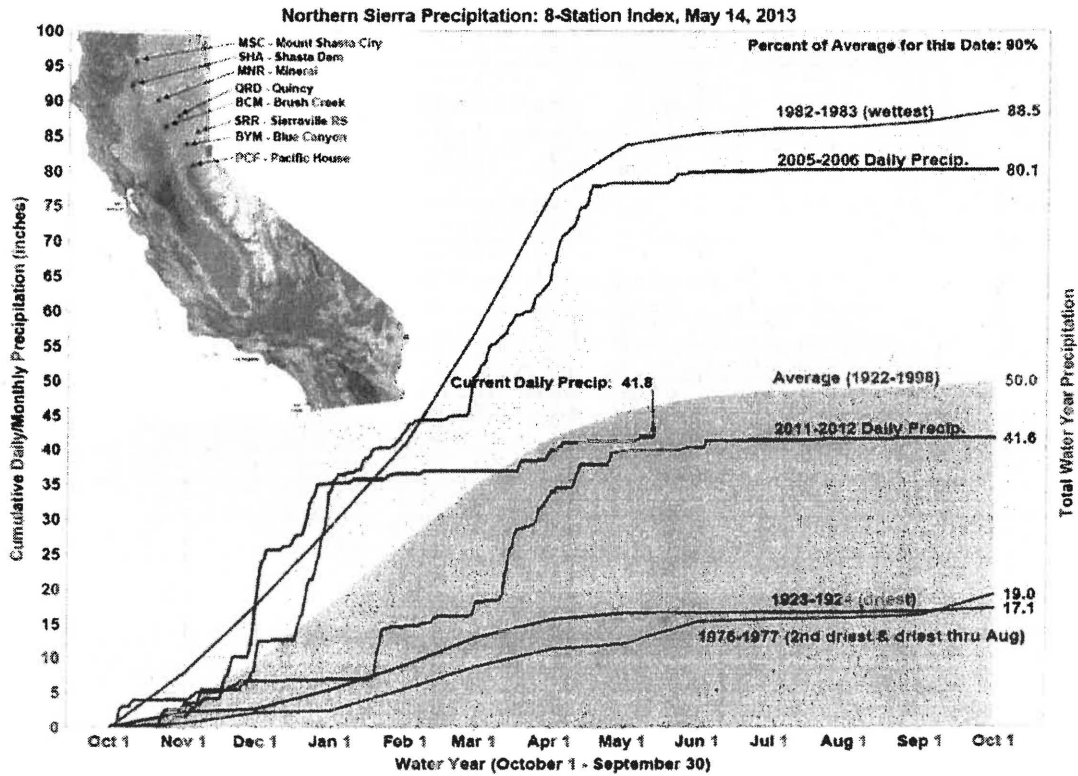
Thomas J. Shephard, Sr.
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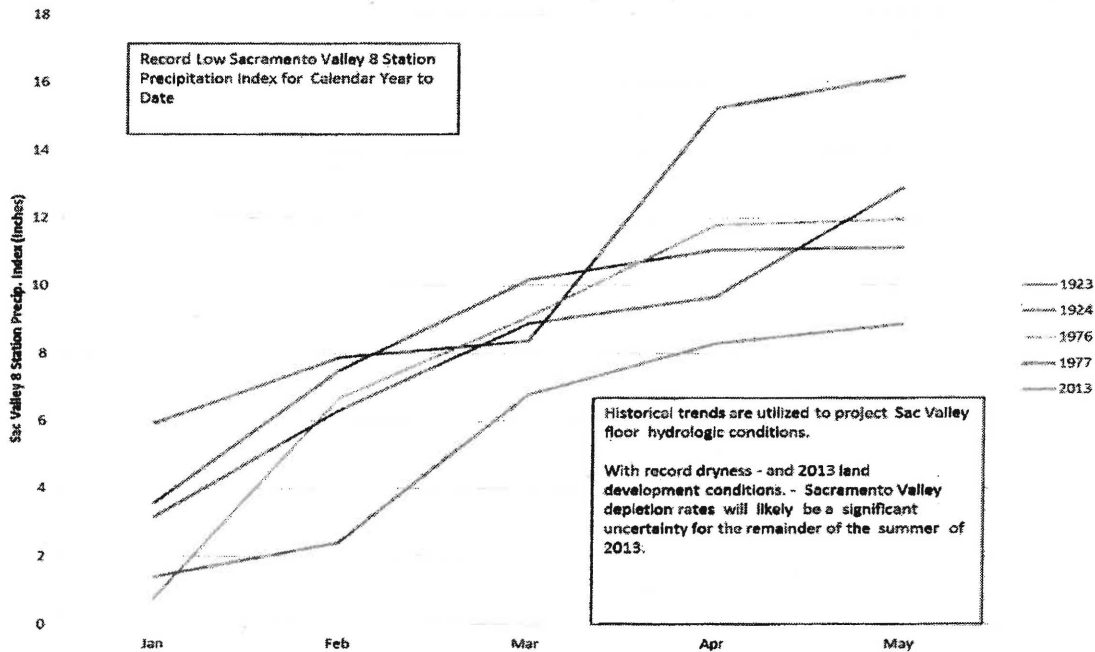
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(w/encl to each)

8SRI PLOT



Extreme Calendar Year Sac Valley Precipitation Conditions



Compliance Standards

for the Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta and Suisun Marsh
Sunday, May 19, 2013

Criteria	Standard	Status
Flow/Operational		
% of inflow diverted	35 %	11 %
Habitat Protection, X2 / Flow * 2days as carryover from April	1 days at Chipps Island 31 days at Collinsville	3 days 19 days
Water Quality		
Days @ CCWD PP#1 w/ chlorides <= 150 mg/l	165 days	139 days
Export Areas for SWP, CVP, CCWD, et al	<= 250 mg/l Cl	42 mg/l
14dm EC at Emmaton	<= 0.45 mS/cm	0.44 mS/cm
14dm EC at Jersey Point	<= 0.45 mS/cm	0.34 mS/cm
Maximum 30 day running average of mean daily EC at:		
Vernalis	<=0.7 mS/cm	0.3 mS/cm
Brandt Bridge	<= 0.7 mS/cm	0.3 mS/cm
Old River Near Tracy	<=0.7 mS/cm	0.4 mS/cm
Old River Near Middle River	<=0.7 mS/cm	mS/cm
SUISUN MARSH:		
Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates :	1 Open / 0 Closed / 2 Full Tide Open	
Flashboard Status :	In	
Boat Lock Status :	Open	

California Hydrologic Conditions: (California Cooperative Snow Surveys Forecast, May 1, 2013)

Previous Month's Index (8RI for April.): 2.023 MAF
 Water Year Type: Dry
 Sacramento valley water year type index (40/30/30) @ 50%: 5.8 MAF (Dry)
 San Joaquin valley water year type index (60/20/20) @ 75%: 1.6 MAF (Critical)

Electrical Conductivity (EC) in millisiemens per Centimeter.
 Chlorides (Cl) in milligrams per liter
 mht - mean high tides
 md - mean daily
 14 dm - fourteen day running mean
 28 dm - twenty-eight day running mean
 NR - No Record
 NC - Average not computed due to insufficient data.
 BR : Below Rating
 e - estimated value

Montezuma Slough Gate Operation:
 Number of gates operating at either
 Open, Closed, or Full Tide Open
 Flashboard Status : In, Out, or Modified In
 Boat Lock Status : Open or Closed

Coordinated Operation Agreement Delta Status:
 c = excess Delta conditions
 b = balanced Delta cond. w/ no storage withdrawal
 s = balanced Delta cond. w/ storage withdrawal
 Excess Delta conditions with restrictions:
 f = fish concerns
 r = E/I ratio concerns

* NDOI, Rio Vista & Vernalis Flows:
 - Monthly average is progressive daily mean.
 - 7 day average is progressive daily mean for the first six days of the month.

Delta Water Quality Conditions

Date	Antioch Tides		Net Delta Outflow Index cfs	Martinez mdEC	Port Chicago		Mallard mdEC	Chippis Island		Collinsville	
	High	Half			mdEC	14dm		mdEC	14dm	mdEC	14dm
04/20/2013	4.93	3.50	8,211	18.80	11.88	7.15	4.52	3.99	1.64	1.65	0.55
04/21/2013	5.12	3.57	7,471	21.29	13.71	7.53	6.22	5.68	1.90	2.35	0.68
04/22/2013	5.33	3.66	7,059	22.73	15.38	8.08	6.75	6.22	2.20	3.03	0.85
04/23/2013	5.73	3.88	6,849	24.39	15.82	8.80	7.88	7.37	2.65	4.18	1.12
04/24/2013	6.07	4.19	6,605	25.78	18.18	9.65	9.84	9.43	3.23	5.31	1.47
04/25/2013	6.47	4.25	7,038	26.40	18.77	10.49	10.63	10.27	3.86	6.13	1.88
04/26/2013	6.32	4.08	7,896	25.52	17.32	11.21	9.19	8.74	4.38	5.33	2.22
04/27/2013	6.31	4.02	9,030	24.92	16.30	11.84	8.76	8.29	4.86	4.95	2.54
04/28/2013	6.36	4.08	10,396	24.58	15.35	12.44	8.30	7.81	5.31	4.66	2.84
04/29/2013	6.40	4.24	10,578	24.44	14.82	12.96	8.21	7.72	5.75	4.38	3.11
04/30/2013	6.24	4.15	10,798	23.98	13.59	13.56	7.92	7.42	6.21	4.37	3.40
05/01/2013	5.84	3.99	11,146	22.44	11.37	14.10	6.67	6.13	6.60	3.97	3.66
05/02/2013	5.30	3.75	11,614	21.84	12.15	14.52	6.15	5.61	6.93	2.99	3.85
05/03/2013	5.51	3.82	10,635	21.60	12.21	14.78	6.64	6.10	7.20	3.02	4.02
05/04/2013	6.13	4.17	9,908	22.78	12.84	14.84	7.67	7.16	7.42	3.97	4.19
05/05/2013	6.32	4.48	9,485	25.15	12.95	14.79	9.37	8.93	7.66	5.28	4.40
05/06/2013	6.15	4.19	9,388	24.14	11.38	14.50	8.18	7.69	7.76	4.51	4.50
05/07/2013	6.06	4.10	9,350	23.80	11.10	14.17	8.04	7.54	7.77	4.44	4.52
05/08/2013	6.01	4.07	9,129	24.07	10.98	13.65	8.21	7.71	7.65	4.37	4.46
05/09/2013	6.05	4.08	9,695	23.57	9.40	12.98	7.95	7.45	7.45	4.07	4.31
05/10/2013	6.06	4.08	10,994	22.85	8.69	12.37	7.50	6.98	7.32	3.91	4.21
05/11/2013	6.04	4.03	11,743	21.76	7.75	11.76	6.63	6.09	7.17	3.39	4.10
05/12/2013	5.98	4.06	11,861	20.78	7.95	11.23	6.40	5.87	7.03	3.28	4.00
05/13/2013	5.94	4.12	11,402	21.10	7.48	10.70	6.19	5.65	6.88	3.12	3.91
05/14/2013	5.80	4.16	11,153	21.37	6.97	10.23	6.22	5.68	6.76	2.89	3.80
05/15/2013	5.72	4.15	10,114	21.13	5.60	9.82	6.14	5.60	6.72	2.74	3.71
05/16/2013	5.26	4.02	9,550	21.54	2.97	9.16	5.75	5.21	6.89	2.87	3.70
05/17/2013	5.18	3.95	8,987	21.04	2.33	8.46	5.39	4.85	6.60	1.99	3.63
05/18/2013	5.07	3.63	9,399	18.61	2.09	7.69	4.55	4.02	6.38	1.69	3.47
05/19/2013	5.27	3.48	9,727	18.03	1.99	6.91	4.14	3.62	6.00	1.52	3.20

Antioch Tides measured in feet above mean sea level.
Net Delta Outflow Index calculated from equation as specified in D-1841, revised June 1995.
Chippis Island EC calculated from measurements recorded at Mallard Slough.
Electrical Conductivity (EC) units: milliSiemens per Centimeter
md : mean daily
14dm : fourteen day running mean
NR : No Record
NC : Average not computed due to insufficient data
BR : Below Rating
e - estimated value

Delta Water Quality Conditions

Date	Antioch		Jersey Point		Emmaton		Cache Slough	Good Year Slough	Sunrise Club	Volanti Slough	Beldon Landing	Collinsville
	mdEC	14mdEC	mdEC	14mdEC	mdEC	14mdEC	mdEC	mhtEC	mhtEC	mhtEC	mhtEC	mhtEC
04/20/2013	0.39	0.42	0.23	0.25	0.20	0.20	0.39	5.83	5.06	5.62	5.55	2.04
04/21/2013	0.61	0.42	0.24	0.25	0.22	0.20	0.40	5.92	5.40	6.19	5.60	3.56
04/22/2013	0.87	0.44	0.24	0.25	0.25	0.20	0.42	6.13	5.97	6.77	5.93	4.39
04/23/2013	1.16	0.49	0.25	0.25	0.29	0.21	0.42	6.94	7.31	8.39	7.40	5.37
04/24/2013	1.93	0.60	0.30	0.25	0.71	0.25	0.42	8.71	8.59	10.03	9.00	6.92
04/25/2013	2.36	0.74	0.36	0.26	1.28	0.32	0.43	9.73	8.79	10.32	9.24	7.42
04/26/2013	1.91	0.85	0.33	0.26	1.06	0.39	0.43	10.74	9.36	10.77	9.23	6.54
04/27/2013	1.87	0.95	0.34	0.27	1.00	0.44	0.42	11.60	9.71	11.16	9.59	5.86
04/28/2013	1.93	1.06	0.35	0.27	0.89	0.49	0.43	11.74	9.83	10.73	10.02	5.61
04/29/2013	2.04	1.17	0.36	0.28	0.75	0.53	0.45	11.84	10.00	11.33	10.34	5.73
04/30/2013	1.90	1.28	0.37	0.29	0.64	0.56	0.46	11.91	9.92	11.63	10.50	5.40
05/01/2013	1.33	1.35	0.35	0.30	0.35	0.57	0.51	11.90	9.76	11.44	10.86	4.69
05/02/2013	1.28	1.42	0.32	0.31	0.35	0.58	0.46	11.85	9.95	11.16	10.66	3.85
05/03/2013	1.29	1.49	0.33	0.31	0.38	0.60	0.46	11.87	9.85	11.30	9.99	4.36
05/04/2013	1.55	1.57	0.36	0.32	0.44	0.61	0.48	11.74	10.13	10.74	9.79	5.88
05/05/2013	2.21	1.69	0.44	0.34	0.76	0.65	0.42	11.59	9.85	10.94	9.73	6.92
05/06/2013	1.87	1.76	0.39	0.35	0.67	0.68	0.42	11.57	9.68	10.58	8.64	5.54
05/07/2013	1.71	1.80	0.37	0.36	0.62	0.71	0.43	11.61	9.25	9.83	7.57	5.72
05/08/2013	1.66	1.78	0.36	0.36	0.63	0.70	0.45	11.64	8.67	9.42	7.11	5.77
05/09/2013	1.63	1.73	0.36	0.36	0.61	0.65	0.48	11.79	8.13	9.21	6.63	5.27
05/10/2013	1.48	1.70	0.35	0.36	0.57	0.62	0.50	11.99	7.76	8.60	6.49	5.24
05/11/2013	1.32	1.66	0.34	0.36	0.46	0.58	0.48	12.11	7.49	8.22	6.05	4.24
05/12/2013	1.32	1.61	0.34	0.36	0.41	0.54	0.45	11.82	7.10	7.63	5.50	4.49
05/13/2013	1.18	1.55	0.34	0.36	0.37	0.52	0.45	11.36	6.59	7.07	4.94	3.93
05/14/2013	1.12	1.50	0.34	0.36	0.34	0.50	0.43	11.33	6.13	6.45	4.24	4.30
05/15/2013	1.11	1.48	0.33	0.35	0.37	0.50	0.42	11.16	5.72	5.97	3.88	3.56
05/16/2013	1.03	1.46	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.50	0.40	10.60	5.18	5.67	3.68	
05/17/2013	0.91	1.44	0.31	0.35	0.29	0.49	NR	10.25	5.10	5.62	3.53	3.14
05/18/2013	0.74	1.38	0.30	0.35	0.25	0.48	NR	10.12	5.04	5.56	3.31	2.43
05/19/2013	0.70	1.27	0.29	0.34	0.23	0.44	NR	9.95	4.98	5.51	2.97	2.33

Electrical Conductivity (EC) units: milliSiemens per Centimeter
 Chloride (Cl) units: milligrams per liter
 mht : mean high tides
 md : mean daily
 NR : No Record
 NC : Average not computed due to insufficient data
 BR : Below Rating
 e : estimated value

Delta Water Quality Conditions

Date	Bethel Island mdEC	Farrar Park mdEC	Holland Tract mdEC	Bacon Island mdEC	Contra Costa mdEC	Clifton Court mdEC	Tracy Pumping Plant mdEC	Antioch mdCl	Bacon Island mdCl	Contra Costa mdCl	Delta Status
04/20/2013	0.25	0.29	0.26	0.27	0.34	0.57	0.75	54	33	37	f
04/21/2013	0.25	0.29	0.25	0.27	0.32	0.51	0.68	124	32	38	f
04/22/2013	0.24	0.29	0.25	0.27	0.33	0.46	0.60	206	32	37	f
04/23/2013	0.24	0.29	0.25	0.27	0.33	0.43	0.50	298	31	37	f
04/24/2013	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.27	0.32	0.40	0.49	545	31	37	f
04/25/2013	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.26	0.32	0.38	0.42	683	31	36	s
04/26/2013	0.26	0.29	0.26	0.27	0.31	0.35	0.43	537	32	36	s
04/27/2013	0.25	0.29	0.26	0.28	0.32	0.32	0.40	524	34	36	s
04/28/2013	0.26	0.29	0.26	0.28	0.32	0.32	0.35	544	35	36	s
04/29/2013	0.26	0.30	0.26	0.28	0.29	0.31	0.32	581	35	36	s
04/30/2013	0.26	0.30	0.26	0.28	0.31	0.34	0.33	535	34	36	s
05/01/2013	0.27	0.29	0.26	0.27	0.30	0.32	0.33	352	32	36	s
05/02/2013	0.28	0.29	0.21	0.27	0.31	0.33	0.32	337	32	34	s
05/03/2013	0.28	0.29	0.23	0.27	0.31	0.33	0.31	341	32	35	s
05/04/2013	0.28	0.30	0.27	0.27	0.30	0.32	0.31	424	32	35 e	s
05/05/2013	0.29	0.31	0.28	0.28	0.29	0.30	0.28	635	34	35 e	s
05/06/2013	0.29	0.31	0.28	0.28	0.29	0.25	0.28	525	35	33	s
05/07/2013	0.29	0.32	0.28	0.29	0.29	0.24	NR	475	37	33	s
05/08/2013	0.30	0.33	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.24	NR	458	38	33	s
05/09/2013	0.30	0.33	0.29	0.30	0.30	0.25	NR	448	40	34	s
05/10/2013	0.31	0.34	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.26	NR	400	41	35	s
05/11/2013	0.31	0.33	0.30	0.31	0.29	0.28	NR	351	42	35 e	s
05/12/2013	0.31	0.34	0.30	0.31	0.31	0.29	NR	351	43	35 e	s
05/13/2013	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.31	NR	307	44	37	s
05/14/2013	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.30	NR	288	45	39	s
05/15/2013	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.32	NR	283	45	36	s
05/16/2013	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.32	NR	0.34	NR	257	45	40	s
05/17/2013	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.32	NR	0.35	NR	220	46	42	s
05/18/2013	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.33	NR	0.36	NR	166	47	42 e	s
05/19/2013	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.33	NR	0.39	NR	151	47	42 e	s

Electrical Conductivity (EC) units: milliSiemens per Centimeter
 Chloride (Cl) units: milligrams per liter
 md : mean daily
 NR : No Record
 NC : Average not computed due to insufficient data
 BR : Below Rating
 e : estimated value
 Antioch and Bacon Island mdCl are calculated from the respective mdEC values.

Coordinated Operation Agreement Delta Status:
 c = excess Delta conditions
 b = balanced Delta cond. w/ no storage withdrawal
 s = balanced Delta cond. w/ storage withdrawal
 Excess Delta conditions with restrictions:
 f = fish concerns
 r = E/I ratio concerns

Delta Water Quality Conditions South Delta Stations

Date	Vernalis		Brandt Bridge		Old River Near Tracy		Old River Near Middle River	
	md EC	30 day avg	md EC	30 day avg	md EC	30 day avg	md EC	30 day avg
04/20/2013	0.39	0.79	0.52	0.88	0.90	1.10	0.40	0.87
04/21/2013	0.30	0.77	0.41	0.86	0.76	1.09	0.43	0.85
04/22/2013	0.30	0.75	0.42	0.84	0.64	1.08	0.33	0.84
04/23/2013	0.27	0.72	0.32	0.82	0.62	1.07	0.31	0.81
04/24/2013	0.25	0.70	0.30	0.80	0.47	1.05	0.26	0.79
04/25/2013	0.24	0.68	0.24	0.78	0.41	1.02	0.22	0.77
04/26/2013	0.24	0.65	0.22	0.76	0.34	1.00	0.21	0.74
04/27/2013	0.23	0.62	0.21	0.73	0.38	0.97	0.21	0.72
04/28/2013	0.23	0.60	0.21	0.71	0.38	0.94	0.21	0.69
04/29/2013	0.22	0.58	0.21	0.68	0.37	0.91	0.20	0.66
04/30/2013	0.22	0.56	0.20	0.66	0.35	0.88	0.20	0.64
05/01/2013	0.21	0.54	0.20	0.64	0.32	0.85	0.20	0.61
05/02/2013	0.21	0.52	0.20	0.61	0.36	0.82	0.19	0.59
05/03/2013	0.20	0.50	0.20	0.59	0.36	0.80	0.20	0.57
05/04/2013	0.19	0.47	0.19	0.57	0.31	0.77	0.18	0.55
05/05/2013	0.18	0.45	0.18	0.55	0.27	0.74	0.17	0.52
05/06/2013	0.19	0.43	0.17	0.52	0.25	0.72	0.17	0.50
05/07/2013	0.20	0.41	0.18	0.50	0.28	0.69	0.18	0.48
05/08/2013	0.20	0.39	0.20	0.48	0.31	0.67	0.20	0.45
05/09/2013	0.22	0.37	0.20	0.45	0.30	0.64	0.21	0.43
05/10/2013	0.22	0.35	0.22	0.43	0.29	0.62	NR	NC
05/11/2013	0.21	0.33	0.23	0.41	0.29	0.59	NR	NC
05/12/2013	0.21	0.31	0.22	0.38	0.29	0.56	NR	NC
05/13/2013	0.22	0.29	0.22	0.36	0.30	0.53	0.23	NC
05/14/2013	0.26	0.28	0.24	0.34	0.30	0.50	0.25	NC
05/15/2013	0.33	0.27	0.27	0.32	0.31	0.48	0.29	NC
05/16/2013	0.38	0.26	0.32	0.30	0.36	0.45	0.37	NC
05/17/2013	0.40	0.26	0.37	0.28	0.43	0.43	0.44	NC
05/18/2013	0.44	0.26	0.44	0.27	0.47	0.42	0.47	NC
05/19/2013	0.48	0.26	0.47	0.27	0.54	0.40	0.51	NC

Electrical Conductivity (EC) units: milliSiemens per Centimeter
md : mean daily
NR : No Record
NC : Average not computed due to insufficient data
BR : Below Rating
e : estimated value

Delta Hydrology Conditions

Date	Sacramento River at Freeport + SRWTP cfs	Yolo Bypass cfs	East Side Streams cfs	San Joaquin River at Vernalis cfs	Rainfall inches	Clifton Court Forebay intake cfs	Tracy Pumping Plant cfs	CCWD Pumping Plants cfs	Barker Slough Pumping Plant cfs	SBID Diversion cfs
4/20/2013	8,441	395	591	2,334	0.00	1,193	807	25	56	0
4/21/2013	7,858	398	548	2,545	0.00	1,494	810	25	62	0
4/22/2013	7,645 e	410	519	2,678	0.00	1,694	810	25	62	200
4/23/2013	7,194	439	529	2,935	0.00	1,690	813	25	48	73
4/24/2013	6,360	496	559	3,414	0.00	1,695	821	26	72	72
4/25/2013	7,006	530	570	3,582	0.00	996	817	25	70	67
4/26/2013	8,078	529	542	3,675	0.00	991	815	25	65	53
4/27/2013	9,423	585	502	3,765	0.00	995	814	24	78	66
4/28/2013	10,870	584	509	3,893	0.00	963	815	24	77	0
4/29/2013	11,478	602	512	4,130	0.00	2,421	815	26	83	66
4/30/2013	12,147	616	500	4,064	0.00	2,998	817	27	83	0
5/1/2013	12,415	623	479	3,954	0.00	3,193	814	152	88	66
5/2/2013	11,495	629	463	3,952	0.00	494	3,155	178	94	63
5/3/2013	10,056	623	466	4,043	0.00	494	3,082	226	117	67
5/4/2013	9,028	660	478	4,176	0.00	1,492	1,353	240	96	0
5/5/2013	8,414	665	456	4,105	0.00	1,490	937	245	84	0
5/6/2013	8,445	648	445	3,970	0.00	993	982	245	91	159
5/7/2013	8,390	616	456	3,838	0.00	793	980	243	84	91
5/8/2013	9,212	557	479	3,689	0.00	792	979	243	84	77
5/9/2013	10,884	510	484	3,581	0.00	793	978	257	84	70
5/10/2013	11,824	486	468	3,549	0.00	999	978	261	98	72
5/11/2013	12,068	450	478	3,509	0.00	993	983	258	101	0
5/12/2013	11,480	448	479	3,439	0.00	993	982	260	109	0
5/13/2013	11,425	500	451	3,376	0.00	993	980	266	110	206
5/14/2013	10,886	553	416	2,828	0.00	993	980	252	99	76
5/15/2013	10,928	603	400	2,090	0.00	992	979	236	97	86
5/16/2013	10,499	579	410	1,678	0.00	993	863	207	92	84
5/17/2013	11,073	605	445	1,521	0.00	688	811	190	103	65
5/18/2013	11,534	643	439	1,423	0.00	689	808	185	112	0
5/19/2013	11,854	618	418	1,309	0.00	699	808	202	103	0

SRWTP : Sacramento Regional Water Treatment Plant effluent.

Yolo Bypass : combined measurements of Cache Creek at Rumsey and Fremont Weir.

East Side Streams : combined stream flows of Cosumnes River at Michigan Bar, Mokelumne River at Woodbridge, miscellaneous streams estimated from Dry Creek at Galt (discontinued since Dec. 1997), and Calaveras River based on releases from New Hogan Dam.

Rainfall : incremental daily precipitation measured at Stockton Fire Station #4.

CCWD Pumping Plants : combined pumping at the Old River, Rock Slough and Middle River Plants.

Delta Hydrology Conditions

Date	Banks Pumping Plant cfs	Delta Gross Channel Depletions cfs	Rio Vista Flow cfs	QWEST cfs	Net Delta Outflow Index cfs	Percent of Inflow Diverted		Delta Status
						3 day	14 day	
4/20/2013	1,161	1,900	7,029	1,372	8,211	13.3%	10.4%	f
4/21/2013	1,504	1,900	6,352	1,313	7,471	16.4%	12.6%	f
4/22/2013	1,504	1,900	5,850	1,404	7,059	18.7%	14.2%	f
4/23/2013	1,779	1,900	5,677	1,353	6,849	20.5%	15.7%	f
4/24/2013	1,504	1,950	5,301	1,512	6,605	21.3%	16.7%	f
4/25/2013	810	1,950	4,635	2,609	7,038	20.0%	16.0%	s
4/26/2013	895	1,950	5,229	2,868	7,896	17.7%	14.8%	s
4/27/2013	887	1,950	6,158	3,087	9,030	14.8%	13.4%	s
4/28/2013	985	2,000	7,366	3,247	10,396	13.6%	13.7%	s
4/29/2013	1,684	2,000	8,619	2,181	10,578	15.6%	17.3%	s
4/30/2013	2,348	2,000	9,164	1,856	10,798	18.7%	22.5%	s
5/1/2013	3,279	2,000	9,758	1,616	11,146	21.9%	27.7%	s
5/2/2013	1,123	2,000	9,998	1,850	11,614	22.0%	28.2%	s
5/3/2013	1,034	2,050	9,192	1,704	10,635	21.5%	26.9%	s
5/4/2013	1,654	2,100	7,925	2,226	9,908	20.2%	23.9%	s
5/5/2013	2,095	2,100	7,070	2,646	9,485	19.1%	20.8%	s
5/6/2013	596	2,100	6,543	3,083	9,388	16.4%	16.6%	s
5/7/2013	0	2,150	6,539	3,045	9,350	14.3%	13.7%	s
5/8/2013	0	2,150	6,459	2,905	9,129	12.8%	11.9%	s
5/9/2013	138	2,200	7,099	2,835	9,695	12.5%	11.5%	s
5/10/2013	1,101	2,200	8,501	2,745	10,994	12.4%	11.8%	s
5/11/2013	1,101	2,250	9,278	2,723	11,743	12.2%	12.2%	s
5/12/2013	1,101	2,300	9,440	2,691	11,861	12.1%	12.6%	s
5/13/2013	1,101	2,300	8,928	2,746	11,402	11.7%	12.3%	s
5/14/2013	1,015	2,350	8,918	2,498	11,153	11.7%	12.2%	s
5/15/2013	1,101	2,350	8,504	1,872	10,114	12.0%	12.2%	s
5/16/2013	930	2,400	8,577	1,233	9,550	12.5%	12.4%	s
5/17/2013	732	2,450	8,167	1,095	8,987	12.2%	11.6%	s
5/18/2013	732	2,450	8,690	992	9,399	11.5%	10.8%	s
5/19/2013	732	2,500	9,114	892	9,727	10.9%	10.2%	s

Delta Gross Channel Depletions from Dayflow Table 3.

Rio Vista Flow calculated from Dayflow equation.

QWEST calculated from Dayflow equation.

Net Delta Outflow Index calculated from equation as specified in D-1641, revised June 1995.

Coordinated Operation Agreement Delta Status:

c = excess Delta conditions

b = balanced Delta cond. w/ no storage withdrawal

s = balanced Delta cond. w/ storage withdrawal

Excess Delta conditions with restrictions:

f = fish concerns

r = E/I ratio concerns

- Pg 2-31, 2.3.2.5, – East Bay MUD and Contra Costa WD should have been lead agencies as this EIS/R document will inform them for their decision on if to approve this document and to participate in the water transfer program.

96

- Pg 2-31, 2.3.2.5, – “Transfers to East Bay MUD and Contra Costa WD are limited by available pumping capacity at the Freeport intake and Contra Costa WD’s Delta intakes...” Water diverted at Freeport does not traverse the delta and does not contribute to south delta water quality or net delta outflows.

97

- Pg 2-34, 2.3.2.7, – “Buyers and sellers may negotiate transfers that last one year or multiple years.” The project could result in some land being idled for 10 years straight. This could lead to land use designation changes fostering development or protected habitat. The possible long term impacts should be further analyzed.

98

- Pg 2-39, 2.5, – “While the alternatives would affect different resources in different ways, none of the alternatives are considered to be the environmentally superior alternative. There are no unavoidable significant impacts associated with the Proposed Action that would otherwise be avoided or substantially reduced by an alternative, and each of the alternatives has its own unique set of environmental impacts which, on balance, would be a “trade-off” of environmental impacts in selecting any one alternative over another.” A number of significant impacts have been ignored and missed by the EIS/R analysis. the Proposed Action (Alternative 2) is not the environmentally superior alternative. 2.5, provides “Alternative 4 would reduce effects to groundwater levels, quality, and land subsidence.” Any land subsidence from groundwater substitution is a significant impact. Alternative 2 includes groundwater substitution and land subsidence impacts, so alternative 4 is clearly environmentally superior.

99

- Pg 2-39, 2.5 – The project should have separated crop idling from crop switching in an alternative as they have very different impacts and operational requirements. Crop switch was proposed and screened as a separate conservation measure from crop idling. If crop switching were made a standalone alternative along with other conservation measures such as irrigation canal lining and leak repair, irrigation system water distribution uniformity and water efficiency improvements and irrigation scheduling water use efficiency improvements, there would have been an alternative which yielded real water for transfer, was flexible and immediate to implement. This combination of measures in an alternative would have yielded substantial water supplies with fewer environmental impacts of the other alternatives.

100

- Pg 2-40, Table 2-9, 3.2 – “Cropland idling transfers could result in increased deposition of sediment on water bodies.” Some soils carry contaminants with them. This sediment deposition degrades water quality and beneficial uses. Any degradation of beneficial uses is

101

significant for compliance with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan.

101

- Pg 2-40, Table 2-9, 3.2 – “Cropland idling/shifting transfers could change the water quality constituents associated with leaching and runoff.” The EIS/R consistently lumps the description of effects of these two very different actions together. These are separate, mutually exclusive actions to implement on a piece of ground and they have very different impacts in type and magnitude. The EIS/R must separate the analysis of these two actions and disclose and mitigate their impacts separately. As an example, crop shifting would have very little erosional deposition in tributaries while crop idling may precipitate large and significant soil deposition and contamination to waterways.

102

- Pg 2-40, Table 2-9, 3.2 – “Cropland idling/shifting transfers could change the quantity of organic carbon in waterways.” Again, the impacts of these two separate and different project actions have been lumped together to obscure the impacts of each – they are not the same.

103

- Pg 2-40, Table 2-9, 3.3 – “Groundwater substitution transfers could cause a reduction in groundwater levels in the Seller Service Area.” and “Groundwater substitution transfers could cause subsidence in the Seller Service Area.” Both were determined by the EIS/R to be a significant impact. The mitigation proposed by the EIS/R is to monitor the groundwater levels and subsidence. Monitoring something does not mitigate the impact of a project, only positive action like having a specific decision threshold for ceasing groundwater pumping activities would be a mitigation. There also needs to be a mitigation plan if groundwater levels do not recover or subsidence occurs even after cessation of groundwater pumping.

104

- Pg 2-45, Table 2-9, 3.9 – “Cropland idling water transfers could permanently or substantially decrease the amount of lands categorized as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland under the FMMP.” The EIS/R identifies the alternative 4 impact as significant and alternative 2 as LTS. Although alternative 2 includes groundwater substitution, there is no description in the alternatives which prohibits just as much crop idling in alternative 2 as in alternative 4 so both impacts are significant. If alternative 4 results in 177,000 acres of land being fallowed and alternative 2, because it includes groundwater substitution idles only 100,000 acres, the impact of alternative 2 is still significant even though it is less than alternative 4.

105

- Pg 2-45, Table 2-9, 3.9 – “Cropland idling water transfers could convert agricultural lands under the Williamson Act and other land resource programs to an incompatible use.” There is no support for the LTS impact call when 177,000 acres of crops could be idled and nothing in the project precludes the same land being idled for all 10 years of the program? 10 years of crop idling and using the property for non-agricultural purposes is in direct conflict with the requirements of the Williamson Act. As the Proposed Project and alternatives are defined, the maximum impact to Williamson Act lands is 177,000 acres of crop idling on the same land for 10 years. This is a significant impact that must be mitigated and disclosed.

106

- Pg B-8, B.4.3.1.2 - “Transfer Operations and Priorities TOM uses an assumed priority for transfer mechanisms used to make water available under Project alternatives.” This assumption is a fundamental flaw in the analysis of the impacts of the project. The alternatives clearly say that the sellers can transfer up to a limit amount. The project does not define in what priority or sequence those different sources for water for transfer would be implemented under the project. Operational problems with reservoirs or differences in snowpack in different basins could alter the sequence of implementation of the water transfer sources. As an example, if alfalfa prices were to go to levels that were unprofitable, many growers would first offer to switch to another crop and sell that water to the program. Although there is some rationale provided for the assumption used, the project may very well not operate that way at all in reality. The project must not be approved for operations that deviate from the assumptions used in the project analysis of impacts, otherwise the project has been permitted for impacts that were never analyzed mitigated or disclosed.

107

- Pg B-8, B.4.3.1.2, p1 - “TOM simulates the four transfer mechanisms in the following order:

108

- Groundwater substitution – for alternatives that include this mechanism
- Reservoir release
- Conserved water
- Crop idling – for alternatives that include this mechanism”

108

The TOM assumptions do not include crop shifting so the model assumptions were incomplete and incorrect to reflect the actions that were included in the alternatives.

- Pg B-9, Figure B-4 – The project is only using a 33 year period of record for hydrologic conditions. This truncated hydrologic period skews the impact analysis and fails to use the best available science of the readily available and industry standard utilized 83+ year period of record. The EIS/R must be revised using the best available science as NEPA and CEQA requires.

109

- Pg B-9, B.4.3.1.2, – “Groundwater substitution transfers from the Sacramento Valley have the potential to create changes in stream-aquifer interaction that affect other parts of the water delivery system.” Each tributary reach has unique surface and groundwater interactions. The EIS/R fails to disclose what the modeling assumptions were for the geographic distribution of the estimated groundwater transfers. If the groundwater is drawn from primarily adjacent to a single or limited set of tributaries then the groundwater surface water interactions and impacts would be more severe and focused. It appears the analysis assumed an even distribution of the estimated (with unsound rationale) amount of groundwater substitution across the whole north of Delta seller area. This error in modeling assumption causes the analysis to conclude much lower impacts that would occur within the range of operations the proposed project and alternatives.

110

- Pg B-11, B.4.3.1.2 – “Changes in Delta inflow affect the CVP and SWP differently based on system conditions at the time and COA accounting.” This is why we said in an earlier comment that the COA being out of date was a problem for this project that had to be addressed by updating the COA.

111

- Pg B-15, B.4.3.1.5, – “Annual volumes were assumed to be made available on a monthly pattern based on the ETAW of rice, the assumed crop to be idled.” This is a flawed assumption which leads to underestimating the impacts of the proposed project and alternatives. Rice has the highest ETAW at 3.3AF per acre of any of the crops proposed for idling. This assumption is in conflict with the reality of the program which would have a mix of idled crops with different and lower ETAW water consumption rates. This flawed analysis assumption will either lead to the project estimating that less number of acres will be fallowed to accomplish a given target amount of water for transfer or less water being made available for transfer with a given number of acres idled. Either way, the analysis assumption under-estimates the impacts of the project and the analysis must be revised and recirculated once this material analytical error is corrected.

112

- Pg B-16, B.4.3.1.5, p4 – “Crop idling transfers offer the least flexibility of all transfer mechanisms. The decision to enter into crop idling transfers is typically made in spring months when there is still considerable uncertainty in the water supply forecast and the ability to convey water through the Delta.” This is not true. In most years when water transfers are most desired are in years after the first year of a Dry or Critically Dry water year. In those cases when reservoir storage is down, although the exact amount of water allocation may not be announced until the spring, all of the buyers already know that they want to buy water. Each of the water transfer water sources suffer the same limitations on knowing the delta conditions ahead of time and their ability to convey water through the delta. This misperception on the part of the project in terms of the relative desirability of the water sources in the sequence in which water sources would be implemented in the project is

113

flawed. In order to be conservative in identifying the types and magnitude of impacts from the proposed project, the EIS/R should have analyzed the range of actions that it desired to be permitted, not an undefined, unjustified and flawed rationale for generally how the program may or may not be implemented. In order to correct these flawed assumptions and allow a full range of operations as proposed by the project, the analysis needs to do a sensitivity analysis of doing the maximum amount of each water transfer type and in combination with other types. Only then will the potential impacts of the project be disclosed and properly mitigated.

113

- Pg B-16, B.4.3.1.5, – “Crop idling transfers make water available on the fixed schedule illustrated in Figure B-10. Therefore, transfer water made available in May and June, a total of 37 percent of the annual volume, can be lost or not diverted...” Some rice is not planted until the first of June, so the potential transfer loss in those cases is only 22% rather than the 37% as claimed in the EIS/R.

114

- Pg B-17, B.4.3.1.6, – “Analysis of the baseline CalSim II simulation of CVP and SWP operations was performed to identify potential opportunities to store both groundwater substitution and crop idling transfer water made available from April through June in upstream CVP and SWP reservoirs.” Again, the analysis did not include the assumption of water transfer volumes from crop switching.

115

- Pg B-17, B.4.3.1.7, – “TOM simulates shifts in timing of Project water movement at SWP facilities by adjusting baseline Oroville releases and Banks pumping from July through September of some years. Logic in TOM adjusts Oroville releases and Banks pumping to create a more regular monthly pattern of available export capacity.” The EIS/R stated that only Reclamation facilities and water transfers would be covered under this document and that any SWP operations in conjunction with this project would be subject to prior DWR approval and a separate environmental document. This analytical assumption seems to belie that EIS/R statement as the modeling assumptions clearly are counting on SWP operations to facilitate the water transfers covered under this environmental document. The EIS/R modeling assumptions must remove the assumption that SWP operations will be altered to facilitate these CVP water transfer operations.

116

- Pg B-17, B.4.3.1.8.1, – “East Bay MUD diverts both CVP Project water and transfer water at the Freeport Regional Water Project on the Sacramento River near Freeport.” The water transferred by East Bay MUD through the CVP facilities is covered by the OCAP BOs water transfer provisions. The Freeport Regional Water Project facility is not part of the SWP or CVP that is covered under the OCAP BOs and therefore the ESA species impacts of transferring water through these facilities is not covered by an incidental take permit and must seek ESA consultation prior to implementation.

117

- Pg B-18, B.4.3.1.8.2, p1 – “Contra Costa WD diverts water under existing water rights, a CVP water service contract, and transfer water from multiple points of diversion in the Delta.” The CCWD facilities are not part of the SWP or CVP that is covered under the OCAP BOs and therefore the ESA species impacts of transferring water through these facilities is not covered by an incidental take permit and must seek ESA consultation prior to implementation.

118

- Pg B-18, B.4.3.1.8.2 (this was a document numbering error, it should have been B.4.3.1.8.3), p1 – “Transfer water purchased by SLDMWA is conveyed through available export capacity at Jones and Banks pumping plants. Transfers from the Sacramento River assume a 20 percent carriage water adjustment to maintain Delta salinity. Transfers from Merced ID that enter the Delta from the San Joaquin River assume a ten percent carriage water adjustment.” The EIS/R must disclose the basis and justification for these carriage water assumptions.

119

- Under some conditions, the carriage water requirements to maintain delta water quality would have to be much higher, e.g. 30 or 40%. 119
- Pg B-18, B.4.3.1.8.2 (this was a document numbering error, it should have been B.4.3.1.8.3), p2 – “Additionally, water made available by Merced ID can be conveyed directly to SLDMWA member agencies through facilities that connect to Merced ID’s internal conveyance system and facilities that join the lower San Joaquin River and the DMC without going through CVP/SWP export facilities.” These facilities and operations are not covered under the OCAP BO operations or water transfer assumptions so these operations must seek separate ESA consultation with the fisheries agencies prior to implementation. 120
- Pg B-18, B.4.4 – The EIS/R must disclose its assumptions as to what projects they included as reasonably foreseeable. If they are elsewhere in the document, the mention of these assumptions should have included a reference as to what section that content could be found. In general this EIS/R is very poor at making the document reader friendly. 121
- Pg B-20, B.6.1, – “...they would need to complete individual NEPA and Endangered Species Act compliance for each transfer...” Buyers and sellers will need to complete ESA consultations anyway as the OCAP BOs only cover SWP and CVP water transfer activity and specifically exclude coverage of buyer and seller area impacts. 122
- Pg B-20, B.6.2, – “Alternative 2 includes transfers under all potential transfer measures: groundwater substitution, reservoir release, conserved water, and crop idling.” Again, the assumptions leave out crop switching which has very different modeling implications to water use, savings and conveyance than crop idling. The current EIS/R modeling assumptions do not reflect all of the actions included in alternative 2 and the analysis must either be redone with the corrected assumptions or the description of and actions included in alternative 2 must drop crop switching as a component. 123
- Pg B-23, Figure B-14 and Pg B-28, B-24 - The EIS/R stated that only Reclamation facilities and water transfers would be covered under this document and that any SWP operations in conjunction with this project would be subject to prior DWR approval and a separate environmental document. This analytical assumption seems to belie that EIS/R statement as the modeling assumptions clearly are counting on SWP operations to facilitate the water transfers covered under this environmental document. The EIS/R modeling assumptions must remove the assumption that SWP operations will be altered to facilitate these CVP water transfer operations. 124
- Pg B-29, Figure B-27 – This figure demonstrates the point regarding project impacts on proportional flows at tributary confluences on salmonid homing and straying. The information to conduct the analysis of project impacts on straying is clearly available and yet the EIS/R did not conduct that analysis, disclose the impacts or mitigate the impacts. 125
- Pg B-66, Appendix B, attachment 1 – The 2005 level of development should not have been used in that the rest of the modeling updates were current up to January 2014. This out of date level of development assumption biased the analysis results as the 2014 level of demand is higher than it was in 2005.
- Pg B-66, Appendix B, attachment 1 – The Baseline Assumptions did not include implementation of the existing OCAP BO RPA requirements for restoration of subtidal and intertidal habitat and floodplain habitat. The subtidal and intertidal habitats have tidal exchange impacts to delta water quality and CVP/SWP operations that must be included in the modeling assumptions. These are reasonably foreseeable as they are current legal obligations of the CVP and SWP that are required to be implemented prior to 2015. Since the implementation deadline is so close, the location, design and operational characteristics must be thoroughly defined by now or DWR and Reclamation will not be compliant with the 126

BO requirements. The floodplain habitat restoration results in altered water quality and water consumption from evapotranspiration and changes in the tidal prism that must be accounted for in the modeling and impact analysis. The modeling assumptions must be revised and the analysis rerun to reflect these current legal obligations of the CVP and SWP under the OCAP BOs.

127

- Table C-17, p1 – “Although D-1641 specifies 14-day durations for mean daily chloride concentration, since most DSM2 boundary conditions are specified as monthly values, it is not sensible to account for this constraint herein.” DSM2 reports data on 15 minute time increments, so the data from DSM2 is readily available to do the analysis to determine the frequency, duration and magnitude of exceedances of this water quality parameter as defined and required by D-1641. The EIS/R must use the best available science and this readily available DSM2 data to complete this study. The failure to use the best available is unsupported.. The quantity of data available from DSM2 is why this data is always presented as exceedance graphs to show the frequency, duration and magnitude of water quality exceedances. Monthly averages of this data mean nothing and are obviously designed by the project to obscure the impacts of the project. The EIS/R must be revised to include exceedance plots of the full time series of data that is available from DSM2. This comment applies to all water quality evaluations done from DSM2 data.
- C.9 – p2 – “1. the daily minimum stage was calculated for all the Base and three Alternative from the 15-minute model output ; 2. daily change from Base stage was calculated (Daily Alternative Min Stage – Daily Base Min Stage) 3. monthly average stage was calculated from the results at step 2.” So the analysis took two daily time step data sources and decided to water it down to a nice monthly average that is designed to hide all but extraordinary catastrophic impacts. Dewatering an ag intake does not have impacts on a monthly basis, it is an impact that occurs on a day by day basis. With the current analysis, the intakes could be dewatered by 6” for 20 of the 30 days of a month and then covered by 1’ of water for the last 10 days and still show no impact. This analysis and any other used in the EIS/R that used daily source data and analyzed it at a monthly average for the impact assessment must be revised to reflect a best available science use of the full potential of the data sets for a daily impact analysis.
- C-48, p4 – The Proposed Project “...alternative sees the largest increases in EC when exports are the greatest, with Critical water years in July seeing the largest percent difference of 4.2% at the SWP location and 3.3 % at the CVP location.” This is a very significant impact as the SWP and CVP are constantly in violation of these water quality parameters in Critical water years already. For the proposed project to make that violation worse by over 4% is a very significant impact that must be mitigated.
- D.3.6, p1 – “The distribution of aquifer properties across the Sacramento Valley is poorly understood. In certain areas with significant levels of groundwater production, the collection of aquifer test data and the measurement of historical groundwater-level trends in response to known groundwater production rates have provided valuable information on aquifer properties. However, in the majority of the valley, these data are not available.” Yes, this may be true, but it also invalidates the use of modeling for predicting groundwater and surface water interactions. This model is not generally accepted for these types of analyses and its use for this kind of document and analysis in this geographic area is unprecedented. Peer review and supporting acceptable calibration is not apparent.
- Appendix D – The documentation fails to disclose the assumptions used in the model of how the groundwater substitution was geographically distributed or that the model used actual well locations that would be used under the Proposed Project and alternatives. Based on the

128

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very generalized description of the data, we conclude that the model used an assumption of an average groundwater source usage distributed evenly across the seller areas. This assumption of course would have no relationship to reality or the impacts that would occur with implementing the project within the boundaries of how it was described. The generalized assumption of distributed groundwater well locations and demand would vastly underestimate the localized groundwater and surface water interaction impacts from the project that would be implemented such that those impacts were not uniformly distributed. The groundwater analysis in the EIS/R must be redone using an accepted model, with specific well locations and water demands.

132

- Figure D-4 – There are almost no well data points to characterize the hydraulic conductivity of the aquifer in the Feather River basin in which many seller areas were identified. These areas have almost no data to support the model analysis which render the results unreliable.

133

Baseline Definitions

- The EIS/R No Action/Project assumptions were not consistent with the BDCP EIR/S and Reclamation Remand EIS. Since Reclamation is a lead agency for all of these projects and they are all on the CVP operations and they all occur over the same time period, it is an inexcusable inconsistency and bias in the outcomes of the analysis to have different baseline assumptions. Since the other documents have undergone public review already, this project's No Action/No Project assumptions must be revised to be consistent with these other documents, reanalyzed and revised, and then recirculated for public comment.

134

Impact Analysis Geographic Scope

- The geographic area included in the EIS/R impact assessment fails to include areas and tributaries downstream of drainage from water transfer recipient service areas. Transferred water will be applied to buyer areas and some of that water will result in runoff that will be carried downstream of those service areas. Those water transfer runoffs will alter flows and water quality in those downstream tributaries. Some of those downstream tributaries that should have been included in the EIS/R analysis, but were not, include (but are not limited to): San Joaquin River, Coyote Creek, Liags Creek, Pescadero Creek, Uva Creek, Stevens Creek, Beryessa Creek, Alameda Creek, Tassajara Creek, Walnut Creek, Marsh Creek, Kellog Creek, Lone Tree Creek, Hospital Creek, Corral Hallow Creek, Ingram Creek, Salido Creek, Crow Creek, Orestimba Creek, Garzas Creek, Quinto Creek, Romero Creek, Los Banos Creek and others. The San Joaquin River and several of these creeks are documented habitat for ESA species salmonids and therefore the lack of analysis of these ESA species impacts in the EIS/R is a particularly egregious omission.
- The geographic area included in the EIS/R impact assessment fails to include areas from the reservoirs involved in the project to the upstream first impassable fish barrier. Fluctuations of the reservoirs from project releases affect the ability for reservoir fish to forage and

135

136

spawn in the upstream tributaries. The project operations reduce reservoir cold and warmwater fisheries access and use of these upstream habitats from exposing sediment wedges in the tributaries at the interface with the reservoir and increasing the frequency and duration of impassable conditions for fish. Cold and warmwater fisheries are designated beneficial uses of water in the CV Basin Plan and therefore must be evaluated in a revised EIS/R.

136

- Both seller and buyer service areas are in unconfined groundwater basins. The impact area of groundwater resources, surface water interactions with groundwater, and fisheries and wildlife resources in the adjacent groundwater basins connected to these seller and buyer service areas must also be fully analyzed in the EIS/R. As the EIS/R stands, these extended impact areas in the interconnected groundwater basins are not identified, characterized, evaluated, quantified, mitigated or disclosed. This serious omission in the extent of the geographic area of impact from the project must be corrected in the revised EIS/R.

137

Impact Analysis Significance Criteria

- The EIR must use a full range of significance criteria which are consistent with Reclamation's use in other similar environmental documents. These similar environmental documents from which Reclamation should use the significance criteria include: Remand EIS, Shasta Enlargement, Sacramento Valley Water Management Plan (AKA Phase 8), CALFED, and BDCP. For this project to use anything less than the synthesis of the significance criteria from these recent and similar projects with Reclamation as the lead agency would be an inconsistent application of policy, procedure and science. The EIS/R impact analysis must be revised to address them missing impact criteria and thresholds. The revised EIS/R must be recirculated after addition of this material new information.

138

Permits Needed by the Project

- ESA Incidental Take Permit – Impacts from the selling and receiving water service areas are not covered by the OCAP BOs. They will require separate section 7 consultation (BA and BO). NMFS OCAP BO, pg729, p3 - "...this consultation does not address ESA section 7(a)(2) compliance for individual water supply contracts. Reclamation and DWR should consult with NMFS separately on their issuance of individual water supply contracts, including analysis of the effects of reduced water quality from agricultural and municipal return flows, contaminants, pesticides, altered aquatic ecosystems leading to the proliferation of non-native introduced species (*i.e.*, warm-water species), or the facilities or activities of parties to agreements with the U.S. that recognize a previous vested water right." The water transfers ESA species impacts in the seller and buyer service areas are not covered under the FWS or NMFS OCAP BOs and therefore a separate section 7 or 10 consultation for the water transfers for the seller and buyer service areas must be conducted and approved prior to the water transfers.
- Reclamation and DWR have not implemented the OCAP BO RPAs, so the CVP and SWP are not compliant with the terms of their current Incidental Take Permits (ITP). NMFS

139

140

specifically provides in the OCAP BO that if the agencies are not compliant with the terms of the OCAP BO RPAs that they will rescind their ITP. Since DWR and Reclamation are not compliant with the OCAP BO RPAs (see related comments), NMFS must rescind Reclamation and DWRs ITP and reinitiate ESA re-consultation. FWS and NMFS cannot approve the permits for the proposed water transfers until OCAP BO compliance is achieved.

140

- The project will require a 401 Clean Water Act certification to address all types of discharges that occur under the proposed project and alternatives. These discharges by the project which must be permitted include (but are not limited to): releases from each reservoir to each tributary involved in the transfers, leaks from conveyance used in the water transfers (e.g. California Aqueduct), discharge at the water transfer recipient service area, discharges of water used in the buyer service areas, discharge groundwater pumped for groundwater substitution, discharge of groundwater substituted water after use on the fields. These last categories of discharges from groundwater wells and drainage discharge of groundwater substituted fields represent new locations of discharges for the project that would not be covered under any 401 permits the SWP or CVP currently have (if they have any).
- The project will also need Air Quality permits for project impacts from (but not limited to): electrical load demand from groundwater pumping (this increased electrical load is not offset by not surface water pumping), changes in the timing and location of electrical generation from backing up water in reservoirs for transfer (the foregone generation must be replaced and the timing of the impacts are different), idling crops causes wind erosion and airborne particulate loads, operating equipment on fields receiving water from transfers in the buyer service areas are emissions that would not happen under the No Action/Project. All of these impacts are different from the conditions of the CVP and SWP without the project so these impacts are not covered by any current CVP or SWP air quality permits (if they have any).

141

142

Water Supply

- The EIS/R must be revised to evaluate the year to year potential geographic distribution of the sellers and to evaluate the worst case scenario of the distribution (or lack thereof) of the sellers. Since the EIS/R did not evaluate a worst case scenario for how the sales would be distributed, the project must not be approved or permitted for operations that would result in more geographically concentrated impacts than what was represented in the analytical assumptions in the EIS/R. The EIS/R assumed an average water transfer contribution from all seller areas for the available transfer capacity for each water year type. With these assumptions, the impacts are equally spread and are reduced in severity in any geographic location the most of any of the potential operational scenarios. The EIS/R should have conducted and disclosed some sensitivity analysis in which the extremes of operational scenarios were tested and evaluated for their environmental impacts. Several of these scenarios that represented the worst potential impacts from the project should have been fully evaluated. Only under that approach could the project be awarded permits that allow the full amount of water transfer proposed under a set of mitigations that would have addressed the impacts. The analysis took the most optimistic (and completely unrealistic) assumption of even geographic distribution water transfer operations and impacts, each of the identified seller areas should be only allowed to transfer the averaged amount of water that was actually analyzed in the EIS/R. Here is a description and analysis of

143

the critically flawed assumptions the impact analysis used in its impact analysis. The maximum proposed water transfer by the identified water sellers is 511,094AF. In all water years except Critical, Consecutive Dry, and Dry after Critical; the FWS OCAP BO says that the maximum transfer that can be conducted under the permitted conditions is 360,000AF. The EIS/R makes the erroneous assumption that the 360,000AF would be evenly distributed across the seller's area. In reality, the impacts would never be so perfectly distributed and reduced in their severity. The EIS/R should have tested a number of scenarios in which the transfer water was concentrated with various combinations of sellers. The EIS/R should have evaluated the impacts of all of the transfers coming from a single drainage basin under these limited subscription conditions, e.g. all from the Feather River or American River basin and none from the Sacramento River/Shasta drainage basin or visa versa. The scenario of all water transfers from one basin and none from another basin is very plausible as snowpack could favor one basin over another and make more or less water available for transfer or operational considerations of reservoirs in one basin vs. the other could make water storage much more feasible. The EIS/R should have evaluated at least two scenarios of different distribution of willing sellers. These are: all available sellers from the Sacramento and Feather River Service area with none from any of the other seller service areas and another scenario of all transfers being from Merced River, Delta, American River, Yuba River, and Feather River with none from the Sacramento River.

143

- The EIS/R does not analyze the impacts of the proposed project and alternatives on other existing long-term (e.g. YCWA Lower Yuba River Accord) or year-to-year water transfer opportunities. The proposed project and alternatives preclude or significantly reduce the amount of potentially available excess CVP and SWP capacity for other long- and short-term water transfers which compete to use these same CVP and SWP facilities. Some of the Lower Yuba River Accord water transfers are for environmental objectives. Some or all of these transfers may not occur under the proposed project or alternatives. This is unknown because the EIS/R failed to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose the impacts to these other water transfers. This omission is a material deficiency of this EIS/R document which must be revised and recirculated.

144

- The EIS/R proposed "paper water accounting" as the basis for some of its analysis. As an example, the project description says that "These agencies... would use the water diverted from the San Joaquin River in exchange for their CVP water from the Delta-Mendota Canal." (EIS/R page 2-25, p3). The impacts of the other 4 proposed conveyance routes and operations are very different from the foregone diversions of these other water districts in favor of the proposed San Joaquin River diversion impacts. The different impacts of these different proposed modes of accomplishing this Merced ID water transfer were not analyzed, mitigated or disclosed in the EIS/R. These material omissions and deficiencies in the EIS/R must be corrected in the revised and recirculated EIS/R.

145

- If the transferred water is allegedly conserved and does not result from and is limited to an actual reduction in consumptive use (which will vary with the climate) it could reduce runoff to surface flow and percolation to recharge the groundwater.

146

- Is water transferred from outside of basin? E.g. Feather River basin surface water rights transferred, but delivered from Shasta?

147

- Operational assumptions for reservoir storage for water transfer failed to take into account operational changes required by the OCAP BO RPAs for fish passage at Shasta, Folsom and New Melones.

148

- The EIS/R analysis should be specific on the operations and impacts for each water transfer in order to justify project-level permits required for implementation of the project. The level of specificity of the current EIS/R is only at a programmatic level of detail so the project should be subject to additional project level impact analysis prior to implementation each year.
- The EIS/R analysis should be specific on the operations and impacts for each water transfer and cumulatively for year to year for the project and in combination with all current and other reasonably foreseeable projects, e.g. Lower Yuba River Accord water transfers.
- Each river, stream and location has different geology and hydrology. The EIS/R analysis did not incorporate analysis of all potential operational scenarios that could occur under the range of operations and conditions included in the project description. The project should only be permitted for the operations and conditions analyzed, mitigated and disclosed in the EIS/R, not on the range proposed that were not addressed in the analysis.
- Water transfers from this project result in discouragement of investment in water conservation or adaptation of water users to more sustainable water uses in the Buyer Service areas. If you can buy water cheaper than the cost of implementing water conservation to achieve an equal amount of water supply then you will always choose the cheaper option of buying the water. This is also why desalination projects or other new water or major conservation efforts (e.g. fixing all the water conveyance leaks) will never occur until all the cheaper water that exists is purchased and transferred. This project and others like it, result in a California that will continue to take water from each other until there is no more water to take before it makes any meaningful investment in water conservation, alternative water supplies, and changes in lifestyle related to water use (hundreds of golf courses in the desert) and water allocation. The BDCP does not count as a project to create new water as this project claims that it “won’t divert any more water than current operations” and the real purpose of that project is to just facilitate the transfer of water from a poorer Northern California to a richer Southern California.
- CVP and SWP operations are often constrained by net delta outflow requirements. The Net Delta Outflow Index (NDOI) that the SWP and CVP are currently using is grossly over-reporting net delta outflow. “While the NDOI is, at best, an estimate of Delta outflow, there are stations that accurately measure actual Delta outflow. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has established a series of stations in the Delta to measure flow and water quality parameters.” “Four of the USGS gauging stations... accurately measure Net Delta Outflow (NDO).” (“*The Case of the Missing Delta Outflow*”, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance) DWR’s own analysis of NDOI (“Dayflow”) estimates vs. the new more accurate USGS gage measurements indicates that the “Dayflow under estimates flow during wet periods and over estimates flow during dry periods.” (http://www.water.ca.gov/dayflow/docs/2013_Comments.pdf) This DWR report means that during the majority of the CVP and SWP diversion season (spring through fall), the operations systematically over estimate NDOI and systematically divert more water from the south delta than regulatory operational constraints would allow if NDO was correctly accounted for. As a result of this over-estimation of net delta outflows and the resulting lack of operational constraint, Reclamation and DWR’s evaluation of available excess capacity for water transfers for this project will result in more capacity being identified as available as actually would exist if

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the delta net outflows were being accurately measured. The EIS/R must include an evaluation of the accuracy of the Delta Net Outflow Index accuracy and an adjustment for the water transfer delivery quantities that would result from correctly adhering to the operational constraints of the CVP and SWP from Delta Net Outflow Index requirements. This regular exceedance of regulatory constraints on the CVP and SWP operations must be evaluated in this EIS/R and water transfer amounts included in the project must be limited to amounts that would not result in the CVP and SWP violation of net delta outflow requirements. This over estimation of net delta outflow also results in insufficient carriage water being pulled out of the water transfers to maintain delta water quality and CVP/SWP operational compliance with the OCAP Biological Opinions and the Reclamation Remand court order.

153

- Coordinated CVP/SWP operations, funding and water deliveries are based on the COA. The COA is grossly out of date and has not been updated since 1986. COA determines the proportional distribution of available water supplies and operations. If the COA were updated, the amount and locations of excess capacity in the SWP and CVP system would change. This project must include an update to the COA as part of the scope or the actual amount of conveyance capacity available for transfers cannot be determined.

154

Water Rights

- Water rights were not addressed at all in the ES impact summary table.
- In 2014, some federal water contractor's had stored some water from the previous year for later release at Reclamation's Friant facility. Due to the drought conditions and lack of available water supply in 2014, Reclamation decided to deliver that water contractor stored water to the Exchange Contractors to fulfill their other standing obligations to the Exchange Contractors rather than to the water agencies that stored their water in Friant. The EIS/R does not address this potential scenario in released water from reservoirs or the "backed up" water operations of the Proposed Project or alternatives. As a very similar scenario example for the Proposed Project or alternatives, water stored in Friant for Merced Irrigation District that was held back specifically for a water transfer could be hijacked by Reclamation to service the Exchange Contractors instead. This scenario could easily occur on the other dams with backed up water released to fulfill minimum flow or senior water rights holders on the downstream tributaries rather than for the project water transfers. Again, there is a difference in the timing and location of impacts for when the water is released and where it is used for the project or for other obligations. Without the project, the backed up water would not have existed so there would not be the impacts of releasing that water to fulfill these other obligations. The difference in release timing and location of use create impacts that the EIS/R did not identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose.
- When downstream senior water right holder settlement agreement (settlement contractors, e.g. Shasta - Tehama and GCID; Oroville – WCWD, BWGWD, Richvale, etc.) water supply is released from storage for transfer to the water buyers under the Proposed Project and alternatives, it may include natural flow water or stored water which is in violation of permit

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terms and conditions from their Settlement Agreements. The water rights that the settlement contractors have under the settlement agreement are not the same as their original pre-1914 or riparian water right so they should not have the senior water right status for the water transfer. Since they do not have this senior water right status, these actions must not be allowed to affect parties with more senior water rights. All water transfers must be subject to water rights priorities. The EIS/R is deficient as it did not correctly differentiate the water rights level of the settlement contractors and allowed these water transfers to impact the water rights (water quality) of more senior water rights holders.

157

- The analysis should cover the requirement or recognition that no water can be exported from the Delta by the projects unless the Delta is first provided an adequate supply (WC 12200 etseq.) and to the extent the transfer is dependent on the water rights of the SWP or CVP the water can be recaptured to serve needs in the watersheds of origin (WC 11460 etseq.).
- Reclamation and DWR water rights are subordinate to senior rights and conditioned on compliance with statutory requirements as well as permit conditions. The CVP and SWPs post-1914 water rights are junior to most in-Delta water rights and, as a result, the project has no right to divert the natural flows within the Delta if there is not enough natural flows through the Delta to satisfy in-Delta pre-1914 appropriative rights. The CVP and SWP, as junior water rights holders, are also not allowed to impair the water quality of the senior water rights holders from the operational impacts of their diversions. Reclamation and DWR, through their CVP and SWP operations, consistently violate these water quality standards and impact the beneficial uses of water for agricultural use of the senior water rights holders in the delta.
- The SWRCB cannot certify or issue permits on a project which knowingly and consistently violates state surface water rights and the addition of these water transfers under the Proposed Project and alternatives would only exacerbate the frequency, magnitude and duration of these violations. Area of Origin Statutes were enacted during the years when California's two largest water projects, the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, were being developed to protect local Northern California supplies from being depleted as a result of the projects. County of origin statutes provide for the reservation of water supplies for counties in which the water originates when, in the judgment of the State Water Resources Control Board, an application for the assignment or release from priority of State water right filings will deprive the county of water necessary for its present and future development. Watershed protection statutes are provisions which require that the construction and operation of elements of the Federal Central Valley Project and the State Water Project not deprive the watershed, or area where water originates, or immediately adjacent areas which can be conveniently supplied with water, of the prior right to water reasonably required to supply the present or future beneficial needs of the watershed area or any of its inhabitants or property owners. The addition of these water transfers under the Proposed Project and alternatives would only exacerbate the area of origin conflicts.

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- The Delta Protection Act, enacted in 1959 (not to be confused with the Delta Protection Act of 1992, which relates to land use), declares that the maintenance of an adequate water supply in the Delta--to maintain and expand agriculture, industry, urban, and recreational development in the Delta area and provide a common source of fresh water for export to areas of water deficiency--is necessary for the peace, health, safety, and welfare of the people of the State, subject to the County of Origin and Watershed Protection laws. The act requires the State Water Project and the federal CVP to provide an adequate water supply for water users in the Delta through salinity control or through substitute supplies in lieu of salinity control. The addition of these water transfers under the Proposed Project and alternatives would only exacerbate the water supply conflicts addressed under the Act. 161
- In 1984, additional area of origin protections were enacted covering the Sacramento, Mokelumne, Calaveras, and San Joaquin rivers; the combined Truckee, Carson, and Walker rivers; and Mono Lake. The protections prohibit the export of ground water from the combined Sacramento River and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta basins, unless the export is in compliance with local ground water plans. Also, Water Code Section 1245 holds municipalities liable for economic damages resulting from their diversion of water from a watershed." (<http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/previous/b160-93/b160-93v1/ifrmwk.cfm>) The addition of these water transfers under the Proposed Project and alternatives would only exacerbate the water supply and groundwater conflicts addressed under the water code. 162
- Reclamation is not compliant with their junior water rights requirements as the CVP operations frequently exceed Delta water quality requirements in violation of the Delta Protection Act of 1959. Transfers of water supplies through the CVP or SWP from conjunctive use of groundwater substitution for surface water supplies are not consistent with local groundwater plans. Water contractors supplied through the SWP are liable for any direct or indirect damages from diverting water from a watershed. These damages may include injury, damage, destruction or decrease in value of any such property, business, trade, profession or occupation resulting from or caused by the taking of any such lands or waters, or by the taking, diverting or transporting of water from such watershed. (Water Code 1245) The addition of these water transfers under the Proposed Project and alternatives would only exacerbate the water quality impacts addressed under the Act. 163
- The Proposed Project and alternatives must consider the water supply, water rights, water quality impairments and other water beneficial use impacts associated with the water transfers of south delta water. The conditions of waters in the delta including direction of flows, water quality and impacts to agriculture, drinking water supplies and fisheries resources are a direct consequence of the CVP and SWP south delta facilities water diversions.

Water Quality

- The sellers identified are mostly water districts. When water districts transfer water they typically rotate the fallowed lands from year to year so not the same land or owners are participating from year to year. The EIS/R just assumes there will be some even distribution of the fallowed fields across a water district. They do put some constraints on adjacency to wildlife refuges, but other than that, the fallowing could occur in any location or in any combination of locations or concentrations. By not having specific locations or a very specific rule set about how fallowed fields can be distributed within a water district, the 164

analysis of the impacts from field fallowing is at a programmatic level of detail, not a project site specific level of detail. The rules for how fallowed fields are distributed in a water district are not specific enough to allow detailed analysis of impacts such as reduced ag drainage return flows and resulting drainage flows and water quality impacts. The EIS/R must be revised such that project specific levels of detail on the impacts of field fallowing are conducted. Although the agencies can approve a programmatic EIS/R, this project, because of its lack of project-level analysis of impacts, must have a subsequent environmental analysis prior to implementation.

165

- Each groundwater basin and sub-basin area has different water quality, e.g. south of Sutter Buttes has higher saline groundwater than farther to the north. Different depth groundwater aquifers can have different water quality. The differences in groundwater quality that would be substituted for surface water supplies and the specific differences in the water quality of discharge water from the conjunctive use properties in the project are not characterized, evaluated, quantified, mitigated or disclosed in the EIS/R. This material omission of groundwater substitution water quality impacts on surface and groundwater quality must be addressed in a revised and recirculated EIS/R.
- Ag drainage water quality is lower in the areas of groundwater substitution than if their surface water supplies were utilized. As an example of the impact of the project, groundwater is higher in dissolved minerals (TDS) than surface water. High dissolved minerals in water can have significant adverse impacts on development of juvenile salmonids that occur in the tributary reaches where the proposed project surface water quality degradations would occur from groundwater substitutions. The Sacramento Valley Regional Water Plan (AKA Phase 8) identified and addressed those impacts in their project's conjunctive use analysis, but this project EIS/R did not even though Reclamation was a lead agency on both projects and both involve conjunctive use.
- The EIS/R also failed to evaluate the impact of fallowed fields on reduced ag return flow volumes and increased contaminant loads which could exceed the discharge permits tolerances, e.g. water temperature difference, TDS, DO, nutrient loading, DOC, ECw, contaminant metals (Hg, Se, Pb, Fe) other (diaznon, DDT, chlorpyrifos, etc.) of the water and reclamation districts. This is a material omission and deficiency of the EIS/R which must be corrected in the revised EIS/R prior to recirculation.
- The Proposed Project and alternatives will result in water quality impacts to delta and other beneficial uses which were not fully addressed in the EIS/R.
- The Proposed Project and alternatives idling of fields will result wind erosion of soils which will be deposited into tributaries which will degrade water quality of those tributaries with the associated contaminant loads. The contaminant loads from fallowed field wind and water erosion into surface water tributaries was not fully addressed in the EIS/R because the location and number of fields was not defined by the Proposed Project and alternatives. This significant impact must be more specifically analyzed for the field locations, number and distribution and the significant impacts to surface water quality mitigated and disclosed.

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- Water quality impacts vary greatly depending on the tributary and groundwater substituted, e.g. Berryessa and Putah Creek flow transfers would mobilize a disproportionate amount of Hg. Transfers from Friant to Westlands would mobilize a disproportionate amount of Se. Both of these project impacts are not fully addressed in the EIS/R. This significant impact must be more specifically analyzed for the tributary locations, timing of substitution and transfer, and volume of those transfers and the significant impacts to surface water quality for the project mitigated and disclosed.

171

Groundwater

- If the transferred water is based on an actual reduction in consumptive use (which will vary with the climate) it will reduce runoff to surface flow and percolation to recharge the groundwater. As an example, ag irrigation quantities include a component for leaching salts below the plant root system. The leaching component of irrigation water contributes to groundwater recharge. In the case of proposed project idling of fields or crop switching to lower water use crops, that irrigation leaching component contribution to groundwater recharge is significantly reduced or eliminated all together. The EIS/R failed to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose this significant impact from the Proposed Project and alternatives. This material omission in the analysis of the EIS/R must be rectified and submitted for public review in a recirculated document.
- Groundwater drawdown affects of the proposed project and alternatives on adjacent groundwater wells and changes in direction or magnitude of groundwater hydraulic gradient on contribution to surface water flows was not addressed in the EIS/R. The EIS/R Regional Economics section identified "Groundwater substitution transfers could increase groundwater pumping costs for water users in areas where groundwater levels decline as a result of the transfer." as an adverse project impact. Obviously the groundwater section missed this impact, which is a significant impact and must be mitigated.
- Subsidence impacts from groundwater drawdown in the seller service area as a result of the project were not addressed in the EIS/R. The EIS/R only addressed the reduction of groundwater subsidence in the buyer's service area as a benefit. Since groundwater substitution in the sellers area is a significant component to the source of water for transfer, the one sided and biased EIS/R analysis where the beneficial impact is disclosed, but the significant adverse impact is ignored and goes unmitigated and disclosed, There is an egregious violation of the requirements and intent of NEPA and CEQA.
- The amount of groundwater substitution/transfer cannot be greater than the maximum sustainable yield or groundwater aquifer collapse occurs. The Proposed Project does not provide operational limits and the EIS/R analysis does not determine how much water can be sustainably withdrawn from groundwater aquifers without risk of collapsing them. The Proposed Project does not define how much groundwater substitution would occur in each seller area from year to year. With both of these critical information components missing in order to ensure protection of the groundwater aquifers, the EIS/R document is deficient and must be revised to correct these omissions. In order to avoid and mitigate the significant impact of the project on groundwater subsidence, the project must include an alternative

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for a sustainable rate of groundwater withdrawal and/or propose the sustainable rate of groundwater withdrawal as a mitigation of the impacts of the current Proposed Project and alternatives. This “sustainable groundwater alternative” extraction and transfer amount can be calculated for each seller service area groundwater basin using the following generalized methodology. First, determine the current size (TAF) and annual groundwater recharge for each groundwater basin for the 82 year period of hydrologic record. Second, determine the safe and sustainable annual quantity of groundwater yield (including maximum rate of groundwater withdrawal without collapsing water bearing strata) in each basin. Now add the groundwater basin (with size, recharge rates and maximum sustainable rates of withdrawals) as a “reservoir” for each groundwater basin and seller service area to CALSIM (or in a post processing module for analyzing CALSIM results). Next, using the 82 year period of record and the CALSIM model, optimize the amount of seller area water deliveries for each groundwater basin area. Determine the amount of groundwater extraction for transfer that does not accrue into an over-draft of the groundwater basin at any time during the 82 year period of record. The maximum groundwater substitution amount that does not result in over-drafting the groundwater in any year in the 82 year hydrologic period of record will be the maximum contract delivery amount for that groundwater basin and seller service area for use in the “sustainable groundwater” EIS/R alternative or as a mitigation for the significant groundwater aquifer collapse impacts of the Proposed Project. The EIS/R also fails to identify impacts to infrastructure (roads and bridge structural integrity and safety, canal capacity and structural integrity and safety), and other resources (such as surface water drainage) that occur from groundwater withdrawal caused ground level subsidence.

175

Geology and Soils

- The EIS/R evaluated the potential loss of top soil from fallowing, but did not address the different soil erosion potentials that occur in different seller areas. The EIS/R analysis must be revised to reflect the site specific soil erosion characteristics at the seller areas; otherwise the analysis is programmatic rather than project specific and would require subsequent environmental analysis prior to implementation of the project.
- The EIS/R did not address salt accumulation and resulting reductions on soil productivity from the water transfers on the buyer areas. The EIS/R analysis must be revised to reflect the continued and increased salt accumulation of soils and reduced soil productivity from the proposed water transfers.
- Water released from CVP or SWP facilities for water transfers is on top of the water that would have been released in the No Action/No Project. Most of the water transfer releases of the Proposed Project will be on top of higher natural flows so that less carriage water is required and water diversion yields of the transferred water will be highest at the south delta pumps. This extra flow increment of the transferred water on top of the flows that would be there under the No Action/No Project will result in increased erosion of banks in the tributary reaches below the dams. As an example of this impact, see DWRs settlement agreement and

176

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178

compensation to Emerald Farms on the lower Feather River from increased erosion from the SWP operations. These flow related impacts to bank erosion are a real impact of the Proposed Project and alternatives. The EIS/R failed to analyze these identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose these impacts.

178

Air Quality

- The EIS/R identifies a benefit from the reduction of emissions from farm equipment that would not be operated on fallowed water seller fields, but does not address the increase in emissions from farm equipment being operated on buyers fields that would have otherwise been fallowed. This shifting of air quality impacts from farm equipment operations from northern California to the southern central valley is a significant impact as the northern counties generally do not have a problem meeting their air quality attainment requirements and the bay area and southern central valley counties are constantly in violation of their air quality attainment requirements. The EIS/R identification of a beneficial impact while ignoring the more than offsetting corollary significant impact demonstrates the one sided biased nature of the impact assessment. The EIS/R must be revised to disclose and mitigate the air quality impacts of the farm equipment operated in the buyers area under the proposed project which would not occur under the No Action/No Project.
- The EIS/R claims that dust from fallowing fields is an overall benefit because there is no tilling and harvest associated dust. This analysis and conclusion is completely biased and is not supportable. Much more soil is eroded from a field that is fallowed and bare of all vegetation all year as compared to a field that is tilled and harvested. This impact is not a benefit, it is a significant impact that must be mitigated.
- Increased air pollution from increased groundwater and other pumping (e.g. CVP/SWP lift pumps and groundwater pumps) under the proposed project is a significant impact, not a less than significant impact as the EIS/R determined. This significant impact must be mitigated.

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Climate Change

- The EIS/R is analysis is fundamentally flawed because the future project condition to 2024 did not include sea level rise, precipitation or other climate change impact assumptions. NEPA requires the end condition of the project period to be analyzed, in this case 2024. The BDCP has incorporated climate change in its analysis of conditions in 2025, so this EIS/Rs omission of climate change for 2024 is a serious inconsistency in how climate change is addressed between these two similar projects. Reclamation is a lead agency on both projects, both projects cover the same water systems and geographic areas and resources; and yet the BDCP addresses climate change in 2025 and this EIS/R does not for 2024. NEPA guidance and specifically USACE and EPA in their analytical requirements for a 401 permit, require consideration of climate change. Department of Interior, USACE and EPA all have specific methods and assumptions which are required to be utilized in an EIS. The project failed to incorporate these methods and assumptions. This EIS/R must be revised to incorporate climate change assumptions in its Proposed Project, Alternatives and No

182

Action/No Project assumptions. A 401 permit for this project must not be issued without analysis that includes climate change that is consistent with Department of Interior, USACE and EPA analytical method requirements and assumptions.

182

- Fallowed fields do not transpire so the cooling effect of the growing crops would not occur in acres fallowed from the implementation of the proposed project or alternatives which include crop idling. Some publications have speculated that the central valley is 10+°F cooler in the summer due to crop irrigation as compared to non-irrigation of the current irrigated acres. The fallowing of crop acres from the project would have similar impacts as those widely recognized for urban heat island effects. The EIS/R is deficient as it did not identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose these impacts and it must be revised to address these omissions.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from increased groundwater and other pumping (e.g. CVP/SWP lift pumps and groundwater pumps) is a significant impact, not a less than significant impact as the EIS/R determined. This significant impact must be mitigated.

183

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Aquatic Resources

- Increased deliveries of CVP/SWP south of delta service areas of Sacramento Valley basin water supply increases the proportion of “foreign basin” introduction of water and drainage water to the tributaries downstream of the water transfer receiving service areas. The water transfers under the proposed project increases the proportion of foreign basin water into the tributaries downstream of the service areas receiving these transfer waters. The out of basin water has a different signature as a homing cue for anadromous fish, especially salmonids. False attraction of migrating fish from out of basin water is well documented in published literature and is a major problem with central valley salmonid reproductive survival rates and genetic introgression which is a direct threat to the species diversity and viability. The proposed project is particularly problematic for increasing salmonid straying from out of basin water transfers in that the years where the proposed project water transfers are anticipated to be most active are the years where otherwise the CVP/SWP would have the lowest operational impacts on out of basin caused salmonid straying and genetic introgression. As an example, in 2014, CVP and SWP deliveries to the agricultural users that are the proposed project recipients of the water transfers, their 2014 water deliveries from the CVP and SWP were 0%. This means that in 2014 there would have been no straying and genetic introgression from out of basin transfers from these areas for the San Joaquin River and the South San Francisco Bay and their tributaries. With the proposed project, the out of basin transfers would occur on years of low and no CVP and SWP deliveries which will result in an increase in the proportion of out of basin water in the downstream drainage tributaries and in the rate of salmonid straying, associated mortalities and loss of fecundity and genetic introgression impacts on the species genetic integrity and diversity as compared to the No Action/No Project condition. In the case of years with 0% CVP/SWP water deliveries, to go from zero straying impact from the CVP/SWP operations under the No Action/No Project condition to some increased amount of straying impact is

185

an increase of infinity percent as compared to the baseline condition that occurs without the project water transfers. The EIS/R failed to identify, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose this impact.

- The EIS/R must be revised to evaluate the year to year potential geographic distribution of the sellers and to evaluate the worst case scenario of the distribution (or lack thereof) of the sellers. Since the EIS/R did not evaluate a worst case scenario for how the sales would be distributed, the project must not be approved or permitted for operations that would result in more geographically concentrated impacts than what was represented in the analytical assumptions in the EIS/R. The EIS/R assumed an average water transfer contribution from all seller areas for the available transfer capacity for each water year type. The EIS/R average geographic distribution of water seller assumption for the impact analysis is actually the best case scenario for the least impacts as the impacts are equally spread and are reduced in severity in any geographic location the most of any of the potential operational scenario. Any other scenario of seller distribution would result more significant impacts than the average seller distribution assumption used in the EIS/R analysis. The EIS/R should have conducted and disclosed some sensitivity analysis in which the extremes of operational scenarios were tested and evaluated for their environmental impacts. Several of these scenarios that represented the worst potential impacts from the project should have then been fully evaluated to disclose the range of impacts that could or would be precipitated by implementing the proposed project. Only under that “bookend” of worst case scenarios analytical approach should the project be awarded permits that allow the full amount of water transfer proposed with a full set of mitigations to cover the worst case scenarios that would address these impacts. The current EIS/R analysis took the most optimistic (and completely unrealistic) assumption of an evenly distributed geographic spread of water transfer operations and impacts. Under the current set of analysis assumption that assumes only average seller water allocation in the transfers, each of the identified seller areas should be only allowed to transfer the averaged amount of water that was actually analyzed in the EIS/R. Any more water than that allowed under the operations would precipitate impacts that were not analyzed, mitigated or disclosed. Here is a description and analysis of the current critically flawed analytical assumptions the EIS/R used in its impact analysis. The maximum proposed water transfer by the identified water sellers is 511,094AF. In all water years except Critical, Consecutive Dry, and Dry after Critical; the FWS OCAP BO says that the maximum transfer that can be conducted under the permitted conditions is 360,000AF (see related comments). The EIS/R makes the erroneous assumption that the 360,000AF would be evenly distributed across the seller’s area. In reality, the impacts would never be so perfectly distributed and reduced in their severity. The EIS/R should have, as described earlier in this comment, tested a number of scenarios in which the transfer water was concentrated with various combinations of sellers. The EIS/R should have evaluated the impacts of all of the transfers coming from a single drainage basin under these limited subscription conditions, e.g. all from the Feather River or American River basin and none from the Sacramento River/Shasta drainage basin and visa versa. The scenario of all water transfers from one basin and none from another basin is very plausible as snowpack could favor one basin over another and make more or less water available for transfer or operational considerations of reservoirs in one basin vs. the other could make water storage much more or much less feasible. The EIS/R should have evaluated at least two scenarios of different distribution of willing sellers. These are: all available sellers from the Sacramento and Feather River Service area with none from any of the other seller service areas and

another scenario of all transfers being from Merced River, Delta, American River, Yuba River, and Feather River with none from the Sacramento River. To analyze the salmonid straying effects of the project (see related comments), these scenarios should have also included maximum differences in flow contributions from different operational scenarios for each tributary confluence. At the minimum, these should have included max operations on the Sacramento and no operations on the Feather River and Yuba (and visa versa), max operations on the Feather River and none on the Yuba (and visa versa), max operations on the Sacramento, Feather and Yuba rivers and none on the American (and visa versa). The concept proposed by the project of “backed up water” (see related comments) where water is released earlier in one tributary (e.g. Feather River), water is stored in another tributary basin (e.g. Shasta) and then released later in the other tributary (e.g. Sacramento River) has many more complex flow and water temperature impacts than just the raw number of acre feet in the transfer would indicate by just considering the “upper limits” of transfers as presented in the EIS/R Table 2-5. In the case of “backed up water”, the flow impacts on proportional flows at a tributary confluence are doubled. Under the backed up water operational scenario of the proposed project operations, all of the water identified by willing sellers in the Feather and Yuba River and could be released earlier than they otherwise would have in lieu of releases that would have occurred from Shasta. This results in an increase of Feather River flows and a relative decrease in Sacramento River flows at the confluence of the rivers. This is a 2x change in proportional flows at the tributary confluence (e.g. Feather and Sacramento River confluence) (+90,000AF in the Feather River and -90,000AF in the Sacramento River) as compared to the No Action/No Project during the release period. The proposed project does not define when or how short a time period a backed up water transfer could occur (presumably limited by available excess capacity for transfer), but in the absence of supported assumptions provided by the EIS/R we must assume the worst case period of time and volumes so as to be protective of the endangered fisheries species resources. If the analysis does not specify when, where and how these reservoir backup water transfers would occur, the agencies must assume the worst case scenario and limit the project permitted operations accordingly to assure ESA fish protections. Without these potential flow and temperature change analyses at the confluences of the salmonid migratory tributary confluences, the potential impacts of the range of operations that the project has proposed have not been evaluated, quantified, mitigated or disclosed. The EIS/R is deficient for the lack of this analysis which must be rectified when the document is revised and recirculated.

186

- The Terrestrial species impact analysis determined that “Groundwater substitution could reduce stream flows supporting natural communities in small streams” was a significant impact for alternatives 2 and 3. If groundwater impacts on streams can be significant for terrestrial species, how can it not be significant for aquatic species? The EIS/R must be revised to correct this impact call omission in the aquatic species section.

187

- Vegetation removal from Bouldin Island was required for a water transfer to Semitropic Water District in 2014. The herbicide application resulted in the damage to 10s of thousands of acres of agricultural crops and wildlife habitat. Since Bouldin Island is in the very middle of the delta, the herbicide spray drift that impacted terrestrial habitat would have also have to have contaminated hundreds of acres of aquatic habitat. In this case the aquatic habitat damaged included designated critical habitat for San Joaquin steelhead and Chinook salmon, green sturgeon, delta smelt and other special status species. Previous

188

water transfers have proven that this is a real risk of this type of project and these risks must be evaluated. The EIS/R failed to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose these very real potential impacts of the proposed project. The EIS/R must be revised and recirculated to address these material omissions and deficiencies in the document.

188

Wildlife

- The sellers identified are mostly water districts. When water districts transfer water they typically rotate the fallowed lands from year to year so not the same fields or owners are participating from year to year. The EIS/R just assumes there will be some even distribution of the fallowed fields across a water district. They do put some constraints on adjacency to wildlife refuges, but other than that, the fallowing could occur in any location or in any combination of locations or concentrations. By not having specific locations or a very specific rule set about how fallowed fields can be distributed within a water district, the analysis of the impacts from field fallowing is at a programmatic level of detail, not a project site specific level of detail. The rules for how fallowed field are distributed in a water district are not specific enough to allow detailed analysis of impacts. The lack of specificity of the location and distribution of fields also does not allow for impact analysis to wildlife. There are some vague assurances from the project about not disrupting habitat corridors, but they do not say how this would be determined, what threshold of disruption is acceptable or unacceptable. A single fallowed field is disruptive to habitat connectivity by itself, is that too much? How about two adjacent fields fallowed, too much or OK? How about 3 contiguous fields or 30 contiguous fields? The EIS/R assurances to not disrupt habitat are so vague that these questions cannot be answered and therefore these assurances by the project are meaningless. The EIS/R must be revised such that project specific levels of detail on the impacts of field fallowing are conducted. Although the agencies can approve a programmatic EIS/R, this project, because of its lack of project-level analysis of impacts, must have a subsequent environmental analysis prior to implementation.
- Farmed fields contribute wildlife habitat values for foraging, refuge, and mating. Fallowed bare ground impacts wildlife by altering habitat values and uses and overall provides lower habitat value than a cultivated field, e.g. no flooded rice when fallowed. Loss of habitat on the international flyway, which the seller areas are in a core area of, impact the United States compliance with the International Migratory Bird Treaty which was not addressed in the EIS/R.
- Southern Central Valley land that has been fallowed and is put back into production due to a water transfer will destroy the habitat values that have been created while the field was fallowed. Some of the species that move into fallowed fields that would have their habitat destroyed by putting the field back into production by the water made available by the water transfers include giant garter snake, tiger salamander, Alameda whip snake, San Joaquin kit fox, San Joaquin kangaroo rat, and others. The project failed to quantify and mitigate these impacts.

189

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- If a field is fallowed for up to 10 years under the Proposed Project, habitat values will be created. The project fails mitigate for the destruction of these created habitat values that will occur at the end of the project period when these lands are put back into production. 192
- Vegetation removal from Bouldin Island was required for a water transfer to Semitropic Water District in 2014. The application of herbicide for vegetation removal resulted in the damage to 10s of thousands of acres of agricultural crops and wildlife habitat. In this case the habitat damage included critical habitat for giant garter snake, riparian brush rabbit and rat, tiger salamander, greater sandhill crane, San Joaquin steelhead and Chinook salmon, green sturgeon, delta smelt and other special status species. This spray drift damage has been well documented and publicized (<http://wineindustryinsight.com/?p=54211>, <http://www.winebusiness.com/blog/?go=getBlogEntry&dataId=135322>, http://www.lodinews.com/news/article_3c58d352-f196-11e3-8efa-0019bb2963f4.html, http://rivernewsheald.org/articles2014/bouldin_8-6-2014.html). Bouldin Island is only 5,900 acres. The proposed project could idle as much as 177,000 acres in a year if it utilized its maximum transfer capacity covered under the EIS/R using mostly the crop idling strategy component of its proposed project water conservation. If the transfers were maximized for the 10 year project period and utilized mostly crop idling as its water conservation strategy then over the 10 year project period, there would be as many as 1,770,000 acres that required herbicide treatment. If only 1% of the herbicide treatments for the proposed project water transfers go as badly as the Bouldin Island water transfer, the impact of these water transfers could damage 100s of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat. Previous water transfers have proven that this is a real risk of this type of project and these risks must be evaluated. The EIS/R failed to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose these very real potential impacts of the proposed project. The EIS/R must be revised and recirculated to address these material omissions and deficiencies in the document. 193

Land Use and Agriculture

- Improved irrigation management and scheduling as a water conservation measure should have been included as a component to some of the alternatives. 194
- The timing and method of vegetation removal was not adequately defined in the EIS/R to ensure water conservation. As an example a previous comment alluded to, Bouldin Island vegetation management was very late, so much of what was supposed to be conserved was not. The EIS/R has failed to provide descriptions, process, monitoring and contingency plans to guarantee idled crop land does not continue to transpire and use water that was supposed to be conserved. 195
- Long term transfers conflict with Williamson Act conservation as long term fallowed ground with no vegetation is no longer agriculture. 196
- Transfers include water conserved from “crop shifting”. If a grower was to plant alfalfa (very water consumptive use intensive) and then they say they will take that crop out and plant winter wheat instead and sell the water that was “saved” by not continuing to grow the water use intensive crop, it opens the whole project to gaming and false water savings. 197

- “Cropland idling water transfers could permanently or substantially decrease the amount of lands categorized as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland under the FMMP.” was determined in the EIS/R to be a Less Than Significant impact for alternative 2. This is an error as irrigation of the land is a core requirement of the definition of “prime farmland”. The proposed project and alternatives take irrigation water away from as much as 177,000 acres in any alternative that includes land fallowing. Alternative 2 includes land fallowing, so it is a significant impact. Alternative 2 may have less of this impact than alternative 4, but it is still significant and must be mitigated.

198

- The EIS/R fails to identify increased weed pressure on properties adjacent to fallowed fields. This results in additional herbicide applications being required, which has environmental impacts and costs for the adjacent land owner. The EIS/R must be revised to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate and disclose this impact.

199

- Native grasses and herbaceous plants are slow to colonize highly disturbed soils such as idled agricultural fields so the idled fields are primarily initially colonized by exotic and invasive weed species. The EIS/R failed to identify that the proposed project and alternatives operations would increase weed pressure of exotic and invasive plant species. These exotic and invasive plants also alter habitat value for foraging and refuge for wildlife.

200

- The EIS/R failed to analyze proposed project impacts on the suitability of water temperatures for agricultural irrigation beneficial uses. The proposed project increased reservoir releases and tributary flows which result in reduced water temperatures farther downstream which in turn results in increased coldwater impacts on crops. DWR’s Oroville Facilities reached a settlement agreement with the water districts which are affected by water temperatures being too cold for crop production. The settlement agreement has resulted in more than a million dollars per year in compensation to the affected growers. The proposed project operations at Oroville would add to these impacts. Similarly, cold water affects from releases from Shasta reservoir for the project, could precipitate impacts for growers that divert water at TCID and GCID. The EIS/R failed to identify, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose coldwater affect impacts to agricultural irrigation beneficial uses resulting from the Proposed Project or alternatives.

201

- The water transfers must be restricted to avoid inducement of more permanent demand such as conversion of annual crops to permanent crops in the buyer service areas. The EIS/R failed to address the impacts of the water transfers in conversion of crop land to permanent crops and development of permanent demand as a result of the project.

202

- Fields adjacent and downwind of fallowed fields have yield losses from hot dry and dusty air being blown from the bare fields. This impact was not addressed in the EIS/R.

203

- Vegetation removal from Bouldin Island was required for a water transfer to Semitropic Water District in 2014. The herbicide application resulted in the damage to 10s of thousands of acres of agricultural crops. In this case the crop damage included large portions of the Lodi wine grape district. This spray drift damage has been well documented and publicized (<http://wineindustryinsight.com/?p=54211>, <http://www.winebusiness.com/blog/?go=getBlogEntry&dataId=135322>,

204

http://www.lodinews.com/news/article_3c58d352-f196-11e3-8efa-0019bb2963f4.html, http://rivernewsherald.org/articles2014/bouldin_8-6-2014.html) and is estimated to have caused as much as \$1Billion in damages. Bouldin Island is only 5,900 acres. The proposed project could idle as much as 177,000 acres in a year if it utilized its maximum transfer capacity covered under the EIS/R using mostly the crop idling strategy component of its proposed project water conservation. If the transfers were maximized for the 10 year project period and utilized mostly crop idling as its water conservation strategy then over the 10 year project period, there would be as many as 1,770,000 acres that required herbicide treatment. If only 1% of the herbicide treatments for the proposed project water transfers go as badly as the Bouldin Island water transfer, the impact of these water transfers could be \$3 Billion in damages. If you look at the amount of herbicide damage claims associated with water transfer vegetation removal to date, you will find the damage rate is well above 1%. Just talk to some Forensic Agronomists in California that deal with these types herbicide drift cases (e.g. Rush Markroft, Whaley and Stienberg, Bahme and Associates) to get a realistic rate of damages which occur. DWR has a particularly bad track record (probably among the worst in the state when compared to the amount of damages vs. the number of herbicide applied acres) when it comes to damages to third parties from herbicide applications. If the project claims that some or most of the water conservation will not come from crop idling that require herbicide spray weed control, then they must define these limits and analyze and disclose them in the EIS/R. Previous water transfers have proven that herbicide spray drift is a real risk of this type of project and these risks must be evaluated. The EIS/R failed to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose these very real potential impacts of the proposed project. The EIS/R must be revised and recirculated to address these material omissions and deficiencies in the document.

204

Cultural

- The impact criteria for cultural resources are incorrect. It is not an impact only if the reservoir levels are drawn down below historical levels, it is an impact if the reservoir drawdown from proposed project and alternatives operations that result in an increase of the frequency and magnitude of archaeological site exposure within the fluctuation zone of the reservoirs. Any increase in the frequency or magnitude of exposure of cultural or archaeological resources is a significant impact of the project. As an example of a correct impact criteria for this resource in a similar environmental document, see the Cultural Resources reports from the California Department of Water Resources Oroville Facilities Relicensing.

205

Recreation

- The impact calls related to reservoir recreation are incorrect. If the proposed project or alternatives result in an increase in the frequency or earlier calendar date of boat ramp dewatering, then the impact is significant and must be mitigated. As an example of a correct impact criteria for this resource in a similar environmental document, see the Recreation

206

Resources reports from the California Department of Water Resources Oroville Facilities Relicensing.

206

Power

- The EIS/R misses the main impact of the proposed project and alternatives 2 and 4 in the impact of increased energy demand from groundwater pumping and from groundwater level drawdown. The amount of groundwater pumping the project can create definitely could be a significant impact to power resources in northern California, especially with power transmission line capacity constraints in the areas where the groundwater power demand can be anticipated. Additionally, “backed up reservoir” water transfers which are include in the proposed project and all alternatives alter the timing and location (see related comments) of hydroelectric power generation associated with these releases as compared to the No Action/No Project. The EIS/R failed to consider these power generation timing and location, changes in location and timing of power consumption and constraints and impacts on power transmission from the proposed project and alternatives. The EIS/R must be revised to correct these omissions and propose mitigations for these undisclosed significant impacts.

207

Flood Control

- The impact calls relative to project impacts on reservoir storage are flawed. Reservoirs are multipurpose, including flood control and water supply. Flood control comes first in terms of overriding operations as adequate flood control reserve must be managed in the flood control season. If the reservoirs are lower due to proposed project operations, there is no impact to flood control operations as flood control reserve releases are less likely to be triggered and therefore the project has no impact. If flood control reserve releases are activated when the reservoir is fuller due to proposed project operations, the water stored by the project will be spilled first.

208

Regional Economics

- “Water transfers from idling alfalfa could increase costs for dairy and other livestock feed.” This impact category misses the fact that alfalfa would be one of the primary crops not grown in the component of the proposed project for “crop shifting”. When rotation away from water use intensive forage crops in crop shifting is added to the loss of these crop acres in the following part of the proposed project and alternatives, the impact to forage supplies and feed prices to local dairies the impacts could be significant.
- The EIS/R does not disclose if the water transfers are paying proportionate fees for conveyance as the water districts that are paying for the SWP and CVP facilities construction and operations.
- Vegetation removal from Bouldin Island was required for a water transfer in 2014. The use of an unregistered combination of herbicides and misapplication of them has resulted in the damage to 10s of thousands of acres of agricultural crops. In this case the habitat damage

209

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211

included critical habitat for giant garter snake, riparian brush rabbit and rat, tiger salamander, greater sandhill crane, San Joaquin steelhead and Chinook salmon, green sturgeon, delta smelt and other special status species. This spray drift damage has been well documented and publicized (<http://wineindustryinsight.com/?p=54211>, <http://www.winebusiness.com/blog/?go=getBlogEntry&dataid=135322>, http://www.lodinews.com/news/article_3c58d352-f196-11e3-8efa-0019bb2963f4.html, http://rivernewsheald.org/articles2014/bouldin_8-6-2014.html) and is estimated to have caused as much as \$1Billion in damages. Bouldin Island is only 5,900 acres. The proposed project could idle as much as 177,000 acres in a year if it utilized its maximum transfer capacity covered under the EIS/R using mostly the crop idling strategy component of its proposed project water conservation. If the transfers were maximized for the 10 year project period and utilized mostly crop idling as its water conservation strategy then over the 10 year project period, there would be as many as 1,770,000 acres that required herbicide treatment. If only 1% of the herbicide treatments for the proposed project water transfers go as badly as the Bouldin Island water transfer, the impact of these water transfers could be \$3 Billion in damages. Previous water transfers have proven that this is a real risk of this type of project and these risks must be evaluated and \$3 billion in damages to the crops in the seller service areas from the project is a substantial impact to the agricultural industry and local economies that the EIS/R failed to evaluate. The EIS/R failed to identify, characterize, evaluate, quantify, mitigate or disclose these very real potential impacts of the proposed project. The EIS/R must be revised and recirculated to address these material omissions and deficiencies in the document.

211

Environmental Justice

- Fallowed ground and shifting to lower water use intensive crops which are typically less labor intensive than more water intensive crops has significant impacts on disadvantaged local communities, employment opportunities, the working poor, and minority farm workers. Regional economics identifies that 500 people would lose their jobs in the water sellers area from fallowing and crop shifting. The vast majority of these people would be minorities. The EIS/R impact call of "No disproportionately high or adverse effect" is not only incorrect, it is not even a proper NEPA or CEQA impact call.

212

Growth inducement

- Growth inducement was not a section included in the ES summary. Growth inducement consideration is a NEPA requirement.
- These water transfers result in an increase of the economic disparity between the value of water used for agriculture vs. M&I uses. M&I water uses can justify costs in excess of a thousand \$ per acre foot. Almost no crops can be economically grown at a comparable cost to the values that can be justified for M&I uses. The proposed project water transfers inducement creation of permanent demand such as for industrial, urban, commercial or permanent crop use because those water uses can always afford to pay more than the value of the water if it were used for normal row crop production. Therefore, creation of this long

213

214

term water transfer opportunity from the project has significant growth inducement impact from permanent shifting of water use location and beneficial use that must be evaluated, quantified, mitigated and disclosed by the project. The EIS/R must not be approved until these material deficiencies in how it addresses growth inducing impacts are rectified.

214

- Long-term transfers resulting from this project encourage reliance on this water supply. Annual transfers as an alternative for comparison do not. This difference in growth inducement must be evaluated.

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Cumulative

- The EIS/R analysis must be specific as to each transfer and cumulatively. This cumulative analysis must be in conjunction with single year water transfers and other long-term transfers such as the Lower Yuba River Accord.

216

December 1, 2014

BY U.S. MAIL AND EMAIL

[BHUBBARD@USBR.GOV; FRANCES.MIZUNO@SLDMWA.ORG]



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Re: State Water Contractors' Comments on Draft Environmental
Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for Long-
Term Water Transfers

Dear Mr. Hubbard and Ms. Mizuno:

The State Water Contractors ("SWC") appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report ("EIS/EIR") prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation ("Reclamation") and the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority ("SLDMWA") for the proposed Long-Term Water Transfers Project (the "Project"). The SWC understand that Reclamation is serving as the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") and that SLDMWA is serving as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). These comments are provided by the SWC for both NEPA and CEQA.

As Reclamation and SLDMWA know, the SWC is a nonprofit mutual benefit corporation that represents and protects the common interests of its 27 members¹ in California's State Water Project ("SWP"). Collectively, the SWC member agencies utilize the SWP and other facilities to deliver water to more than 26 million residents throughout the state and to more than 750,000 acres of agricultural lands. Hence, the SWC have an interest in any project that may impact SWP water supplies.

¹ The SWC members agencies are: Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Zone 7; Alameda County Water District; Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency; Casitas Municipal Water District; Castaic Lake Water Agency; Central Coastal Water Authority; City of Yuba City; Coachella Valley Water District; County of Kings; Crestline-Lake Arrowhead Water Agency; Desert Water Agency; Dudley Ridge Water District; Empire-West Side Irrigation District; Kern County Water Agency; Littlerock Creek Irrigation District; Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Mojave Water Agency; Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District; Oak Flat Water District; Palmdale Water District; San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District; San Geronio Pass Water Agency; San Luis Obispo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District; Santa Clara Valley Water District; Solano County Water Agency; and Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District.

As described in the EIS/EIR, the Project covers a 10-year period (2015 through 2024) during which water could be transferred between willing sellers and buyers through groundwater substitution, reservoir release, conservation, and other mechanisms. More specifically, the Project would allow Central Valley Project (“CVP”) contractors in areas south of the Delta or in the San Francisco Bay area to purchase transferred water. The transferred water would be conveyed to the purchasers by the sellers through the Delta using existing CVP or SWP facilities and pumps.

1

After reviewing the EIS/EIR, the SWC have several questions regarding the Project and its environmental analysis. Accordingly, the SWC respectfully request that Reclamation and SLDMWA provide further discussion regarding the items identified below in order to more fully comply with NEPA, CEQA, and those laws’ respective public disclosure and analysis requirements. Specifically, the SWC’s questions relate primarily to the analysis of, and mitigation for, potential impacts associated with the Project’s groundwater substitution and reservoir re-operation elements.

1. The SWC request that Reclamation and SLDMWA clarify the criteria for assessing the magnitude of impacts.

Based on the SWC’s review of the EIS/EIR, it is unclear how thresholds of significance or magnitudes of impacts were utilized to determine whether the Project would result in significant impacts to water supplies. The SWC request that the EIS/EIR be clarified to identify with greater specificity how thresholds were applied in both the groundwater substitution and reservoir re-operation contexts, and what specific magnitude of impacts were used when arriving at a significance conclusion.

2

Similarly, when determining whether the Project would result in significant impacts to groundwater resources as a result of groundwater substitution, the EIS/EIR asks whether the Project would cause “[a] net reduction in groundwater levels that would result in adverse environmental effects or effects to non-transferring parties.” (EIS/EIR, p. 3.3-61). Thus, the threshold suggests that any net reduction in groundwater levels or any effect to non-transferring parties (regardless how small) may be significant. The SWC request that the EIS/EIR more clearly identify what standard/magnitude of impact was used for assessing significance. Similarly, the threshold asks whether the Project would result in “adverse environmental effects.” The SWC’s request clarification regarding how “adverse environmental effects” were assessed and what magnitude of impact was used when reaching the significance conclusions in the EIS/EIR.

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Finally, the EIS/EIR could avoid ambiguities by answering the following questions. Is any amount of “permanent land subsidence” considered significant, and how did Reclamation and SLDMWA determine whether “significant groundwater level declines” would occur in the first instance? (See second threshold at EIS/EIR, p. 3.3-61; see also third threshold which appears to be incomplete at EIS/EIR, p. 3.3-61). The SWC request that the EIS/EIR be clarified to more specifically identify how Reclamation and SLDMWA determined the significance/magnitude of Project impacts.

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2. The SWC request that Reclamation and SLDMWA expand the analysis of impacts and also clarify the “Environmental Commitments” and Project features that are relied upon to prevent impacts from arising.

- a. The SWC request a further elaboration on the Project’s impacts on water supply and surface/groundwater interactions

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The discussion of water supply impacts and surface/groundwater interaction confirms the Project’s groundwater substitutions will cause reduced Delta Pumping Station exports on an annual basis. (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-17). However, it is unclear how those reductions were calculated or during which

specific months of the year they are likely to arise. As the EIS/EIR notes, the Biological Opinions (“BiOps”) applicable to the Coordinated Operations of the CVP and SWP typically limit the bulk of Delta exports to the months of July through September. (EIS/EIR, pp. ES-9, 1-11). Accordingly, if Project-induced reductions in exports are all concentrated within a narrow-window (particularly during summertime peak exports), the overall impact on water supply may be disproportionately large. The SWC request clarification regarding what month(s) reductions in exports are likely to occur and what impacts to water supply exports may result.

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Similarly, the SWC request further discussion regarding the groundwater substitutions. Specifically, the SWC request explanation of which specific surface flows are likely to see the largest flow reductions; when those flow reductions are most likely to manifest; and what the magnitude of those reduced volumes may be. As the EIR acknowledges throughout Section 3.3, the geographic area covered by the Project is large and it hosts a wide variety of hydrological and geologic conditions (annual rainfall, volume of groundwater basin, depth to groundwater, etc.). These varying conditions presumably make certain surface flows more vulnerable to the effects of groundwater substitution impacts than others. (See EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-16 [Figure 3.1-2]). Thus, the EIS/EIR should provide a stream-by-stream discussion of whether flow reductions are likely; when those reductions are likely to arise; and what the magnitude of those reductions may be. As described below, mitigation could then be tailored to more specifically address those impacts.

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The EIS/EIR also confirms that reservoir re-operations will cause a drawdown in reservoir levels. (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-19). It is anticipated that this drawdown volume would, over time, be replaced by water that would otherwise flow downstream. (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-18). However, and again as the EIS/EIR alludes to, there are certain flow and salinity requirements arising from the BiOps that regulate Delta exports. If water that would normally flow downstream and assist in meeting BiOp requirements is now withheld in upstream reservoirs (for example, flows that would normally enter the Delta from the San Joaquin River), that could reduce the SWC’s ability to export water from the Delta, an impact that should be described in greater specificity in the EIS/EIR.

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The EIS/EIR also states that reservoir re-operations may result in reservoir drawdowns that require more than one season to refill. (EIS/EIR, p. ES-11). It is unclear how refill would occur, if at all, in periods of multiple drought years akin to the drought conditions that exist today. Ultimately, the SWC request that the EIS/EIR discuss in greater detail how compliance with the BiOps’ flow requirements, water quality requirements (such as salinity targets), and release timing requirements would be affected by reservoir re-operations.

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With regard to cumulative impacts, the SWC request clarification of the discussion regarding groundwater substitution and reservoir re-operation. The EIS/EIR confirms that the cumulative effects analysis spans a ten year period (2014-2024). (EIS/EIR, p. 3.3-91). However, elsewhere the EIS/EIR states that residual reservoir drawdowns and stream flow effects may linger for more than one season, potentially even after any transfers have been completed. The SWC request further discussion to confirm that the Project’s impacts have been captured, including those impacts that may remain even after the 10-year transfer period has concluded. Additionally, it is unclear how the cumulative impacts analysis accounts for the combined pressures of existing CVP and SWP operations, the ongoing drought, the potential effects of BiOps, and other projects. The SWC request that an expanded discussion of those issues be provided.

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- b. The SWC request that “Environmental Commitments” and Project features be further specified.

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The EIS/EIR puts forward a number of measures intended to prevent water supply impacts from occurring. The SWC appreciate those efforts, and agree that proactive management is appropriate to prevent impacts from arising. However, the SWC believe that the proposal could be improved with more specific details of those measures specified as part of the current EIS/EIR process.

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As one example, all transfers (including both groundwater substitution and reservoir re-operation) are subject to a “carriage water” requirement that is aimed at maintaining water quality in the Delta. (EIS/EIR, p. 2-29). It is unclear if this carriage water factors is intended to be duplicative of the stream flow depletion requirement imposed by Mitigation Measure WS-1, or if the carriage water concept is an entirely separate and distinct requirement.

As another example, the EIS/EIR states that all reservoir re-operation transfers would be subject to a “refill agreement” between the seller and Reclamation to prevent impacts to downstream users. (EIS/EIR, p. 2-11). However, it is unclear how quickly refill would be required or how such an agreement would be enforced. Likewise, the EIS/EIR states that the refill agreements would require refill of reservoirs only when it would not adversely affect downstream water users.” (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-19). It is unclear to the SWC what standards apply for making that determination and which party (the seller, the buyer, the downstream water user, or DWR/Reclamation) would have the burden to prove or disprove any adverse impact. The SWC request clarification of the specific performance standards and enforcement mechanisms for the refill agreements, such as withholding water to refill reservoirs only occurs during times when Delta water exports are not occurring.

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The EIS/EIR also confirms that Delta water quality may be adversely impacted by reduced flows or changed timing of flows. Thus, “Reclamation and DWR would need to either decrease Delta exports or release additional flow from upstream reservoirs to meet flow or water quality standards.” (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-16). The SWC request further details on how this Reclamation/DWR process would be implemented; which entity would bear responsibility for documenting the decision; and what factors Reclamation and DWR anticipate applying in deciding whether to cut water supply exports or release upstream reservoir volumes. Similarly, the SWC request elaboration on whether upstream reservoir volumes are likely to be available, particularly as the EIS/EIR elsewhere confirms that total reservoir volume is likely to decrease for more than one season at a time. (See EIS/EIR, p. ES-11).

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Finally, the EIS/EIR states that transferred water would only be used to meet existing needs and not future or expanded needs. (EIS/EIR, pp. ES-1, 1-1). The SWC request elaboration on how this Project feature will be monitored to ensure that no unanticipated impacts will arise.

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3. The SWC request that Reclamation and SLDMWA clarify the mitigation to ensure performance with specific criteria.

Here – separate and apart from the “Environmental Commitments” and Project feature concerns addressed above – the SWC believe Mitigation Measure WS-1 requires the implementation of a stream flow depletion factor, which will be developed at a future date and subject to change, and which will be designed to offset any water supply impacts and prevent conflict with the “no injury” rule that may otherwise arise from groundwater substitution transfers. (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-21). However, measure WS-1 does not identify what specific minimum depletion factor would be required. Instead, it appears that this decision is left largely to DWR and Reclamation’s future discretion. The SWC request further elaboration on how this factor would be developed and enforced, and the SWC recommend that a minimum stream flow depletion factor percentage be established now as part of the current EIS/EIR process.

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Likewise, measure WS-1 provides that the stream flow depletion factor will be established “in consultation with buyers and sellers.” (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-21). However, many of the entities that may suffer injury as a result of any approved transfer are actually downstream water recipients that are neither the buyer nor the seller in the transfer. Thus, the SWC request that measure WS-1 be modified to state that any depletion factor will only be established in consultation with buyers, seller, and other potentially affected parties.

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Further, measure WS-1 states that no water transfer will be approved if it violates the “no injury rule.” (EIS/EIR, p. 3.1-21). The SWC request that the Mitigation Measure be revised to elaborate on who bears the burden of proving/disproving injury, and what information would be relevant to that determination.

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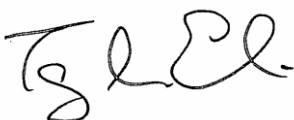
Similarly, the SWC request that Mitigation Measure GW-1 be revised to further explain how long-term decreases in surface flows will be prevented or mitigated. As set forth above, the EIS/EIR confirms that surface flows may decrease as a result of increased groundwater pumping. The EIS/EIR confirms that surface flows may experience some decrease over baseline conditions as groundwater basins subsequently recharge. Without further details, it appears that surface water flows may be decreased for a period of 10+ continuous years as transfers result in an ongoing tradeoff between groundwater pumping and groundwater recharge (both of which would reduce flows in surface stream). Thus, the SWC would appreciate further explanation of how Mitigation Measure GW-1 will prevent that long-term reduction in surface flows from occurring. One recommendation is to provide a body-by-body performance standard that states how much reduction in surface water flows would be allowed and over what time period in order to assure that no significant impacts result.

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In conclusion, the SWC thank Reclamation and the SLDMWA for the opportunity to review and comment upon the EIS/EIR. The SWC appreciate the Project’s overall goal of increasing flexibility and reliability with regard to management of CVP water supplies. However, the SWC do request that Reclamation and SLDMWA expand on the issues identified above in order to comply with CEQA and NEPA. SWC believe it is necessary to provide a fuller and more complete environmental analysis under NEPA and CEQA to help ensure that the Project does not provide a benefit to certain water providers to the potential detriment of others.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-7357 ext. 203.

Sincerely,



Terry Erlewine
General Manager



COUNTY OF YOLO

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December 1, 2014

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Re: Comments on Draft EIS/EIR on Proposed Long-Term Water Transfers

Dear Mr. Hubbard and Ms. Mizuno:

The County of Yolo ("County") submits this letter to provide its initial comments on the Long Term Water Transfers Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report ("Draft EIS/EIR"). The County is continuing to review the Draft EIS and may submit further comments in early 2015.

Altogether, the Executive Summary of the Draft EIS/EIR indicates that up to 86,000 acre-feet of surface water could be transferred each year from 2015 through 2024 from properties within Yolo County to buyers in the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Agency ("SLDMA") service area, as well as the Contra Costa Water District and East Bay Municipal Utility District. The County's comments focus on proposed transfers within Yolo County and, in particular, on the potential transfer of up to 35,000 acre-feet annually ("af/yr") from Conaway Ranch. Notwithstanding this letter's focus on transfers from Yolo County, however, the following comments apply equally to other proposed transfers and the Draft EIS/EIR generally.

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1. General Comments.

As an overall matter, the County disagrees with the conclusion that Alternative 2 (the "Proposed Action" analyzed in the Draft EIS/EIR) will not have any significant, unavoidable adverse effects. Even considering the "environmental commitments" described in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR/EIS, it is objectively unreasonable to conclude that the potential transfer of slightly over 500,000 af/yr and associated groundwater substitutions, cropland idling, and other measures within the selling areas will somehow not cause any significant, unavoidable adverse effects. There are a host of specific reasons why this conclusion is inappropriate, including an overreliance on assumptions that lack a sound evidentiary basis and other factors discussed in the following section of this letter.

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Altogether, these analytical flaws distort the comparison of the Proposed Action to other alternatives that could reduce environmental effects associated with cropland idling (Alternative 3) and groundwater substitutions (Alternative 4). The deficient analysis of the Proposed Action's environmental effects compromises the analysis of Alternatives 3 and 4, as well as the ultimate conclusion that those alternatives are not "environmentally superior"

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to the Proposed Action. The timeframe for analysis—a ten-year period between 2015 and 2024—is also artificial and appears to have been contrived for the purpose of environmental analysis, independent of any proposed transactions or other relevant factors. A shorter transactional timeframe (such as five years) should be used to ensure that environmental effects are appropriately studied as they become apparent, rather than dismissed several years from now by virtue of the inappropriate use of a ten-year period in the Draft EIS/EIR.

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These fundamental flaws in the Draft EIS/EIR are alone sufficient to support revising the document in several respects, as noted more specifically below. The Draft EIS/EIR should also be recirculated for further public review after these deficiencies are addressed.

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2. Issue-Specific Comments.

The County's specific comments fall into three categories: (A) subsidence and public safety; (B) agricultural and economic impacts; (C) impacts on terrestrial species, including migratory waterfowl.

A. Subsidence and Public Safety.

The Draft EIS/EIR fails (albeit understandably) to consider recent information relating to subsidence on the Conaway Ranch during the Summer of 2014. A copy of the report on subsidence produced by MBK Engineers on November 12, 2014 is attached hereto. As that report documents, portions of the Conaway Ranch subsided by up to 17 centimeters (6.5 inches) in a three-month period. That three-month period coincided with the transfer of about 25,000 af of surface water to the Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority via groundwater substitution.

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The County acknowledges that it is not possible to determine the relative contribution of increased groundwater pumping and the following of thousands of acres of farmland on Conaway Ranch to the observed subsidence. However, the overall circumstances support a serious concern that further surface water transfers will cause or contribute to similar effects if up to 35,000 af/year is transferred from Conaway Ranch in the future (in addition to 10,000 af/year that Conaway Preservation Group is contractually obligated to deliver to local cities). This concern is particularly acute because the Yolo Bypass passes through Conaway Ranch. The levees of the Yolo Bypass are already known to suffer from various deficiencies, as documented in the Draft EIR for the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan in 2012 and numerous other public documents. Subsidence can further compromise levee integrity (Draft EIS/EIR at p. 3.3-28) and, in turn, increase public safety risks within Yolo County.

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Further analysis is required in the Draft EIS/EIR to determine the potential magnitude of such effects and, in addition, to enable proper consideration of the findings required for surface water transfers by Water Code § 1745.10 (relating to conditions of long-term overdraft in affected groundwater basins). These are serious concerns that deserve specific attention in the Draft EIS/EIR, which should be recirculated after it is revised to include a discussion of the new information available on subsidence within the Conaway Ranch. The potential for adverse short-term subsidence effects should also be considered, as even subsidence of a limited duration could impact levee integrity and increase public safety risks (as well as the environmental consequences of large-scale inundation of urban areas if the Yolo Bypass levees fail).

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In addition, Mitigation Measure GW-1 (Monitoring Program and Mitigation Plans) is legally inadequate. By its own terms, it applies only if "substantial adverse impacts" are determined to occur as a consequence of increased groundwater pumping due to surface water transfers. (Draft EIS/EIR at p. 3.3-90.) It assumes, without any apparent basis, that such "substantial adverse impacts" are entirely reversible and can be reduced to a less than significant level through mitigation plans backed by "financial assurances." Much more is needed to explain the conclusion that such mitigation plans will be effective, that adequate financial assurances can be provided (particularly for impacts on major public infrastructure such as levees), and that Mitigation Measure GW-1 is otherwise sufficient in all instances to reduce even the short-term adverse effects of subsidence and other effects of groundwater pumping to a less than significant level. Additionally, the Draft EIS/EIR should study mitigation measures (or project alternatives) that include common-sense approaches such as lower levels of transfers and/or related groundwater pumping.

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B. Agricultural and Economic Impacts.

The Executive Summary of the Draft EIS/EIR explains that the proposed transfers are primarily intended is to support agriculture within SLDMA boundaries. Ironically however, all of the identified drawbacks of the "no action alternative" in the Draft EIS/EIR--increased groundwater pumping, cropland idling, and land retirement within the SLDMA--could occur within the selling areas if the transfers proceed. These effects range from minor to significant, as explained in Chapter 3.9 of the document.

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Despite this, the Draft EIS/EIR does not contain sufficient mitigation measures or other constraints upon the proposed transfers to ensure that the adverse effects of water shortages are not simply transferred from the SLDMA to the selling areas. There is no legal or practical reason why this should be so. For instance, the Draft EIR/EIS could easily contain safeguards that limit transfers to the extent necessary to avoid environmentally and/or economically significant effects on groundwater pumping, cropland idling, and land retirement within the selling areas. Such mitigation measures (or project alternatives) should be included for consideration in a recirculated version of the Draft EIS/EIR. More detailed consideration of the potential for Alternatives 3 and 4 to reduce such effects should also be included in the recirculated document.

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The Draft EIS/EIR also takes an inappropriately narrow view of "agricultural impacts." It focuses largely on whether cropland idling and changes in cropping patterns will "substantially decrease" the amount of affected farmland designated Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland during the limited term of the transfer program studied in the Draft EIS/EIR. This impact is deemed less than significant under Alternative 2, primarily because cropland idling will be for relatively short periods of time during the ten-year duration of the studied transfers.

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This analytical approach is flawed because the water transfers facilitated by the Draft EIS/EIR will lead to continued demand (post-2024) for additional water transfers to support agricultural, municipal, and industrial uses within the boundaries of the SLDMA and other purchasing entities. For this reason, the ten-year term of the environmental analysis is entirely artificial. It has no connection to real-world demands, which will extend long past 2024, nor does it have any apparent connection to legal or other characteristics of the proposed transfers. A short-term view of the environmental and economic effects of creating a water transfer program is therefore inappropriate because it can be seen with reasonable certainty that, analogous to the growth-inducing effects of urban development projects, the demand for such transfers will continue beyond the limited life of the program. The Draft EIS/EIR should be revised to account for the basic reality that water transfers will lead to (and likely increase the demand for) more water transfers, well beyond the ten-year period of the analysis.

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Finally, the potential adverse economic impacts of the proposed transfers are considerable, particularly within Yolo, Colusa, and Glenn Counties. The Draft EIS/EIR notes that, among other things, over 40,000 acres in rice land alone in the Sacramento Region may not be farmed due to the potential water transfers. In those three counties alone, up to 362 jobs may be lost and the projected declines in labor income and economic output are \$11.1 million and \$45.46 million, respectively.

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These economic effects (and the related potential for indirect environmental effects) deserve considerably more analysis. To use one example, the potential decline of rice cultivation in the Yolo Bypass due to water transfers, ecosystem restoration, and other projects (which should be included in an analysis of cumulative impacts) could lead to a "tipping point"—meaning that rice cultivation ceases to be commercially viable even on unaffected lands throughout the County—due to a decline in rice volumes, the resulting closure of local rice mills, and the eventual rise of unit processing costs to unacceptable levels. None of this appears to have received meaningful consideration in the Draft EIS/EIR.

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C. Impacts on Terrestrial Species, Including Migratory Waterfowl.

The Draft EIS/EIS concludes that potential adverse effects on habitat availability and suitability for terrestrial species due to cropland idling/shifting under Alternatives 2 and 4 would be less than significant. This is simply wrong, particularly (though not only) for species that depend on flooded agricultural fields and associated irrigation waterways. Not only does this analytical shortcoming render the Draft EIS/EIR deficient under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), it also calls into

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question whether the proposed transfers meet the requirements of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act of 1992 (which prohibits water transfers will adversely affect water supplies for fish and wildlife) and similar provisions of the California Water Code (e.g., Cal. Water Code §§ 1725 and 1736).

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For the giant garter snake, the analysis of these issues in the Draft EIS/EIR is particularly deficient. The analysis at pp. 3-8.68 through 3-8.70 is highly general and simply states the obvious (i.e., that some individual members of the species will be subject to increased predation and other risks due to habitat displacement) before concluding that impacts are unlikely to be significant. The conclusion appears to be nothing more than speculation.

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Also, the "environmental commitments" described at p. 2-29 are unlikely to be sufficient to protect giant garter snake populations in Yolo County. The commitments primarily limit restrictions on transfers from fields "abutting or immediately adjacent to" the "land side" of the Toe Drain along Willow Slough and Willow Slough Bypass in Yolo County. (Draft EIS/EIS at p. 2-29.) This very narrow restriction that fails to fully account for the wide distribution of the giant garter snake across parcels not immediately adjacent to the Toe Drain. Accordingly, the Draft EIS/EIR does not sufficiently explain how this restriction supports a conclusion that impacts will be less than significant.

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Similarly troubling is the complete absence of any analysis of the potential effects of the proposed water transfers on the Swainson's hawk or migratory waterfowl. Numerous passages in Chapter 3-8 indicate that the authors of the Draft EIS/EIR understand that agricultural fields and natural communities affected by the proposed transfers currently support abundant Swainson's hawk and migratory waterfowl populations. Despite this, however, there is no meaningful analysis of potential impacts on the Swainson's hawk or migratory waterfowl. Effects resulting from the fallowing of fields--and for migratory waterfowl, particularly the loss of up to 40,000 in rice annually--need to be analyzed carefully in the Draft EIS/EIR.

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* * *

Overall, as this letter describes, the Draft EIS/EIR needs significant revisions and recirculation to meet the requirements of CEQA and NEPA. The County requests notice of any hearings or other public discussions of the Draft EIS/EIR or the water transfers studied therein, as well as copies of any documents subsequently produced under CEQA or NEPA for the proposed transfers. Such notice is required by CEQA, as the County is a "responsible agency" within the meaning of that statute. As noted above, the County is continuing to review the Draft EIS and may submit further comments in early 2014.

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Very truly yours,



Patrick S. Blacklock
Yolo County Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Yolo County Board of Supervisors