State Water Board's Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan, Phase 1

Stanislaus County
Water Advisory Committee

Sept. 10, 2014

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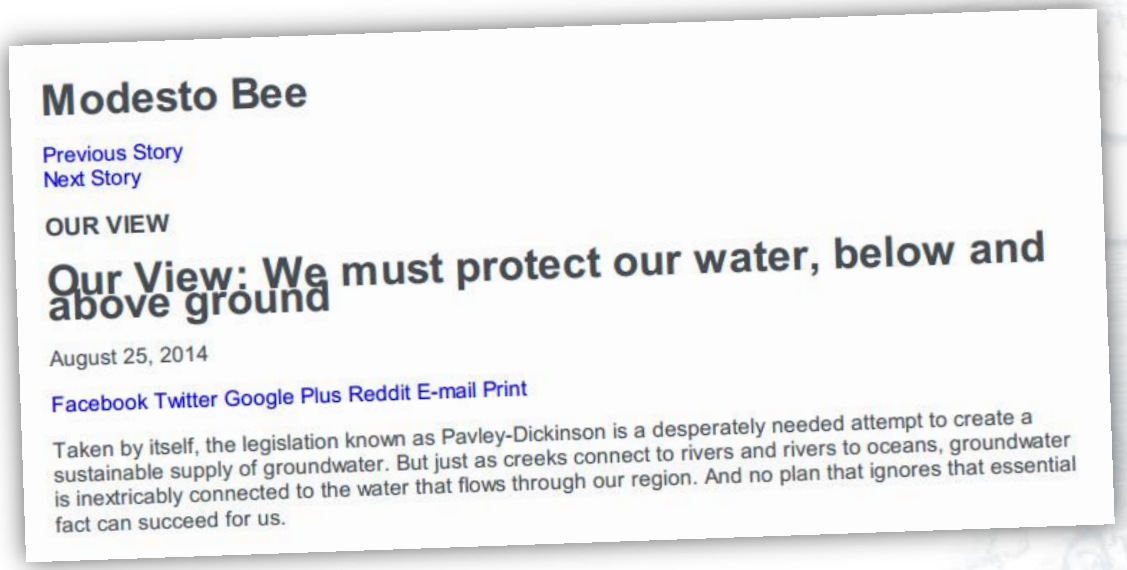

Modesto Bee

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OUR VIEW

Our View: We must protect our water, below and above ground

August 25, 2014

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Taken by itself, the legislation known as Pavley-Dickinson is a desperately needed attempt to create a sustainable supply of groundwater. But just as creeks connect to rivers and rivers to oceans, groundwater is inextricably connected to the water that flows through our region. And no plan that ignores that essential fact can succeed for us.

"…the State Water Resources Control Board is formulating demands to send vastly more water down the Merced, Tuolumne and Stanislaus rivers into the Delta. The goal is to improve survival for salmon…"

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SWRCB's Bay-Delta Plan

- About the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan
- Phases of Plan Update
  - **Phase 1: Update of the San Joaquin River flow and southern Delta salinity objectives and program of implementation**
  - Phase 2: Comprehensive review and update of other components of the Bay-Delta Plan and program of implementation
  - Phase 3: Amendment of water rights and other measures to implement changes to the Bay-Delta Plan resulting from Phases 1 and 2
  - Phase 4: Development and implementation of flow criteria and flow objectives for priority tributaries to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta watershed, with a focus on the Sacramento River watershed

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SWRCB Phase 1 background

- Feb. 2009 notice of preparation
- April 2011 revised NOP to plan for SED
- March 2012 technical app released for review
- **Draft SED released Dec. 2012**
- SWRCB March 20-21, 2013 workshop
  - Presentations, testimony
- June 2013: SWRCB staff recirculates SED
- Original adoption of final SED planned for 8/6/13

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What does Phase 1 SED outline?

- LSJR Flow Alternatives 1-4
  - SWRCB staff recommendation= 35% UF from Feb-June annually on each of three SJR tributaries
  - Revised SED recommendation?
- per current FERC license, TID and MID
  - Critically dry year: 94,000 AF instream flows
  - Wet year: 300,923 AF instream flows
- per 35% UF flow proposal
  - Critically dry year estimation
  - Wet year estimation

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What it would do to the region

- Our region relies on surface water
- Less surface water for region = problems
- Flows described in the SED will negatively impact the socioeconomic fabric of our region
  - In dry years, regionally (*SJTA, 2013 numbers*)
    - Up to 210,000 acres fallowed
    - Up to 1,200 jobs lost
    - Up to $187 million in ag sector income loss
    - Up to 25 percent increase in GW pumping
  - Long-term direct and indirect impacts?

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What it would do to the region

- Hydropower
  - more generation at a time of *low* demand (Feb. to June)
  - less water in DP in summer = less generation at time of *peak* demand
  - May need to buy supplemental power from conventional sources
  - Possible additional impacts on electric rates

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What it would do to the region

- Groundwater
  - GW is historic *hydrological drought* buffer
    - As surface water becomes less reliable, more people rely on GW
  - Would SED cause *regulatory drought*?
    - Increased demand for GW
    - Less GW recharge
    - Fewer opportunities to capture SW storage
  - Sustainable GW Management Act of 2014

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“Significant and unavoidable”

LSJR Alternative 2 **20 % UF**	Groundwater pumping to replace reduction in surface water diversions is expected to increase less than 5 percent of existing pumping. Therefore, a substantial depletion of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge would not occur.	Less than significant
LSJR Alternative 3 **40 % UF**	Groundwater pumping to replace reduction in surface water diversions is expected to be more than 5 percent of existing pumping in three subbasins (Modesto, Turlock, and Merced). Therefore, it is expected that a substantial depletion of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge would occur.	Significant and unavoidable
LSJR Alternative 4 **60% UF**	Groundwater pumping to replace reduction in surface water diversions is expected to be more than 5 percent of existing pumping in four subbasins (Eastern San Joaquin, Modesto, Turlock, and Merced). Therefore, it is expected that a substantial depletion of groundwater supplies or substantial interference with groundwater recharge would occur.	Significant and unavoidable

Water to canals is valuable

- Socioeconomic numbers
  - Within TID
    - Value of crops produced: $359.3 million
    - Avg. land values: $20,000 per acre (2007-2012); twice CA average
  - Within study area (area served by MID and TID)
    - Milk production value supported: $537.4 million
    - Don Pedro Project supports $4.109 billion in economic output and $734.8 million in labor income

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Some fundamental beliefs

- Flows described in the SED will negatively impact the socioeconomic fabric of our region
- Flow approach misses mark
  - no guarantee fish will thrive; seems cavalier
- No guarantee water gets to Delta
- Non-flow measures can work; predation control, habitat restoration
- Span of control; cannot be held responsible for salmon survival to Pacific Ocean and back to Tuolumne

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What's to come

- Revised SED completed as early as fall (October?) of 2014 for review
- Comment period to submit written comments
- Public hearing held before the State Board
- State Board looking to adopt the document before 2015

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Impact aware? Yes

Table ES-3. Significant and Unavoidable Impacts of the LSJR and SDWQ Alternatives

Environmental Resource Area	Alternative					
	LSJR Alternative 1 and SDWQ Alternative 1 (No Project)	LSJR Alternative 2	LSJR Alternative 3	LSJR Alternative 4	SDWQ Alternative 2	SDWQ Alternative 3
Water Supply, Surface Hydrology, and Water Quality	S	S	S	S	L	L
Flooding, Sediment, and Erosion	L	L	L	L	N	N
Aquatic Resources	S	S	L	L	N	N
Terrestrial Biological Resources	S	S	L	L	L	L
Groundwater Resources	S	L	S	S	N	N
Recreational Resources and Visual Quality	L	L	S	S	N	N
Agricultural Resources	S	L	S	S	L	L
Cultural Resources	L	L	L	L	N	N
Service Providers	S	L	S	S	S	L
Energy Resources and Climate Change	S	L	S	S	N	N

Notes:

Gray cells indicated significant and unavoidable impacts

S = significant and unavoidable impact

L = less than significant impact

N = no impact