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News Release

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Locals Finally Allowed to Meet with State Water Officials to Discuss Proposed Water Grab from Local Rivers

Stanislaus County, CA – It’s a story that has played out like a local community’s worst nightmare, as the State power structure has imposed its will while turning a deaf ear to the devastating local impacts. On September 15, 2016, the State Water Resources Control Board released their Substitute Environmental Document (SED) for public review and comment. This controversial 2000-page document took years for Water Board staff to create and the public has been given just 60-days to review the document and give comments.

The Stanislaus County Water Advisory Committee (WAC) will meet with a representative from the Water Board on **Wednesday, September 28, at 9 a.m.** to hear a brief presentation and then discuss the Water Board’s proposal to push up to 50% unimpaired water flows from local rivers into the Delta. The meeting will take place at the **1020 10th Street in Modesto at the Kirk Lindsey Center** (across from Brendan Theaters) and is open to the public and media.

“We’ve pleaded with them to look at our data and to discuss the local issues and we are continually ignored, stated Terry Withrow, District 3 Supervisor for Stanislaus County and WAC member.” “It’s unthinkable in this day and age that a government agency could operate like this . . . but it’s happening. Now we’re afraid it’s just too late.”

Complaints by local officials about the SED include:

- Water Board staff refusing to reveal assumptions for their report;
- Refusing to review local water data that has been captured over the years for inclusion in the report;

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- Refusing to work collaboratively and in good faith with local communities;
- Refusing to discuss local proposal alternatives;
- Refusing to acknowledge the local importance of groundwater recharge;
- Refusing to acknowledge the severe environmental impacts of their proposal to underserved communities who are at great risk; and
- Refusing to acknowledge the severity of local economic impacts and significantly understating these in their staff report.

An August 25, 2016, Modesto Bee editorial noted:

“Historically, the Sacramento River has supplied 75 percent to 80 percent of the Delta’s water. But the new Bay Delta Conservation Plan would divert much of the Sacramento’s flow south before it ever reaches the Delta – leaving only the San Joaquin River and its tributaries to improve conditions.”

It continued to state:

“Why should we alone be responsible for fixing the Delta? No similar demands are being made on Sacramento, whose unimpaired flow is 23 times greater than that of the Tuolumne. As we said, it’s all connected.”

If the public would like more information on the Water Advisory Committee Meeting, they can go to www.stancounty.com/er/groundwater/

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