

A Resolution to Stop the Exporters' Proposals for Sacramento Valley Water

April 16, 2004 version

Note: This resolution may be edited and added to as seen fit by the endorsing organization.

For more information contact Sacramento River Preservation Trust, Friends Of The River, Butte Environmental Council or see the Sacramento Valley Environmental Water Caucus website at <http://svewc.org/>

WHEREAS

In a fast growing state where it seldom rains during the summer, and the entire south is classified as a desert, water is precious to everyone, and

WHEREAS The Sacramento Valley has enough water for a thriving economy, sustainable agriculture production, great recreation, and valuable fish and wildlife habitat, but may not have enough if farms and cities south of the Delta gain long-term rights to Valley supplies, and

WHEREAS Federal and state water contractors including the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Kern County Water Agency, and the Westlands Water District are now pursuing efforts to increase the amount of water that is exported out of the Delta and the amount of fresh water that enters the Delta from the north, with exports out of the Sacramento Valley to increase by as much as 1.5 million acre feet of water per year , and

WHEREAS The primary source of this water will be existing surface and groundwater supplies in the Valley, with much of this expected to come from the fallowing of farmland in the Valley and major increases in groundwater pumping with its associated negative economic impacts to the region, and

WHEREAS

The exporters along with their allies in the Valley are pursuing approval before the end of summer 2004, of key elements needed to dramatically increase export of supplies from the north state including the South Delta Improvement Projects, the Environmental Water Account, the State and Federal Aqueduct Intertie, the Central Valley Project's Operational Criteria and Plan, and the North Delta Improvement Project, and

WHEREAS The scientific studies and monitoring data necessary to provide adequate information regarding how much harm will be caused by the exporter plans for Valley groundwater supplies and wells, stream flows, fish and water quality have not been done, and

WHEREAS Use over time can affect water rights especially as the more populated southern parts of the state become reliant on supplies from the Sacramento Valley, and they continue to have the political and financial ability to protect their supply through the courts or the legislature and at a minimum tie up Valley lawyers for years, and

WHEREAS As a result of increased exports south, water levels in Lake Shasta, Oroville and other Valley reservoirs will fluctuate more and degrade recreational boating, fishing and other activities on those regional recreational resources, flow releases from dams into the rivers will suffer even greater modifications, harming environmental and human uses and resulting in an economic loss to the Valley, and

WHEREAS A host of Valley wildlife species, including threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead, many riparian and wetland dependent birds and other wildlife need naturally functioning streams and reliable groundwater levels to survive and recover, and these conditions will be much more difficult to achieve with increased exports from the Valley, and

WHEREAS If any actual water for irrigation purposes is surplus to the needs of the Valley, it should first be made available to meet other consumptive and environmental needs in the Valley before being sold to the south, and

WHEREAS The proposal to dramatically change state and federal project operations and infrastructure in order to increase exports out of the Delta and Sacramento Valley should be fully analyzed in a transparent process readily accessible to the public with analysis on other alternatives that would require water importers to develop additional local supplies through increased water use efficiency and conservation, water reclamation, desalinization, fallowing of irrigated land poisoned by selenium, and other options, and

WHEREAS It is neither a fair nor a sound policy to focus on exporting Valley water before first fully considering all other water conservation, use reduction and alternative supply methods

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED TO

1. Write an official letter to the governor, local state representatives, and the California Bay Delta Authority requesting that they stop advancing the South Delta Improvement Project, OCAP, and other components in the effort to increase the export of water out of the Sacramento Valley and the Delta until a thorough analysis of the alternatives are completed include alternatives that have Southern California developing its own water supplies, and
2. Meet and unite with other Sacramento Valley interests in a long term plan to protect the Valley's water supplies and advance the science, computer modeling, communication, knowledge and education needed for Valley interests to fully understand the options they have to save and safely transfer water around and out of the area of origin, and
3. Educate the public in other ways such as through letters to the editor, newsletters, public speaking engagements and other opportunities.