



Response to State Water Board Bay Delta Plan

Sept. 15, 2016

The State Water Resources Control Board today released the long-anticipated Bay Delta Plan environmental document. This plan calls for significant diversions of Merced River water away from eastern Merced County and sends it north toward the San Francisco Bay Delta for the purported benefit of salmon, water quality and agriculture.

This water would normally be stored in MID's Lake McClure for use in eastern Merced County. The State's diversion of water will have a devastating impact on local groundwater quality used by cities, rural residents and farmers alike, as well as cause peripheral harm to our [local environment](#). It will [cost our economy](#) more than \$230 million in economic activity and nearly 1,000 jobs.

The State's plan attempts to improve salinity and water quality in the Southern Delta in part for agriculture. Yet this approach overlooks the salinity that will result to our disadvantaged community's water quality, the loss of local agriculture production and local environmental impacts.

The State's Plan notes "Reclamation of farmland in the Delta ... (has) played a significant role in fish and wildlife species plummeting." Yet the plan seeks to address these issues simply by diverting more water long used by our community to benefit Delta farmers and cities.

MID has spent decades and millions of dollars on Merced River fishery science and modeling. The District is certain the Bay Delta Plan will fail to meet its stated objective of improving the salmon populations. The District has long advocated a more responsible, comprehensive approach to increased salmon production on the Merced River through vital habitat restoration, predation control and more appropriate flow regimes. In the coming weeks MID will be releasing the Merced River S.A.F.E. Plan (**S**almon, **A**griculture, **F**lows and **E**nvironment).

Today MID has joined dozens of other local government agencies, business organizations and irrigation districts from the eastern San Joaquin Valley in opposing the State's Bay Delta Plan. To read the letter [click here](#).

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