

## **CALIFORNIANS FOR A FAIR WATER POLICY**

*No Wasteful Water Projects*

**No Tunnels!**

<http://www.stopthetunnels.org>

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### **Farmers, Fishermen, Environmentalists & Consumers Launch Campaign Against BDCP Tunnels:**

**Too Costly, Create No New Water, Better Solutions Available**  
***\$50 billion Boondoggle – Urban Families & Businesses Pay for West  
Side San Joaquin Valley Mega-Growers' Water***

**Sacramento, CA** - Californians for a Fair Water Policy, a statewide coalition opposing Gov. Brown's water export tunnels, today launched a statewide campaign by their members (Restore the Delta, Food & Water Watch, Environmental Water Caucus, AquAlliance, Friends of the River, California Water Impact Network, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, and Southern California Watershed Alliance) and allies, including elected leaders, Sierra Club California, the Winnemem Wintu, the Planning and Conservation League, Earth Law Center, the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, First Generation Farmers, California Striped Bass Association, Local Areas of the North Delta, the Butte Environmental Council, the South Delta Water Agency, and a dozen other groups to defeat the BDCP project. The groups rallied at the State Capitol as the Brown Administration released their proposed tunnels project. Opponents pointed out expected damage to water, the environment, fish, farming and water ratepayers.

Opponents pointed out "fatal flaws" of the tunnels they said would be too costly, create no new water and do nothing to increase regional water self-reliance. Experts identified many impacts from the tunnels that would damage water quality, harm the environment, destroy fisheries and sustainable farming, and impose billions of dollars of increases on water ratepayers. Two-thirds of the water would go to huge agricultural operations on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, engaged in unsustainable agriculture, growing permanent crops on arid land.

The opponents assailed the failure to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the proposal, in addition to the lack of a finance plan, and said the costs would fall on water ratepayers to subsidize unsustainable mega-growers.

Organizers also note that as stated in a September [Los Angeles Times](#) article, only 36% of respondents to a poll conducted by the University of Southern California's Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics would support the Bay Delta Conservation Plan when they learned that

it would cost tax payers and water rate payers \$25 billion.

*Below please find opposition statements from leaders and organizations across California.*

**Quotes from Leading Opponents:**

“AquAlliance can show you what drives this project and what it could do to California’s largest watershed (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yL6shak8Jnw>). There is little doubt that the massive tunnels will drain the Sacramento River and North State aquifers, diminish vital flows into the already stressed Delta, further stress native salmon runs, and destroy 150-year-old family farms to benefit unsustainable corporate agribusiness on the west-side of the San Joaquin Valley,” stated **Barbara Vlamis, Executive Director of AquAlliance.**

**Assemblymember Jim Frazier (11<sup>th</sup> Assembly)** said, “As the Assemblymember who represents three-quarters of the Delta, proper management of this regional, state, and national treasure is a primary concern for not only me, but also for the constituents that I proudly represent. The conveyance and conservation methods proposed by the Bay Delta Conservation Plan will not only destroy the already fragile Delta ecosystem, but also its agricultural vitality, economic prosperity, and overall communal livelihood. I will continue to do everything in my power to ensure that the Delta is protected by advocating for alternative measures which are less destructive, such as water conservation and improved water quality, responsible management of land use and development, and preservation for environmental and economic sustainability.”

“What is being left out of the discussion is that to fill the Twin Tunnels, surface water will be increasingly exported from the north and replaced with an already overburdened unregulated groundwater supply. This not only transfers environmental and economic damage north, but puts the existing water supply for the entire state at risk,” said **Carol Perkins, Water Policy Advocate, Butte Environmental Council.**

“In the final analysis, BDCP is a blatant water grab and represents an insidious attack by powerful special interests in the south state on the fisheries, farms, communities and future prosperity of California,” said **Bill Jennings, Executive Director of the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance.**

**Carolee Krieger, California Water Impact Network (C-WIN),** said, “These documents are a whitewash of a white elephant. The BDCP is a sham and a scam -- fluffy propaganda for a project that will burden ratepayers and taxpayers with ruinous debt for the benefit of a few hundred corporate farms. Nor will the Twin Tunnels deliver any extra water to South State ratepayers. In fact, if Bay/Delta flows meeting the biological

standards of the scientific community are established, there will be *less* water available for export, not more – and that means everything squandered on the Twin Tunnels will have been money for nothing.”

**Bill Wells, Executive Director for the California Delta Chambers & Visitor's Bureau** said, "The \$54 billion Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) will be devastating to the boating and recreation industry in the California Delta. Recreation adds more than \$350 million a year to the local economy and provides about 5,300 jobs to the Delta region. This will all be at risk if the state goes ahead with its plans to divert the Sacramento River around the Delta."

“We are back to 20<sup>th</sup> century reactions for a 21<sup>st</sup> century problem. California can do better,” said **Linda Sheehan, Executive Director, Earth Law Center**.

**Colin Bailey, Executive Director, Environmental Justice Coalition for Water** said, “There are communities, both rural and urban, throughout this state without access to clean, safe, and affordable water. BDCP does not address these issues and that must be our first priority.”

**Nick di Croce of the Environmental Water Caucus** said "BDCP is an ill-conceived project, being driven by exporters who want more water from the Delta despite all the science that says we should be reducing exports in order to protect the Delta. And the more we look at BDCP costs, the more it becomes apparent that the tunnels are a bad investment, especially in view of less costly and more sustainable solutions that don't need tunnels."

**Alli Cecchini of First Generation Farmers (Contra Costa County)** said, “As first generation farmers in the Delta, our future depends on Delta water quality as well as vibrant Delta ecosystems. The proposed BDCP tunnels will increase water pollution, detrimentally impacting thousands of acres of rich farmland and will destroy the agricultural heritage of the Delta region. The BDCP plan will hurt many already struggling farmers and will severely harm our food system.”

**Adam Scow, California Director with Food and Water Watch**, said, "These tunnels are an abuse of California taxpayer and ratepayer money. It's wrong and unfair to make Californians pay higher water bills and property taxes to secure more water for corporate agribusinesses and oil companies in Kern County and the Westlands Water District."

**Bob Wright, Senior Counsel for Friends of the River**, said "Government agencies calling the BDCP a conservation plan is a fraud on the public. The plan is to grab the water and in the process take it away from designated critical habitat for several

already endangered and threatened species of fish including Sacramento River Winter-Run and Central Valley Spring-Run Chinook Salmon and drive them into extinction. That is against the law because federal agencies are prohibited from doing that by the Endangered Species Act."

**Rebecca Crebbin-Coates, Water Campaign Manager for the Planning and Conservation League**, said, "It makes no sense to build extremely risky, multi-billion dollar tunnels when there are cheaper and more effective options to explore. Now is the time to invest in sustainable water solutions and encourage regional self-sufficiency – not gamble with the future of California's ecosystems and water supply."

"We oppose the rush to build a project that would exterminate salmon runs, destroy sustainable family farms and saddle taxpayers with tens of billions in debt, mainly to benefit a small number of huge corporate agribusinesses on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley," said **Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, Executive Director of Restore the Delta**. "This proposal is fatally-flawed."

**Janet McCleery with Save the California Delta Alliance (STCDA)** said "Removing fertile Delta farm acreage by eminent domain based on that unproven science is unconscionable. The salt intrusion that will occur is a threat to the remaining farmers and recreation. We represent people who swim, fish, boat, water-ski, wakeboard and otherwise recreate in the Delta. The BDCP is a threat to those activities, our farmers, our communities' economies and our home values."

Southern California continues to strive to be more water efficient and to do that we need to invest first in local jobs for cost efficient solutions not dump more money into this boondoggle. We do not want water taxation without representation and big AG and MWD do not represent us. Water demand continues to drop even with increases of population and that is where we need to invest. People save water not agencies," said **Conner Everts, Executive Director, Southern California Watershed Alliance**.

"After nearly six years of discussions, it is disappointing that the BDCP still does not meaningfully address local concerns about the project. Instead the BDCP proposes to devastate sustainable farming in our local communities and decimate the natural resources of the Delta for the benefit of other areas of the state," said **Osha Meserve, attorney with Stone Lakes National Wildlife Association and LAND (Local Agencies of the North Delta)**.

"The BDCP is the wrong plan for California. It will waste scarce tax dollars on a system which will not produce one additional drop of water. There is a better, more cost effective way. Our focus must be on conservation, groundwater banking and other regional self-sufficiency projects if we are to provide water to future

generations of Californians,” said **Kathy Miller, Stockton City Councilmember and San Joaquin Delta Coalition Chair.**

**Caleen Sisk, Chief and Spiritual Leader of the Winnemem Wintu** said, “The end of salmon would also mean the end of Winnemem, so the BDCP is a threat to our very existence as indigenous people.”

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