

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

September 12, 2012

Agenda Item #12

MOTION TO OPPOSE THE BAY-DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

The undersigned organizations oppose the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan to build a new tunnel or any conveyance facility to divert the Sacramento River. The project, estimated to cost between \$20 and \$50 billion, is unnecessary and would benefit corporate agriculture at the expense of ratepayers in Los Angeles. We urge you to pass legislation to prohibit the use of ratepayer money to finance this project and to support investment in local water projects that would improve the reliability of our water supply.

Los Angeles does not need to import more water. In fact, LADWP's 2010 Urban Water Management Water Plan calls for purchasing *less* imported water as it is becoming more expensive, and prioritizes increasing local water sources such as storm water and cleaning and replenishing groundwater aquifers. Moreover, LADWP estimates that each year there are over 1,400 water main breaks in its 7,200-mile network that need to be repaired and/or replaced. Increasing our local supply and fixing local infrastructure are cost-effective measures that create local jobs. As these necessary investments will cost billions of dollars, ratepayer money should not be wasted on an unnecessary tunnel, especially in a bad economy.

The tunnel would be a major gift from ratepayers to a few corporate agriculture interests in the Central Valley. The chief beneficiaries, the Kern County Water Agency and the Westlands Water District, already receive massive amounts of water subsidized by ratepayers and taxpayers. Some of these agribusinesses, in addition to exporting lucrative crops overseas, sell taxpayer-subsidized water for private profit. Los Angeles ratepayers should not be forced to pay everincreasing water bills to subsidize the profits of a few powerful corporate interests.

Contrary to proponents' claims, a new tunnel located 350 miles north of Los Angeles would not safeguard our water supply from a major earthquake. As the United States Geological Survey estimates that a major earthquake is more likely to occur in southern California than in northern California, LADWP must prioritize and accelerate the repairing of its aging and breaking local water delivery system. Given that an earthquake could also compromise pipelines that deliver

imported water, diversifying our water sources by increasing our groundwater supply and capturing rainwater will protect the public's access to water in an earthquake.

Legislative action by the City Council is needed to ensure ratepayers are not harmed. Because the Metropolitan Water District, a partial source of LADWP's water supply, would be a financial sponsor of the tunnel in its effort to control more water, ratepayers in Los Angeles could be made to pay over \$2 billion over the next thirty years.

Therefore we urge the Council to pass legislation prohibiting the use of any ratepayer funds towards financing a new tunnel or any conveyance facility to divert the Sacramento River. As LADWP's water plan states, Los Angeles needs to repair and augment its local water supply. We should not waste money on a project that was defeated by California voters in 1982. We thank you for your attention and future action towards protecting ratepayers and our water supply.