COMMENTS

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D-035812

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Rick Woodard (Attention Judy Heath)
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth St., Room 1148
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I am writing to comment on the proposed Year 2000 and 2001 Priority Actions that were attached to your April 26 letter to the WQTG.

Low Dissolved Oxygen in the San Joaquin River near Stockton

It is my understanding that an essential component of correcting this problem is maintaining a substantial downstream flow (instead of a reverse flow) in this river reach. This can be done by use of the three proposed tidal barriers, but this measure is not mentioned. There is no realistic possibility of maintaining downstream flow without barriers. It would, therefore, be unproductive to spend a million dollars on sampling for, and analysis of any measures that would not be significant in the presence of barriers to maintain downstream flow.

Non-Seawater Sources of Bromide

The data I have seen indicate that the bromide to chloride ratio is almost the same in bay water, in the Delta Mendota Canal, and in the San Joaquin River. The data have also shown that the "fingerprint" of chemical composition of mineral ions in the DMC and in the San Joaquin River is essentially the same for all major ions including boron and probably bromides. Unless there is a plausible explanation for another significant source of bromide that is compatible with this data, it seems like a "wild goose chase" to spend half a million dollars looking for such a source.

The amount of bromide in exported water will be influenced by the path of water flowing across the Delta to the export pumps. It should be more productive to design the thru-Delta option to minimize bay water entrainment in the crossflow. For example, create a hydraulic barrier in Georgianna Slough and keep most of the crossflow along eastern channels that have less tidal flux than central Delta channels.

Drinking Water Assessments

This item overlaps the bromide item. It should be acknowledged that little can be done to decrease the salinity of urban source water without increasing the salinity of agricultural and other water. This adverse impact must be

weighed against the cost for dual piping and for reverse osmosis for urban potable water supplies.

There are opportunities to trade San Joaquin tributary water to urbans for export water to agriculture, but this must not be done unless there is a valley drain. In the absence of a drain these trades would accelerate the largely irreversible accumulation of tens of millions of tons of salt in the valley's soils and groundwaters. The benefit of a drain should be included in the analysis.

Sincerely,

Alex Hildebrand

cc Tom Zuckerman