



# COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS

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March 1994

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**FILE COPY**

Subject: Proposed Rule. Water Quality Standards for Surface Waters of the Sacramento River, San Joaquin River, and San Francisco Bay and Delta of the State of California.

The purpose of this letter is to transmit comments on EPA's proposed rule, as requested in the Federal Register posting of January 6, 1994 [FR40 CFR Part 131, 59(4):810-871]. These comments are our own, as experts in this subject, and do not represent any endorsement by the agency for which we work. As I mentioned at the Irvine evening session of the Bay-Delta hearing of February 28th, we would not make a presentation that night but would submit written comments for your consideration. I strongly urge your careful considerations of these comments. They come from the heart as well as several decades of direct experience, and are given in the spirit of cooperation and teamwork to develop the very best, scientifically based Bay-Delta Standards. We believe that only science can provide a factual basis for the difficult social, economic and political decision that must be made on our renewable, but limited water and living resources.

Our interest in this rule stems from several sources. First, as wastewater agency staff we see the need for taking an holistic approach to environmental matters, and see watersheds as the integral and most important units to manage, a "pines to the palms" approach - as we have attempted to promulgate here in southern California. But, as a result of our long, checkered water history, the reality is that this region is largely dependent on outside supplies to support continuing growth and development. Second, as scientists we speak as experts in fresh water, estuarine and coastal watershed matters - including hydrology, physical and biological oceanography, and freshwater, estuarine and marine ecology. These skills may prove paramount in assisting (divining) development of the best strategy for the future of the delta as well as all of California's interconnected waterway and coastal zone. Third, as citizens of the state, we care deeply about water and are certain this will be the future determining factor of California's population, economy and environment.

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Attached are the detailed comments of Dr. Michael Rozengurt of this office. Prior to joining our staff as a coastal engineer/oceanographer, Dr. Rozengurt had over 30 years of experience in the field of estuarine hydrography and physical oceanography. He has also written and published hundreds of pages of scientific findings and hypotheses regarding the environmental impacts of excessive water development the world over. He predicted the subsequent, unfortunate collapse of many formerly extensive fisheries in a number of seas of his former homeland. And, even worse, he witnessed the salinization of deltas and their fresh water intakes resulting from ill-advised and inappropriate levels of water diversion. As a good soldier, he even developed an idea for a restraining channel, a structural palliative to alleviate salt intrusion to allow for taking even more water for agricultural, industrial and domestic use.

Finally, after he immigrated from the former Soviet Union in 1978, Dr. Rozengurt has freely made his vital experience and unique talents available to help his new country avoid the same environmental disasters he saw and eventually left behind. His work here, on the rivers entering San Francisco Bay, was carried on at SF State University's Tiburon Center from 1979-1980 and 1984-89. He saw these new studies as an extension directly related to solving the same problems apparent in his former homeland. He and co-authors, Sergio Feld and Michael Herz, completed two major volumes of hydrologic and ecologic studies specifically focussed on California's most important watershed system and the linchpin of the State's Water Plan.

Interestingly enough, none of the above reports, subsequent related publications, or any of the public testimony before U.S. congressional committees (1989,1993), the California's SWRCB hearings in 1987, or other news reports of the work of Tiburon Center are to be found in EPA's rule-making document or in any of the workshop reports cited therein. Was there some fatal flaw in the work of these scientists? If not, what is the nature of the problem that none of these studies, all directly bearing on the question of Delta Standards, have been noted by EPA?

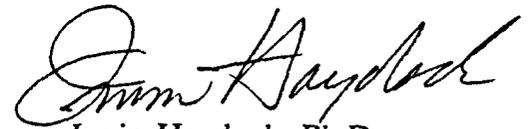
Some of Dr. Rozengurt's basic comments, which are further supported and detailed in attached appendices, revolve around the following topics:

- 1.) Successful watershed development and water supply depend wholly on a professional understanding of the underlying data base and its validity for future decision-making.
- 2.) The strategy for allocating water to repel salt intrusion must be based on expert scientific assessment of total water availability and its fluctuation over both time and space, using well accepted hydrologic, limnologic and oceanographic protocols.

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- 3.) Failure to recognize and heed the natural watershed limitations and the controlling laws of the universe will lead to the same severe deterioration already documented in many other developed river-delta-bay-coastal ecosystems and will, in the long run, adversely impact California.

If you have further questions, comments, or would like additional documentation of the validity of the findings or the methods used to arrive at these recommendations, please feel free to call me or Dr. Rozengurt at 714-962-2411. It is our duty and our pleasure to be of service to you and to the public which supports our efforts at better watershed management.



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Compliance Manager

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Enclosures:

Review 11 pages  
Appendix - 10

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