



**Butte County
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Mark Kimmelshue
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Brad Mattson
Ryan Schohr
David Skinner
Ernie Washington



Our Mission:

*“To manage and
conserve water and
other resources for
the citizens of Butte
County”*

Water Solutions

September 2012

**Protect Your
Groundwater Day**

By Christina Buck

The National Groundwater Association (NGWA) has set aside September 11, 2012 as Protect Your Groundwater Day. Butte County is supporting this education and awareness effort. We each can play a part to ensure safe and sufficient groundwater supplies for agricultural and urban uses for our cities and county.

There are two fundamental categories of groundwater protection: keeping it safe from contamination and using it wisely by not wasting it. It is important to recognize that some substances in groundwater that present a health risk are naturally occurring. This includes microorganisms (ie. Bacteria, viruses, and parasites; these tend to be more common in shallow groundwater), radionuclides (i.e. radium, radon,

and uranium), and heavy metals (i.e. arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, and selenium). Public water systems are required to treat drinking water to State and Federal water quality standards, however if you're a private well owner, it's up to you to make sure your water is safe for drinking and household uses. The NGWA recommends an annual well checkup to ensure proper operation of the well and water quality monitoring. More information about the annual checkup can be found at <http://wellowner.org/water-well-maintenance/annual-checkup/>.

A number of human activities can pollute groundwater. Here are some things to consider: There are hazardous substances common to households (i.e. anti-freeze, fertilizers, compact fluorescent lightbulbs, brake fluid, car batteries, car fluids, degreasers, fungicides). Take a moment to think about what specific hazardous substances are in and around your home.

To prevent groundwater contamination, be mindful of storing them properly in a secure place, use them according to the manufacturer's recommendations and dispose of them safely. Substances poured out on the surface can make their way into groundwater. If you own your own well, move possible contamination sources a safe distance from the wellhead (<http://wellowner.org/basics/planning-for-a-water-well/>).

Using water wisely is another way to protect groundwater. Almost three-quarters of water used inside the home occurs in the bathroom, with 41 percent used for toilet flushing and 33 percent for bathing. The remainder of indoor water use is divided between clothes washing and kitchen use, including dish washing, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In California, 44 percent of all household use is outdoors.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Thinking about how and where your family uses the most water will help identify the ways you can easily and best conserve. Changing simple habits (like turning the water off while

you brush your teeth or shave) or fixing leaks can make a difference. For a few more specific ways to use water wisely, visit <http://wellowner.org/groundwater/conservation-matters/>. An abundance of valuable information largely in single page articles

is available at www.wellowner.org and www.ngwa.org. On Protect Your Groundwater Day, begin or continue doing your part for protecting one of our most important natural resources — groundwater

Table A Lease Agreements Approved

By Paul Gosselin

Butte County’s Table A allocation is a valuable water resource asset that must be preserved for future generations. After decades of perseverance by the Butte County Board of Supervisors, Butte County gained an unprecedented ability to temporarily lease portions of its Table A. A monumental effort was undertaken to take advantage of this opportunity by securing the necessary agreements and approvals in time for this year. On July 31st, the Butte County Board of Supervisors approved two lease agreements. One lease agreement is with the Palmdale Water District and the other is with the Westside Districts (Dudley Ridge Water District, Belridge Water Storage District, Berrenda Mesa Water District, Lost Hills Water District and Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District). The unprecedented lease agreements went into effect on-schedule, two days later when the Department of Water Resources gave their approval. Maneuvering the approval process was the result of hard work, creativity and teamwork. Vickie Newlin (Department

of Water and Resource Conservation), Jon Pernula (Palmdale Water District), Dale Melville (Westside Districts), Kamie Loeser (Northstar Environmental Inc) and Craig Trombly (DWR) deserve kudos for overcoming numerous obstacles and getting the agreements secured on time. Under the terms of the agreements, Butte County will lease a portion of the Table A allocation (24,000 acre feet) not needed for in-county demand to these districts for the next two years. Butte County will retain ownership, recoup its costs and generate revenue. Most importantly these agreements set the foundation for future long term agreements.

The lease agreements culminate years of effort by the Board of Supervisors to gain greater control over the Table A allocation. When Lake Oroville was created as part of the State Water Project in the 1960s, Butte County received a contract for 27,500 acre-feet for future in-county demand. Only about ten percent of the allocation has been used to meet in county demand due to cost, lack of infrastructure and state allocation reductions. Until 2008, Butte County only had to pay for the water it used. The rest of went back into the State Water

Project system. In 2008, the Table A situation changed when the State began requiring Butte County to pay for the entire Table A whether we used it or not. The Table A was no longer an underutilized asset but became a fiscal liability. The cost to the County rose to over a million dollars per year. With options to fully utilize the Table A within the county more than a decade away, action was needed. The critical dry year of 2008 and 2009 presented an opportunity to enter into a two-year transfer with the Palmdale Water District. The 2008-09 transfers provided revenue to cover the County’s Table A costs for a couple of years. When those transfer agreements expired, the Table A Allocation became a fiscal liability. In 2010, the Board of Supervisors gave direction on a strategy to improve the planning and management of the Table A in order to turn it from a liability to an asset. One of the immediate options was to lease portions of the Table A until sufficient in-county demand can be secured. Implementation of the first two year lease agreements was a major step forward in the strategy to assure that the Table A allocation remains a Butte County asset for future generations.

Interested in the Delta? Check this out!

Comprehensive (Phase 2) Review and Update to the Bay-Delta Plan

9:00 am— 5:00 pm (all workshops)

Joe Serna, Jr.-Cal/EPA Building
1001 I Street, Second Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Workshop 1: Ecosystem Changes and the Low Salinity Zone

Wednesday, September 5, 2012 continuing on Thursday, September 6, 2012 if necessary, Coastal Hearing Room

Workshop 2: Bay-Delta Fishery Resources

Monday and Tuesday, October 1 and

2, 2012 and continuing on Wednesday, October 3, 2012 if necessary, Coastal Hearing Room

Workshop 3: Analytical Tools for Evaluating Water Supply, Hydrodynamic and Hydropower Effects,

Tuesday and Wednesday, November 13 and 14, 2012, Sierra Hearing Room

Butte County Opposes the Bay Delta Conservation Plan

By Paul Gosselin

On August 14, 2012, the Butte County Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution formally opposing the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP). Butte County joined a chorus of elected officials, agencies and groups that have voiced opposition to the preferred option for the BDCP announced by Governor Brown and U.S. Interior Secretary Salazar on July 25th. The BDCP effort is a collaborative program lead by state, federal and various water agencies. The goal of the BDCP is to formulate a plan that could ultimately be approved by the fish agencies as a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) under the provisions of the federal Endangered Species Act section 10(a)(1)(B) and a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) under the Fish and Game Code sections 2800 *et seq.*, and /or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), sections 2050 *et seq.* The BDCP process is intended to provide the basis for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), state and federal water contractors, and others to apply for incidental take permits (ITPs) pursuant to Section 10 of Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and the California Fish and Game Code Section 2835 and/or 2081. The BDCP will give the Bureau of Reclamation the ability to get Biological Opinions pursuant to Section 7 of the FESA. These authorizations would allow the incidental take of threatened and endangered species. After six years of development and analysis, the BDCP lead agencies announced their preferred plan options. The centerpiece of the BDCP is the dual conveyance facilities (two 37 foot

diameter tunnels) that will deliver up to 9,000 cubic feet/second. Although the tunnels are provocative, the BDCP plan includes extensive conservation, habitat restoration, biological goals and other measures to improve Delta species. The project will cost at least \$14 billion and may be as much as \$50 billion. Although mostly financed by water contractors, there are concerns that some financing will be forced upon the public in general and specifically to farmers in northern Sacramento valley.

The northern Sacramento Valley region is the Area of Origin for much of the water that flows through the Delta and therefore, our region is a major source for California's overall water supply picture. Our surface water resources include the crown jewel of the State Water Project (SWP) located at Lake Oroville, as well as a network of creeks and rivers that are tributary to the great Sacramento River which feeds into the Delta. Our region's water resources are more than the water supply for the Delta and the state. They provide the life blood for our agricultural-based communities, economy and environment. Much of our local water supply comes from the various groundwater basins throughout the region that are recharged through these creek and rivers. A well designed BDCP can accomplish its goals of improving the Delta ecosystem and improving water supply reliability without impacting the Delta watershed. Unfortunately, the proposed BDCP will not fulfill its intended goals and would result in unintended impacts to Butte County and much of the northern Sacramento Valley region. For these reasons, the Butte County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution on August 12, 2012 in opposition to the BDCP.

We remain hopeful that a successful BDCP can emerge that will not re-

sult in adverse impacts to Butte County. Butte County Board of Supervisors offered reasonable and constructive steps that will remediate our concerns in a manner consistent with the stated goals of the BDCP. There is a high certainty that increased flows through the Delta will be required as the Delta's ecologic restoration. Increased flows through the Delta should not be a burden placed on the northern Sacramento Valley. The impact to Lake Oroville from the implementation of the BDCP would devastate the local economy. The BDCP lead agencies must provide an assurance that existing water rights and area of origin rights will be protected will avoid impacts to local groundwater resources and our economy. Analysis of the BDCP has indicated that Lake Oroville would be emptied in most years to dead pool conditions. The BDCP must fully assess local and regional socioeconomic impacts and either avoid those impacts or fully mitigate them. Implementation of the BDCP will cost billions of dollars over the next five decades. Those costs must be borne by those who benefit from it, namely contractors south of the Delta. Lastly, we believe that the BDCP lead agencies should engage in meaningful dialogue with a broad cross section of stakeholders from the northern Sacramento Valley. The Board of Supervisors sent letters to Governor Brown, U.S. Interior Secretary Salazar and California Natural Resources Secretary Laird stating the County's position and offering recommendations. As the next few months unfold, we await the response from the BDCP lead agencies on the path they decide to follow.

To view these documents and other Delta related items, please visit the Department's website under "Delta Issues".



Meeting

Schedules

Butte County Water Commission

9/5/12, 1:30 p.m.
Board of Supervisors
Chambers
25 County Center Drive
Oroville, CA 95965

10/3/12, 1:30 p.m.
Board of Supervisors
Chambers

Water Advisory Committee/Technical Advisory Committee

11/29/12 2:00-4:00 p.m.
HR Training Room
2279 Del Oro Av Ste G
Oroville, CA 95965

Drought Task Force

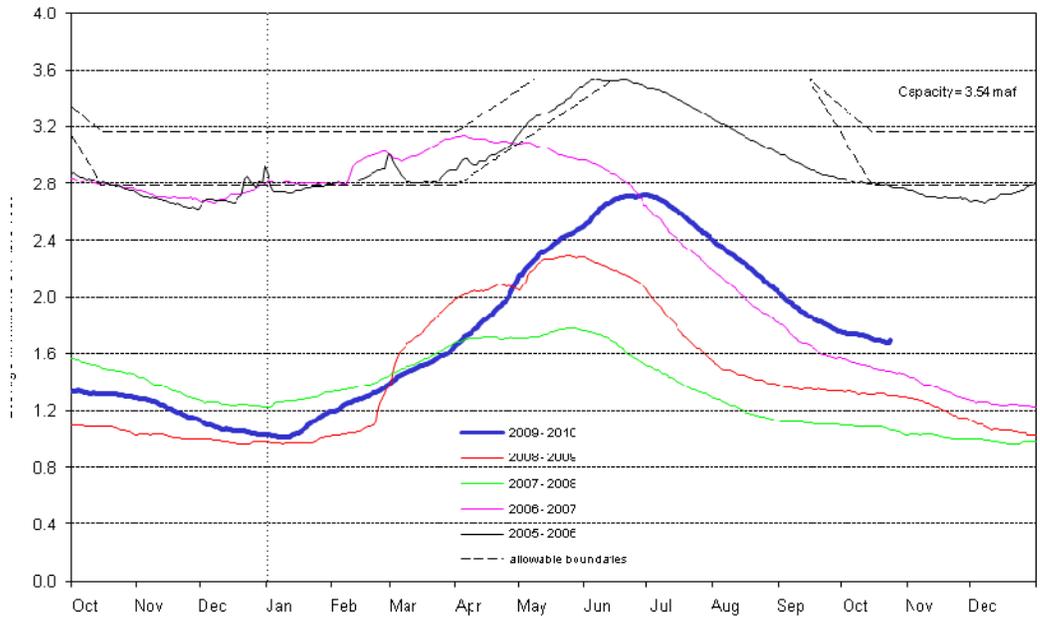
TBA 10:30 a.m.
Water & Resource Conservation Conference Room, 308 Nelson Ave.
Oroville, CA

Butte County Board of Supervisors

9/11/25, 9:00 a.m.
Board of Supervisors
Chambers

9/25/12, 9:00 a.m.
Board of Supervisors
Chambers

Lake Oroville Storage
Combination Water/Calendar Year



Northern Sacramento Valley

Integrated Regional Water Management:

Potential Project List and Public Outreach Meetings

By Vickie Newlin

The Northern Sacramento Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Board (NSV Board) accepted projects from throughout the six-county region for potential inclusion in the NSVIRWM Plan. Project proponents were requested to submit their projects into an on-line submittal form at whatever stage of development they might be in at this time. Therefore, some of the projects are clearly conceptual in nature, but the idea is to get the concept out there for review and discussion. Currently there are 58 projects published from the on-line sub-

mittal process. The project list can be viewed on the NSV website at: www.nsvwaterplan.org.

The thought is to link these project and concepts to the Goals and Objectives approved by the Board in June 2012. The overlying goals include: Water Supply Reliability, Flood Protection and Planning, Water Quality Protection and Enhancement, Watershed Protections and Management, Integrated Regional Water management (IRWM) Sustainability and Public Education and Information Dissemination. Underlying objectives to meet these goals are also provided on the website.

A key component of the IRWM is the integration of different projects to satisfy multiple goals and benefit multiple parties. Integration cannot take place until

the various projects are identified and showcased to help stimulate the conversation between various parties.

To assist in this, the next series of Public Outreach meetings will be held on September 26 and 27. The series of three meetings will be held in Yuba City, Redding and Chico. Each meeting will provide the same information, so we are encouraging everyone to attend the location most convenient to meet their needs. Please see the attached flyer for more information.

As we roll into the second official year of the NSV IRWM planning, we hope to bring more entities into the process to help meet the needs of the six-county region. For further information please feel free to contact me.