

Flume near De Sabla - May 02.

BEA 2012



8-2-16 Board Meeting Item 6
DeSabla-Centerville Project (Ferc No. 803)
Deadline:8/1/16 by 12 noon

Upper Centerville Canal

RECEIVED
8-1-16
SWRCB Clerk

A needed, vital part of the fabric and life
of our community since the late 1800s.

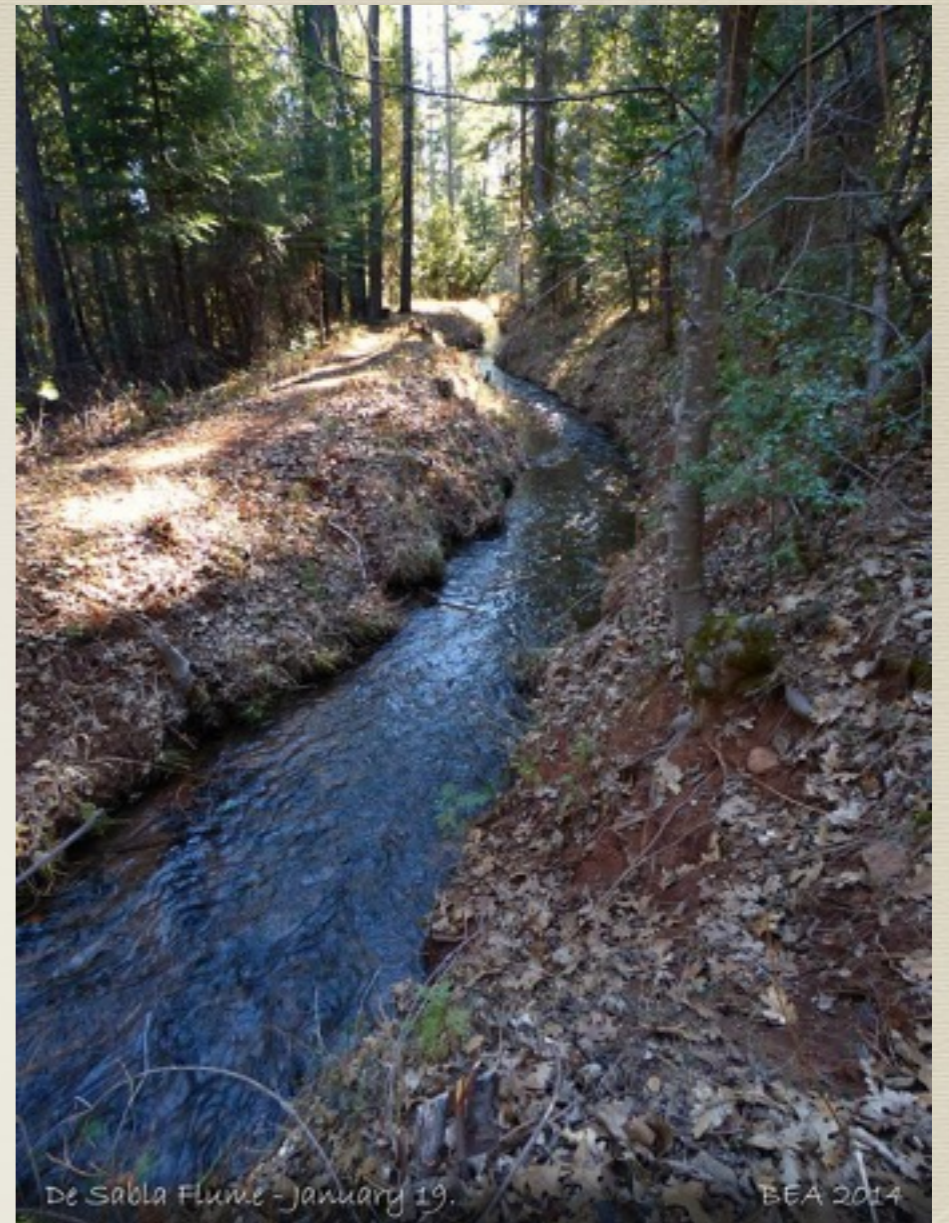


The Upper Centerville Canal began as a ditch used by miners as early as 1871.

Originally called the Cherokee Ditch, the canal was an arm of the conduit supplying water for nearby hydraulic mining as well as hard rock mining within the Upper Ridge community.

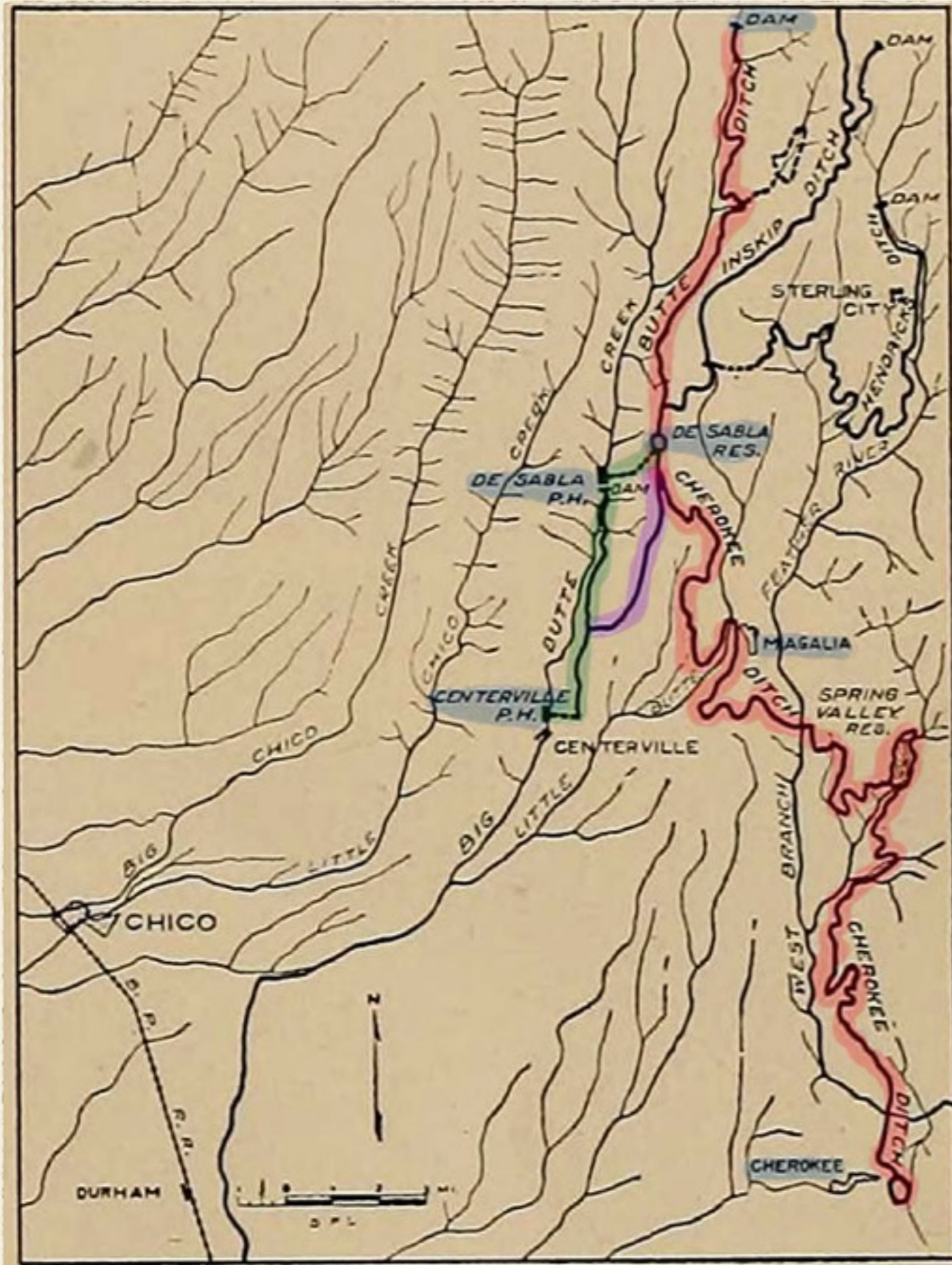
In 1902, property owners with land traversed by the Upper Centerville Canal granted the Valley Counties Power Company — and its future successors — the right to operate and maintain the canal on their lands in exchange for \$1 and the guarantee of water delivery rights.

Each property owner was allocated a specific amount of water in their agreement.



De Sabla Flume - January 19.

BEA 2014



1910 map showing the ditches and canals originating with water rights from the Butte Creek head dam.

Note that by this time the Butte Ditch (*red*) had been renamed by PG&E from its original name, Cherokee Ditch. The Cherokee Ditch continues from below the DeSabra Reservoir to Cherokee, and the Upper Centerville Canal (*purple*) is part of it.

From: Journal of Electricity, Power & Gas; July 16, 1910; volume 25, number 3; page 45

The relationship between PG&E and the property owners in the Upper Centerville Canal community was further formalized with the 1942 court adjudication of water delivery rights, the result of an intense two-year process.

*Because of this, some property owners on the Upper Centerville Canal have
“water delivery rights.”*

*PG&E holds the “water rights” to 1.175 cfs and must provide “public service delivery” of this water to the “consumers” who have rights to service and are
entitled to this water.*

We are appealing to SWRCB because:

PG&E has petitioned your board with a request to have a “minor modification” in the Water Quality Certification.



OUR CONCERN:

As property owners and community members, we understand PG&E will likely attempt to use their revised version of the WQC to make arguments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission whether it can abandon portions of the DeSabla/ Centerville Project – and specifically the Upper Centerville Canal, which is the conduit for our water deliveries.

The PG&E requested change in the WQC is important.

While we community members and PG&E have a difference of opinion regarding the interpretation of specific wording in the 1942 adjudication, that's not what we're here today to resolve.

This is a CEQA issue.



*This project has not been analyzed to include
the possibility of an interrupted
and/or halted water supply.*

The CEQA documents for this project assumed continued deliveries. Since that was consistent with the decree and prior agreements, our community didn't feel a need to comment to SWRCB regarding the original CEQA.

Introducing the possibility that our deliveries can be shut off at PG&E's discretion is not only inconsistent with the decree...

...it is a totally different project than advertised and one that has had no CEQA review.

The original CEQA for the WQC assumed continued water deliveries.

The CEQA document which the original certification was based on said there would be a “less than significant impact” on hydrology and water quality and “no impact” on utilities and service systems.

Fact: If PG&E cuts off water, our community will need to find alternate sources of water supply.

- The impacts associated with a water supply cut-off were not studied in the environmental document prepared for the Certification.
- How can there be a “no impact” finding when we will definitely have to develop groundwater or some other source of water supply?





What does water in the Upper Centerville Canal mean to our community?

1. Fire protection.
2. Support for domestic water wells.
3. Landscaping and domestic use.
4. Small farm and orchard operation.
5. Wildlife.
6. Property value.
7. Beauty.







What does our community want the SWRCB to do?

The Board cannot revise Mitigation Measure 3 to essentially eliminate PG&E's obligation to us without examining and analyzing the impacts that would have.

The Board has not yet done that analysis.

The board, then, has two options at this point to remedy the situation...

1. Either reject the proposed revision to Mitigation Measure 3, OR
2. Conduct an appropriate environmental review which includes a study of the effects of all of us having to find substitute water sources and which gives our community an opportunity to comment on that project.



Our community thanks you for helping us preserve our heritage of more than 110 years of water delivery.