

Barnes, Peter@Waterboards

From: michael Benjamin <mikebenjamin@mac.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 8:53 AM
To: Barnes, Peter@Waterboards
Subject: Draft EIR, PG&E Certification UNFFR Project NO 2105

Mr. Peter Barnes, Engineering Geologist
State Water Board Resource Control Board, Division of Water Rights
Water Quality Certification Program
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Peter.Barnes@waterboards.ca.gov

RE: Draft EIR, PG&E Certification UNFFR Project NO 2105

Dear Mr. Barnes,

I am providing strong feedback on the above mentioned project and do hope that my points of view do not fall on deaf ears.

Having been involved in the water industry for many years, I have grave concerns that the proposed Alternatives 1 and 2 will have a devastating and an irreparable negative impact on my community, the surrounding communities, the local economy, the environment and the entire Lake Almanor basin.

My main issue with the Draft EIR is that I find very little in the report regarding the impacts of this project, and the proposed Alternatives, will have on the quality of my life. I strongly disagree with the statement that increasing the water temperatures of Lake Almanor will not have a "substantial impact". Having been the Chairman of the Board for DRI (Desert Research Institute) one of the leading environmental hydrological research institutes in the world, I have been exposed to much. The water curtain is an experiment. In theory it "might" work. However the impact is negligible and the decrease in water temperature down river, will destroy the present day watershed, known as Lake Almanor. In discussing the two proposed alternatives with the senior vice president of HWH Global, the cost benefit of the Thermal Curtain has NEVER been proven, ANYWHERE without a tremendous negative impact! And where the experiment has been conducted in the past, the end result has been less than expected, anticipated or advertised. Global institutional scientist, as well as private hydrologist working on a global platform agree that the thermal curtain is just an experiment for the proving at best.

Lake Almanor is NOT a proving ground. The risks are far too great!

Secondly, the construction of the curtain would disrupt and unearth dangerous amounts of particulate materials from the lake bed, including arsenic and mercury. This would create a very dangerous situation both for people exposed to the water in the lake and the fishery. Additionally, the effects of the pollutants traveling down the river in a condensed form have not been addressed.

Finally, for the past 54 years I have been part of Lake Almanor and now I live here. My personal experience has been contrary to your findings. With several years of drought I have seen firsthand

the negative effects that an increase in water temperature has on the lake. We are experiencing more algae than in the past, which in turn reduces the clarity of the lake. My belief is that any activity that further reduces cold water in the lake will greatly reduce the cold water fisheries that have made Lake Almanor one of the best fishing destinations in the State of California. My observations are supported by data in the final draft of the Lake Almanor Water Quality Report, 2015.

Increased water temperatures, increased algae, and reduced fisheries will have a devastating negative impact on the local economy, which is dependent upon tourism and already suffering. When I consider all of the negative impacts this project will have on the local economy and environment, I wonder what the impact will be on my quality of life and property value. Will more local businesses close? Will I lose needed services, such as our hospital, as a result of a worsening local economy? Will we lose the one thing that has brought us all here – the enjoyment of Lake Almanor?

In conclusion, I am **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to Alternatives 1 & 2, as described in the Draft EIR, and I am strong fast in my belief that pursuing these Alternatives is unreasonable, reckless and experimental. I strongly urge the State Water Board to only consider the PG&E project, as submitted and approved in the Settlement Agreement of April 22, 2004, without the additional release of cold water from Lake Almanor.

The entire citizenry of Almanor is opposed to these alternatives. That is not by accident. In the simplest of terms, when something walks like a duck, looks like a duck, quacks like a duck, there is a high probability that it's a duck.

With grave concerns,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "mB", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike & Cindy Benjamin
829 Lassen View Drive
Lake Almanor, CA