

Barnes, Peter@Waterboards

From: Jeffrey Greening <jeffrey.greening@barberlandco.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 10:36 AM
To: Barnes, Peter@Waterboards
Cc: Jeffrey Greening
Subject: Board's Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR")

March 26, 2015

Peter Barnes
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
E-Mail: Peter.Barnes@waterboards.ca.gov

Re: Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project Draft EIR

To Whom it May Concern:

I am a resident of Plumas County, writing to express my concerns regarding the State Water Resources Control Board's Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR").^[1] In general, I find the EIR confusing and unclear. Lake Almanor has been operated for the last 50 some years as a hydroproject. The environment and community has adjusted to this. Now significant changes are being proposed. As I understand it, PG&E, the county, and other stakeholders held extensive negotiations and developed a settlement agreement in 2004. That settlement provided more cold water flows down the river while maintaining enough cold water and suitable lake levels at Lake Almanor so that recreational benefits would be preserved. For some reason the EIR includes two project "alternatives" that involve thermal curtains and even more water releases that would significantly impact Lake Almanor. Why are *any* alternatives necessary when the proposal to operate per the settlement already provides beneficial changes that will cool the river downstream?

Those that live in and visit Plumas County value the natural resources of Lake Almanor. The EIR's thermal curtain and increased cold water outflow alternatives will significantly impact the fisheries and visual beauty of Lake Almanor. The EIR admits that these alternatives will significantly impact Lake Almanor's fisheries and potentially cause a massive fish kill. Why would the State Water Board consider alternatives that will harm Lake Almanor's beneficial uses by draining the lake of its cold water? I thought CEQA prevented public agencies from harming the environment. This is bad policy.

The EIR also fails to evaluate the recreational economy that is tied to the Lake Almanor fisheries – an important economic driver in this region. Harm to the fish means harm to the community because fewer people will visit and fish the lake. This will probably result in closed and abandoned businesses and homes and declining funds for public services. The EIR should not ignore this issue.

More importantly, the "environmental setting" upon which the EIR was developed is more than a decade old. It precedes the radical shift in policy and regulation at State, Fed & International levels related to Climate Change! Clearly, NO EIR would pass the litmus test after such a long period from which the baseline data was this old and that from which subsequent potential impacts were assessed. The current drought and

projected climatology alone clearly illustrates the document is subject to legal challenge and will very definitely be so! DWR readily admits "change"; "Whether we like it or not, our world is changing" said Mark Cowin, director of the Department of Water Resources while addressing the Northern California Water Association in Chico just this month. The EIR does not reflect DWR's present position related to Climate Change!

I request that you reject the thermal curtain / increased release alternatives and ensure protection of Lake Almanor and the surrounding community.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey S. Greening
574 Peninsula Drive,
Lake Almanor, CA 96137
