

March 26, 2015

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

Dear Mr. Barnes:

I am writing you to express my concern about the Water Board staff recommendation in the recent draft EIR as it pertains to Lake Almanor.

As a Lake Almanor home owner for 12 years and an avid fisherman and outdoorsman, the alternatives proposed on the draft EIR to export cold water from the lake for the purpose of attempting to reduce the temperature downstream on the Feather River are complete folly. Even in the best case scenario, this experiment would achieve a marginal benefit however; the ecological travesty to Lake Almanor – as well as Butt Valley Reservoir – would far outweigh any noticeable improvements to the water temperature downstream.

In the EIR, I disagree with the claim that there would be “less than significant impact” to the fisheries, water quality and wildlife when the SWRCB calls for up to a 40% withdrawal of Lake Almanor’s cold water to be sent downstream. As you might know, the lake is primarily a cold water fishery with species such as rainbow and brown trout and king salmon which depend on cold water to survive and thrive. Since fishing is one of the Lake Almanor regions primary tourist attractions, these proposals could have a very detrimental impact on the quality of fishing in Lake Almanor and Butt Valley Reservoir and in turn, could negatively impact the fragile economy of the region. What’s more, taking cold water from the lakes will result in increased algae blooms – something I’ve noticed is already on the increase over the years due to the lack of cold water entering the lake due to inadequate snowmelt runoff from the upper Feather River watershed. Algae blooms further choke out the lake’s supply of oxygen putting further stress on the ecosystem. In an era of climate change, rising snow levels and poor spring snow melt, intentionally increasing the temperature of Lake Almanor and Butt Valley Reservoir is completely contrary to sensible practice. Where is the environmental justice in damaging one watershed for a questionable and unproved benefit for another?

It is common knowledge that the SWRCB is using outdated science, poor analysis and just bad judgement by pursuing the removal of cold water from our lakes. These expensive and unproven schemes will cost will cost PG&E customers tens of millions of dollars. Everything that is being done to pursue these proposals is completely irresponsible. I think it’s time to “pump the brakes” on this and consider other more environmentally friendly alternatives... or how about this?... no alternatives at all.

Thank you for your consideration in this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David R. Parr". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with a large initial "D" and "P".

David R. Parr  
715 Peninsula Drive  
Lake Almanor, CA