

Barnes, Peter@Waterboards

From: dave@davesellers.com
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 11:11 AM
To: Barnes, Peter@Waterboards
Subject: Lake Almanor Thermal Curtains

Mr. Barnes, I am sure you have received at least a few letters and e-mails expressing outrage against the proposed "thermal curtains" at Lake Almanor. Although I am against this proposal as it will provide so little benefit to fisheries below Lake Almanor, my greater concern is how this proposal might alter the habits of the cold water gamefish at lake Almanor. As you may or may not know, Lake Almanor gets much of it's water from the abundant springs in the basin. In the summer months, fish concentrate in areas with springs and become easier to catch. Currently there is significant documented poaching in the form of over limits in these areas and without cold water options outside the springs, fish will become more concentrated in these areas and more subject to over harvest. The current limit of 5 fish mixed salmon and trout is already on the high side especially considering that all new stocked fish are triploid (sterile) fish. Further, our DFW has stated specifically that they do not conduct k reel surveys at Lake Almanor nor do they use gill net surveys to assess populations of the cold water species in the lake. In short, they do not have any baseline numbers or taget goals for abundance of cold water species. With that, conservative management including the maintenance of cold water is an imperative to maintain this economically important resource without the presence of active management.

My natural tendencies, as a member of Trout Unlimited, and past member of Cal Trout is to do all that is necessary to protect cold water species in both still water as well as rivers. The problem with the water below Lake Almanor is that this water is highly manipulated for power generation and indeed, is boarded by two large impounds. Further, the notion that native species will benefit is dubious as it is highly unlikely that any pure strain Feather River rainbow trout even exist in the river between these two large impounds. While there might be some marginal benefit to the non native river trout directly below Lake Almanor, risking the abundance of the cold water species in the lake is, in my opinion, risking further economic damage to the areas struggling economy. Fishing in Lake Almanor is perhaps the highest return, lowest environmental impact recreational resource in the region.

On a more visceral level, let me offer this: Should the thermal curtains be constructed and should they negatively impact Lake Almanor's cold water species, with little benefit to the fish below the lake, it is likely that the aesthetically challenging curtains will become an ugly "monument" to a failed of policy. In a region that has become less and less trusting of government, the SWRCB is going to "own this" and I'm not sure that will be of benefit to any party involved.

Dave Sellers
3579 Hill Crest Drive
Lake Almanor, CA 96137
831-320-0173

Barnes, Peter@Waterboards

From: dave@davesellers.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 10:02 AM
To: Barnes, Peter@Waterboards
Subject: RE: Lake Almanor Thermal Curtains

Mr. Barnes, Thank you for acknowledging receipt of my letter.

Having spent the better part of the evening reviewing documents from the draft EIR to the transcript of the public meeting in Chester in February 2015, I have become increasingly concerned about this project. While many of the comments at the meeting were hyperbolic and, in my view, more fearful of change than thoughtful and pertinent, several were disturbing in that they addressed specific, negative likely outcomes of the project that, even in the EIR, remained unaddressed. First, an in depth economic impact report is lacking. Also, only cursory evaluation of the effect on wildlife was addressed in the report. Despite the fact that many pages were devoted to listing species of concern, little attention was paid to the fact that the Prattville area is a major rearing area for Western, Clark's and eared grebes. I could not find any reference to potential entrainment issues related to heavy foraging during a critical time for young of the year recruitment of these birds. And last, when the Maidu tribe stands in opposition to this proposal, as well as Pacific Gas and Electric, in addition to the vast majority of people effected by it, this project seems to reside in the category of ill conceived, expensive, unwanted by most impacted and, in the end, just plain bad policy. Perhaps one very important indicator of poor policy is finding yourself more in opposition to a policy proposal the more you know about it.

Thank you,

Dave Sellers
3579 Hill Crest Drive
Lake Almanor, CA 96137

----- Original Message -----

Subject: RE: Lake Almanor Thermal Curtains
From: "Barnes, Peter@Waterboards" <Peter.Barnes@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 3/23/15 11:33 am
To: "dave@davesellers.com" <dave@davesellers.com>

Mr. Sellers,

Thank you for your comments. I will make sure that they are added to the record and taken into consideration. After the comment period has closed, the State Water Board will provide written responses to all comments received.

Sincerely,

Peter Barnes

Engineering Geologist

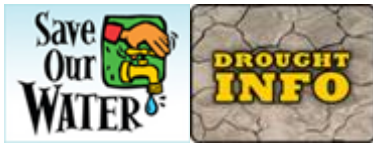
Water Quality Certification Program

Division of Water Rights

State Water Resources Control Board

Phone: (916) 445-9989

Email: Peter.Barnes@waterboards.ca.gov



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