

Operations of the State Water Project and Delta Conveyance

Wednesday, July 14, 2021 | 6:00pm – 8:00pm |

- If a tunnel is constructed and operated, it will reduce freshwater flows, resulting in water quality and quantity in the Bay-Delta deteriorating and the ecosystem will collapse.
- Fresh water flows are critical to sustaining the habitat for hundreds of fish and wildlife species, as well as stopping the salt water intrusion from the Bay and flushing out the hundreds of thousands of tons of pollutants and salts that accumulate in the Delta annually.
- The tunnel is estimated to cost \$16-40 billion. 65% of that cost will inevitably fall on ratepayers in Southern California where a key water wholesaler, the Metropolitan Water District, is the lead proponent of the project.
- A recent study draft found that the San Francisco-Bay Delta will be a less reliable source of water in the future, which is one more reason why the Delta Conveyance project (aka Delta tunnel), is a waste of ratepayer money.
- The floor of the rivers is made of silt and is too soft to support the joints of the pipeline. The data used for the last design of the tunnel assumed a harder ground surface, and this could lead to devastating and expensive cracks and leaks in the pipeline, especially with seismic activity. The 40ft diameter pipeline shaft will be jerked up and down or side to side, so it must be flexible in the muck environment. The best ground surface is hard rock, not sand, silt, or gravel. The connectors between the shafts for a tunnel of that size need to be fixed and not able to move with seismic activity, but if they are unsupported and unconstrained, then the differentials in stresses and strains would lead to breakage.
- The proposed Delta tunnel project is not consistent with the Delta Reform Act's policy of reduced reliance on the Delta and opens DWR, and thus taxpayers, to litigation by environmental organizations as well as the affected municipalities and Tribes
- DWR should increase focus on water conservation, efficiency, and additional demand reduction measures that would be less environmentally harmful than the tunnel and achieve the same water supply reliability goals and targets.

Fisheries

Tuesday, August 3, 2021 | 6:00pm – 8:00pm |

- DWR must analyze and assess the tunnel's impact on biological resources, including all species that may be impacted by the SWP, as well as upland habitats that may be affected.

- The Delta serves as a key migration area for many fish, birds and other wildlife species. As such, DWR must analyze and assess the impacts to all Central Valley anadromous fish species, such as Chinook Salmon and Green Sturgeon, that migrate through the Delta to survive.
- Other fish species, including the native delta smelt, longfin smelt, and Sacramento splittail, are year-long Delta residents. DWR must analyze and assess the impacts to all fish species that live there year-around. The Delta smelt will likely go extinct this year and other species are soon to follow. This tunnel may be the end of wild California salmon.
- Fish species born in the Delta travel through the Bay to the ocean, and are both a key part of California's fishing industry and a source of food for marine mammals including seals and whales in the Pacific. DWR must analyze and assess the impact the Delta tunnel will have on California's fishing industry and the complex food web system.

Climate Change

Wednesday, August 25, 2021 | 6:00pm – 8:00pm |

- According to the Draft Vulnerability Assessment report released by the Delta Stewardship Council Earlier this year, Delta water exports will be less reliable in the future. Climate change will reduce Delta exports in all year types, but impacts will be greater in dry years. This will lead to higher energy use due to the need to pump the water harder.
- Climate change will also reduce reservoir storage in all years, meaning less water can be carried over from one year to the next, increasing the water supply system's vulnerability to droughts and impacts when they occur. The existing water supply will not change this; the Delta does not provide a new source of water.
- Climate change will bring sea-level rise that will lead to more salt water flowing into the Delta from the San Francisco Bay. The tunnel will worsen saltwater intrusion impacts by exporting more fresh water and decreasing Delta outflow.

Environmental Justice

Thursday, September 16, 2021 | 6:00pm – 8:00pm |

- The lack of freshwater flows will create more stagnant conditions in Delta waters that are conducive to the proliferation of harmful algal blooms. Algal blooms produce toxins

dangerous to humans and wildlife. They disproportionately affect the air and water quality of disadvantaged communities.

- DWR must analyze and assess the impacts incurred during construction of the tunnel (increased traffic, worsened air quality, noise, etc.)
- Freshwater flows mitigate against saltwater intrusion. That intrusion can cause increased salinity in Delta waters, impacting water supplies for disadvantaged communities.
- Family farmers in the Delta will not be able to use the highly-salinated water to irrigate crops. And without advanced treatment, drinking water quality in many Delta communities will decline.
- The cost of the project will have a significant impact on the water rates for communities both in the Delta and south of the Delta. Farmworker communities in the south San Joaquin Valley will also see increased water rates due to rising costs of water regardless of whether their water agency invested in the tunnel or not due to the cost of water imports increasing.