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Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025 3:41 PM

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Subject: Davis Symposium

Ed-

I watched almost all of the September 16-17 symposium by zoom and have the following take-aways and comments which I would ask you to share with the ISB members and staff:

First- The stress on the Delta water supply is not being generated by climate change.

The failure by the SWP to develop the 5MAF of firm yield planned for the project, to come largely from the North Coast rivers eventually designated as “Wild and Scenic”, the gross underestimation of the environmental flow requirements, and the over commitment of actual supply through contracting to State Water Contractors jointly created a deficit generally recognized in the magnitude of 7-8 MAF/ year over the historical dry cycle in meeting the commitments of the SWP, without regard to global warming which is/will continue to aggravate the shortages.

Second- The 33,000-60,000 acres of “habitat projects” either in place or planned have to date not proven to reverse the downward spiraling of the endangered or threatened species which has been evidenced since the advent of the SWP and CVP export operations. It should be recognized that many of those projects will further aggravate water shortages in the Delta by way of increased evaporation from wetted surfaces and increases in the tidal prism causing increases in salinity intrusion.

Third-As global warming concentrates precipitation in the vast Delta watershed into fewer, warmer powerful storm events, upstream management of resulting water becomes more critical, as through “meadow management” techniques and, especially through utilizing depleted ground water basins as storage for what otherwise might be flood flows. The latter can be accomplished in a number of ways which are currently being designed or implemented, including flooding of permeable farmlands during inter-crop or dormancy periods, substitution of surface water for groundwater in irrigation, and direct pumping to groundwater basins.

Reimagining the utility of existing foothills reservoirs for season-long provision of stored water for groundwater recharge, which will also improve flood control capability, may be

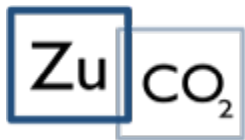
the most important opportunity. A Tunnel project has little capacity to capture the enormous downstream run-off.

Fourth- Recognition that sea level rise is a major threat to low-lying population centers and infrastructure in the entire Bay Area and California Coast. Much of the projected rise is attenuated by existing river gradient in the Delta itself. Looking at potential structures akin to the Rotterdam Storm Surge Barrier and the like may be the more far-sighted approach for the Bay Delta as a whole with corresponding benefit to the Delta.

Fifth- Recognition that the cost of a Fresh Water Corridor in the Delta is small in comparison to the Tunnel proposal, accomplishes most of the same benefits, and preserves the Delta Pool concept of the original State Water Project description in Bulletin 76 without sacrificing the economy and ecosystem of one area of the State for the benefit of another. Fresh water flows into and through the Delta can preserve water quality essential to the economic and environmental health promised by statute, court decisions, and morality.

Thanks. Please let me know if you need clarification.

Tom



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