

Waterlines

JULY 2006

The Top California Water Stories of the Month as Compiled by Orange County Water District

AP 7-8-06 - In a move that could hold implications for farmers and thirsty California cities, the federal government plans to re-examine the effects of pumping water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. Federal scientists have agreed to reconsider their previous conclusions in light of recent studies showing the population of the threatened delta smelt may be in steep decline.

North County Times 7-8-06 - San Diego water leaders call it a troubling “secret deal” and “preferential treatment” worth billions of gallons of water a year to the city of Los Angeles. Metropolitan’s former general manager apparently OK’d a deal two years ago without board approval for L.A. Dept. of Water and Power to tap directly into the State Water Project. That deal could open the door for Los Angeles to push to buy water directly from the state and result in “shifting cost”---possibly increasing what Met charges San Diego County residents and other Met customers in the future.

San Diego Union Tribune 7-6-06 - In a case with implications across the arid West and into Mexico, a federal judge refused to block a controversial water conservation plan aimed at providing San Diego with a vast new supply from Imperial Valley. The ruling lifts a potential legal hurdle to a \$251 million project that involves building a lined 23-mile section of the All-American Canal near the Mexicali border. The project could save 56,000 acre feet of water from seeping into the ground every year. But in doing so, Mexican farmers will lose groundwater they have counted on for decades.

Monterey Herald 7-26-06 - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers withdrew its endorsement of levees protecting parts of the city of Sacramento, reversing a 1998 evaluation that facilitated a construction boom in the Natomas area. A letter released by the Corps’ chief engineer in

Sacramento attributed the decision to local and federal studies that unearthed levee vulnerabilities.

San Francisco Chronicle 7-19-06 – It would cost anywhere from \$3 to \$10 billion to fulfill one of California’s environmentalists’ fondest dreams – draining the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and restoring a valley in Yosemite National Park that John Muir called “one of nature’s rarest and most precious mountain temples.”

Sacramento Bee 7-11-06 – As global warming continues and California’s mountain snow pack decreases, the state can expect to see a drastic drop in its drinking and farm water supplies, as well as frequent winter flooding, according to a report released by the state Department of Water Resources. The report was commissioned in response to Gov. Schwarzenegger’s order last year for state agencies to begin preparing for an altered climate.

Waterlines is a monthly e-mail news summary prepared by the Orange County Water District (OCWD) to keep you abreast of this changing water environment. Attached is a summary of statewide news reports on key water issues. As the manager of the groundwater basin that supplies 60 percent of Orange County’s water supply, OCWD provides this handy, condensed news report to save you time while still keeping you abreast of water news that affects Orange County. We hope this will help you in the performance of your duties by keeping you up-to-date on key water stories affecting your organization and your constituents. If you have any questions, or know anyone who would like to receive this update, please contact Rose Wilke at (714) 378-3206 or rwilke@ocwd.com