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Much in the same way that bad decisions are being made by the State Water Resources Control Board regarding water quality and quantity protections for the Delta during the drought, Federal bill H.R. 2898 (Valadao), the Western Water and American Food Security Act proposes to maximize water exports from the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary and Northern California watersheds, in addition to further weakening regulations for endangered fish species. In effect, what we have is a State and Federal end-run around water quality standards during drought – which truly foreshadows what will happen to the Delta if the tunnels are built.

Just to name a few of the problems with HR 2898 for the Delta, this legislation does nothing to provide drought relief protection for 55 of California's counties. It makes water winners, the big agricultural water districts on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, and losers by sacrificing water quality for Delta farms worth \$5.2 billion annually, the 4 million people living in Delta communities where invasive plant species and algal blooms are exploding, and for Bay Area and coastal fishing dependent economies. HR 2898 will almost certainly result in the extinction of the endangered Delta smelt in its native habitat and accelerate the already precipitous decline of the Central Valley's wild salmon and steelhead towards extinction. It will draw down limited water reserves needed in reservoirs throughout California during the upcoming fire season. And it will do nothing to create drought relief in the Sierras, for Northern California farms and communities, or for Northern California municipalities dependent on drinking water from Central Valley Rim reservoirs.

HR 2898 is truly the product of Westlands and Metropolitan water districts' deep pockets and extensive lobbying efforts. The bill unnecessarily expedites feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and permitting for projects that will likely result in decisions not in the interest of taxpayers and the general public, again benefitting special interest growers and water wholesalers while providing little water security for other regions of the state. It is nothing more than the shifting

of public wealth and health to Westlands, Kern County Water Agency, and Metropolitan Water District in the form of water currency.

Here are just a few of the egregious technical provisions for HR 2898:

- 1) Complex technical direction for Delta water flows, upstream dam project operations, and Delta smelt incidental take calculations for which Congress has neither the expertise nor authority to undertake.
- 2) Mandating of impossibly short deadlines for endangered species consultation, emergency environmental review and permitting, and expedited water transfers that will likely result in poor decisions, unacceptable environmental impacts, and increased litigation.
- 3) Allowing all the fresh water inflow from the San Joaquin River to be exported in April-May, which will further degrade Delta water quality, and expand water transfers well into the spring and fall, when threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead are most sensitive to modified flows.
- 4) Overturning a significant public investment in the legally and legislatively mandated goal of restoring salmon in the San Joaquin River in favor of an undefined "warm water fishery"

(To learn more you can find a sign on-letter opposing the opposition at Friends of the River's website)

To conclude: As with Governor Brown's charge for the Delta tunnels plan, and the gutting of Delta water quality standards by the State Water Resources Control under the drought emergency measures, Congressional Representatives put into Congress by the big ag special interest water districts are leading the effort to sacrifice the largest estuary on the west coast of the Americas and California's largest watershed for an industrial ag economy that contributes 0.3% to the state's GDP. Clearly, SJ Valley Congressional leadership working with Sen Feinstein to push this bill through (to protect almond exports to China and other unsustainable crops) shows that they champion the notion of wringing every last drop of water out of the Delta. In other words, when it comes to California water such leadership shows by its actions that they know the price of everything and the value of nothing.

Thank you