



April 2009

## Another Empty Bucket?

By Susan A. Sutton

Members of the California Legislature have proposed five water bonds in an attempt to address our ever critical water supply issue. If the past water bond allocations are any indication of the current set of proposals, years from now Californians will be more in debt and still have no new water.

As in the past, the current set of bonds are dedicated to numerous objectives, such as habitat, levees and ecosystem projects to include ocean protection, protection

against invasive species, and fuel reduction in fire damaged areas. But nowhere is there truly “new water.”

Advertising of these initiatives dupe the general public into believing that the funding will insure safe

water bonds totaling \$23.4 billion. Take a look at the last few water bonds.

- In Proposition 50 (\$3.4 billion), the Water Quality, Supply and Safe Drinking Water Projects, Coastal Wetlands Purchase and Protections Act of 2002, 38% of the funds went to land acquisition, 25% to habitat restoration, 1% to water security and 36% to multiple other areas.
- In Proposition 84 (\$5.4 billion), Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, 56% went to habitat and other environmental objectives, 28% to water quality, 15% to flood control and **only 1% to state wide water planning.**

Citizens voted for these bonds believing they were voting on a revitalization of the water system and building supplies for the future. If a line item process was initiated, Californians would know what they were voting for and not be duped into voting for projects that do nothing to generate reliable new water supplies. If Proposition 84 was dedicated to one objective, water supply, we could be well on our way to building Sites Reservoir, estimated to cost \$3.2 billion.

Environmentalists are backing the peripheral canal. But a peripheral canal only conveys water; it does not develop new water to meet the increasing needs of people or the environment. If a peripheral canal is built now, what motivation will there be to build additional storage in the near future? The mantra for the North State should be; **“No canal without storage.”**

plain and simple. Since 1920, California has experienced numerous droughts, some have lasted for six years, others for shorter durations. Numerous public and private entities call for increased conservation to solve the water shortage dilemma. However, the Delta Vision Strategic Plan (page 93), admits that “Even if this target is achieved, (20% conservation in urban per capita water use by 2020), current trends indicate that population growth will overtake these conservation gains by 2030.” In support of this statement, take into consideration that according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the California birth rate is around 550,000 per year.

This drought is estimated to cause \$1.6 billion in agricultural losses and may eliminate over 60,000 farm related jobs in the Central Valley, according to a recent University of California, Davis study. Loss to agriculture will cripple communities and the State. Time has come to be proactive not reactive and plan today for tomorrows needs.

Voters do not want more of the same, misleading water bonds and morphed environmental programs. Bonds must include language and line items that guarantee the completion of new high yielding storage projects. Without such language there is no guarantee of any new storage. What we will get is just another empty bucket.

### **WATER RALLY**

May 20, 2009 at the State Capitol

1:30 PM

A call for action on water is being sponsored by ACWA.

Come if you can to support solutions for the State’s water shortages.

and ample water but a closer look at the bond allocations clearly reveals that proportionally few funds are indeed being allocated to long term solutions for the drought, whether natural or regulatory.

**Time has come to set aside the bundling of multipurpose objectives that are standard in bonds and demand line item initiatives.**

Since 1970, Californians have voted for 21

The California drought is a supply issue,

### **SAS Strategies & Perspectives**

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## *Don't Kill the Golden Goose*

*By Susan A. Sutton*

Most Americans have become removed from the land. They live in big cities with all the amenities, to include an affordable and abundant food supply, energy at the flip of a switch, housing, transportation, parks and museums. They cast their vote based on public opinion and make contributions to the “feel good society” yet have little to no understanding of how such food got to their table, where the shoes on their feet and the clothes on their back originated, or the source of their insulin, cortisol, or other life saving drugs.

The voting habits and financial contributions of the majority of the consumers, rationalized under the guise of the “greater good” will have long lasting negative impacts on their fellow man and the creatures they are trying to protect. What has happened? We have become a polarized nation, not politically, between Democrats and

Republicans, but between producers and consumers.

Consumers have forgotten that the wealth of the nation is based on the ability to convert natural resources into consumable products. As in the past, today’s producers have converted capitol, labor, and land, into products that have improved all our lives. Wise uses of America’s natural resources produce the basic necessities of living in such abundance that as individuals we are freed from the daily toil of securing our food, clothing, and shelter. We are free to pursue our dreams in other careers, art, music, etc.

Consumers have become so accustom to abundance that they now have time to work for the “greater good.” To such end they sue, regulate, tax, and support unsubstantiated “facts” in an effort to protect the water, air, forests, farms, oceans, ice caps,

global temperatures, and God’s creatures.

Producers create the bounty that benefits all. How ironic it is that the inventions and the products that producers contribute elevate our nation’s quality of life to the highest in the world yet is the very thing that is condemned and controlled through government intervention. Environmental regulations and designations, Cap and Trade programs, government involvement in private enterprise is already affecting the productivity of our nation.

Our nation was founded in the ideals of rugged individualism, the right to own and use private property; to produce and reap the rewards of such efforts. Our forefathers rejected the evils of socialism and collectivism. They knew it was not in any ones best interest, individuals or society, to have an agenda that supports only the “greater good” that kills the golden goose.

### Eco-Sense

## *Reclamation District No. 108 Receives Water Conservation Award by Lewis Bair*

At the 2009 Mid-Pacific Water User Conference, the Bureau of Reclamation presented Reclamation District No. 108, located in Colusa and Yolo Counties, Northern California, with the Regional Directors Award for their efforts to conserve water with their Pilot Water Conservation Program.

Faced with water shortages and budget constraints, RD No. 108 Board of Trustees (Trustees) had to make the difficult decision to increase water rates or find some way to reduce the budget. Two years ago the District implemented a volunteer Pilot Water Conservation Program. Its success depended on active participation by landowners within the District. While the pilot program consisted of several water conservation elements, the cornerstone of the program was an incentive based rice drainage program. The program not only allowed the District to divert less water from the Sacramento River but also returned a tremendous saving to the District in the areas of power and energy related to drainage

pumping.

Nearly 100% of the landowners participated in the program. The Pilot Water Conservation Program paid landowners and water users the reduction in energy costs paid for conservation activities. During the first two years of the program the results were dramatic, reducing drainage by approximately 30,000 acre-feet annually resulting in payments to landowners of over \$300,000 each year. The rice program along with other conservation efforts allowed the District to plant 100% of it’s farmable acreage with a 75% water allocation.

The success of the program was attributed to a uniquely sized orifice cut into the rice drainage outlet. The dimension of the opening in the rice drainage board originated from staff and management. This opening resulted in a stable, but reduced flow of water from each field. The orifice was designed to permit .5 cubic feet per second of drainage for every 100 acres of rice.

The Pilot Water Conservation Program has

been such a great success; it is now an annual program helping to conserve water while keeping costs down. The Trustees and management agree that the program has made budgeting a little easier and farmers are happy with the conservation payments.

**Eco-Sense** features environmentally constructive ideas or products that not only promote a healthy environment but work well with modern day life, affording benefits to man and nature.



Russell Keaton helped design the rice box drainage outlet.