

A reminder that the SFPUC hearings on the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP) are this week. There will be a hearing **tomorrow, Tuesday, September 18**, at 6:30 pm – at the **Fremont Main Library, Fukaya Room, 2400 Stevenson Blvd., in Fremont**.

Please show up and urge San Francisco to pursue a water policy based on conservation and recycling rather than diverting additional water from Alameda Creek and the Tuolumne River. Please speak in favor of the SFPUC releasing adequate stream flows from their reservoirs to support the restoration of steelhead trout to the Alameda Creek watershed.

Two Sunol Valley projects that are part of the SFPUC Water System Improvement Program contemplate diverting additional water from Alameda Creek - the Calaveras Dam Replacement Project and the so-called Alameda Creek Fishery "Enhancement" Project.

Background

Calaveras Dam

The Alameda Creek Alliance is insisting that the Calaveras Dam Replacement, a major infrastructure project, include adequate water releases from the reservoir to restore steelhead trout below the dam and removal of the Alameda Diversion Dam, which diverts upper Alameda Creek flows into Calaveras. The Calaveras project conceptual engineering report contemplates the SFPUC attempting to capture all stream flows from upper Alameda Creek at the Diversion Dam, which would be illegal and a major step backwards for the health of Alameda Creek.

Click [here](#) for more info on the Calaveras Dam Project.

Enhancement Project

The "Enhancement Project" is the result of a settlement of a water rights complaint filed by California Trout in 1990 - the SFPUC and the California Department of Fish and Game signed an agreement in 1997 for water releases from Calaveras Reservoir, to benefit native fish, primarily resident rainbow trout, in upper Alameda Creek. No water has yet been released under this agreement, as the SFPUC has insisted on recapture of the water to be released, and proposes the construction of a recapture facility on Alameda Creek in the Sunol Valley. The agreement does not include stream flows needed for steelhead or other migratory fish.

The "Enhancement Project" includes an attempt to illegally divert more water from Alameda Creek, a blatant water grab that will degrade rather than restore Alameda Creek. The 1997 agreement memorializes a supposed SFPUC water right to recapture not just "the amount of water released as part of the Calaveras Reservoir stream release and recapture program" but also "historic annual diversions at the Sunol Filter Galleries." It is questionable whether the SFPUC has a valid water right to renew these diversions since they have discontinued the filter gallery diversions and do not have an established beneficial use.

Click [here](#) for more info on the Fishery Enhancement Project.

Program Environmental Impact Report Has Inadequate Studies/Flawed Analysis

- The Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Water System Improvement Program used flawed modeling to determine the anticipated increase in water demand, thus inflating projected future needs.
- In contrast to other metropolitan areas that have managed to reduce water demand in the face of growth, the anticipated 14% increase in demand projected by the SFPUC is large and out of step for the Bay Area.
- The PEIR fails to properly identify and address all of the impacts of taking more water from Alameda Creek and the Tuolumne River.

Conservation, Efficiency and Recycling

- Water conservation and efficiency measures are the cheapest, easiest, and least destructive ways to meet demand and extend supply.
- The SFPUC's "preferred alternative" ignores conservation, efficiency, and recycling measures.
- Per capita water use is projected to increase for wholesale customers, indicating they lack effective conservation programs.
- When it comes to water conservation, the Bay Area lags far behind other metropolitan areas such as Seattle and Los Angeles that are reducing water consumption even in the face of growth. As a region known for a strong environmental ethic, the Bay Area should be a leader in water efficiency and conservation.

The Draft EIR is available at www.sfgov.org/site/planning_index.asp?id=37672
(Scroll down to "Public Utility Commission (PUC) Projects: SF PUC Water System Improvement Program DPEIR.")