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2 EXPERT REPORT OF EDGAR A. IMHOFF,

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4 I. ASSIGNMENT

5 In recent reports submitted for the remedy phase of *NRDC v. Rodgers*, several experts
6 retained by the Friant defendants, and in particular Mr. McKusick, have given opinions about the
7 economic effects of restoring flows to the San Joaquin River (SJR) from Friant Dam to the Delta.
8 These reports, however, do not acknowledge or analyze one of the most significant effects of
9 restoring flows to the SJR: water quality in the downstream river corridor and in the Delta. I was
10 asked by NRDC to assess the water quality effects of increased flows from Millerton Reservoir
11 on beneficial water uses other than salmon restoration, including the potential impact of what Dr.
12 Kondolf has termed “Restoration Flows” on current water quality impairments and efforts to
13 improve water quality in the Lower San Joaquin River and the Delta, and how this relates to the
14 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation’s (USBR) efforts and the efforts of others to address discharge
15 issues involving Westside irrigators.

16 II. SUMMARY OF OPINIONS

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- 18 • “Restoration flows” released from Millerton Reservoir for the benefit of salmon and
19 native fish, as proposed by Dr. Kondolf, will benefit many other categories of users of
20 river water by increasing the capacity of the Lower San Joaquin River (LSJR) to safely
21 assimilate waste discharges and by generally improving water quality conditions in the
22 Lower River and Delta.
 - 23 • Restoration flows would recreate a San Joaquin River in some 60 miles of stream channel
24 that now are often dry and would have the potential of providing water quality and flow
25 benefits along some 200 river miles, from Friant Dam to the San Joaquin River’s junction
26 with the Stanislaus River. This would be in sharp contrast to the current situation in
27 which a comparatively few miles of water quality and flow benefits are derived from
28 periodic releases of New Melones water into the LSJR via the Stanislaus River.
 - Restoration flows could help Westside San Joaquin water districts meet current and
pending water quality objectives (WQOs) for selenium, salt and boron in the LSJR.
Irrigators will face more stringent regulations in the near future when current numerical
standards are applied to more sections of the LSJR.

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- Beyond the direct benefits of increased assimilative capacity from restoration flows, re-connecting the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and the Merced River introduces a significant water management tool for greater operational flexibility for the USBR and others grappling with water quality problems in the LSJR and the Delta. To meet water quality and flow objectives in the LSJR and the Delta, additional water from the Friant Division of the Central Valley Project could be released in conjunction with current flow augmentation programs involving SJR tributaries.
 - The Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) should look upon restoration flows as an opportunity not only to reduce the impacts of current surface and subsurface discharges of salt, boron and selenium into the San Joaquin River—which would reduce the frequency and severity of violations of WQOs—but also to hedge on the possibility of failures in the performances of key components of USBR planning alternatives. The USBR’s in-valley alternatives to address Westside drainage problems rely upon advancements in technology that are expensive and have not been demonstrated as feasible and/or environmentally safe at full scale. Furthermore, the USBR plans rely upon a long time frame that may be over-taken by water quality regulations that are becoming increasingly stringent, whereas restoration flows would provide immediate benefits. (In the USBR plans, the on-farm tile drainage system, essential to collect water from drainage problem lands, is scheduled to be completed over a fifty-year project period.)
 - Through increasing assimilative capacity, restoration flows would ameliorate the harmful effects of other substances that are impairing use of the LSJR water for domestic and industrial water supply, recreation, fish and wildlife, and other purposes. For example, other substances of concern include pesticides and herbicides, mercury, oxygen-demanding materials, and total organic carbon.
 - The full range of water quality benefits is undoubtedly broader than what I have summarized in this report. That is because I have focused on just a few key parameters, and the increased volumes of high quality restoration flows in the SJR will provide water quality improvements for all parameters.
 - The water quality improvements from restoration flows will provide significant economic benefits. The lower SJR and the Delta are highly impaired, ecologically important water bodies that are intensively used by millions of people for purposes ranging from recreation to agriculture to drinking water. Many millions of dollars have been spent, and continue to be spent, on improving water quality (and ecological values relating directly or indirectly to water quality) in these water bodies. While we cannot forecast with precision all of the water quality improvements from restoration flows, the factors discussed herein strongly suggest that the ancillary water quality benefits from restoration flows will be broad and economically meaningful.

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. Meeting Water Quality Objectives for the Lower SJR

I have reviewed and am familiar with the water quality parameters for which Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board programs are current, pending, or potential for the Lower San Joaquin River (LSJR) and the Delta. In this report I concentrate on three current parameters—selenium, salinity, and boron—because of their large impacts, environmental and economic, in the LSJR and the Delta. However, later in this report, I will discuss other water quality parameters and related water problems that could be ameliorated by increasing the assimilative capacity of the LSJR with restoration flows.

1. CWA (Sec. 303d) Impairments of the Lower San Joaquin River (LSJR) By Selenium, Salt and Boron

Water quality impairments of the LSJR because of elevated concentrations of selenium, salt and boron, are a matter of record.ⁱ Principal sources of these major contaminants are identified as waters applied toⁱⁱ, flowing from, or drained from Westside agricultural lands.

The current water quality objective (WQO) set by the Central Valley Board (CVRWQCB) for selenium in the LSJR is 5µ/L, four-day average, waterborne concentration. It is applied to a 50-mile stretch of the LSJR, from Salt Slough to Vernalis (which includes Reach 5 as defined in the Background Report.ⁱⁱⁱ) In the year 2010, the Board proposes to extend the 5µg/L objective upstream to Sack Dam, thus applying the objective to all of Reach 4 and, de facto, to inflow into Reach 4 from Reach 3.^{iv}

The present management target for selenium in water released from the Mendota Pool is 2 µg/L.^v, a level of concentration that accommodates the Central Valley Board's water objective for wetlands. Because of water deliveries to wildlife refuges from Reach 3 (Mendota Pool to Sack Dam),^{vi} the effective WQO for wetlands becomes the attainment objective for Reach 3, during times of diversion of flows to wildlife refuges.

It is important to note that monitoring of the canals that supply water to wetlands shows that the 2 µg/L selenium numeric has been exceeded in various places at various times due to such factors as: flood events, seepage from gates and canals, elevated selenium in the Delta

1 Mendota Canal and Mendota Pool, inflows from farmland drains, ground water seepage and
2 surface return flows.^{vii}

3 The WQOs for salinity vary seasonally from 700 to 1,000 µS/cm, at the compliance point
4 near Vernalis. The WQOs for boron are differentiated by section of the LSJR. From Sack Dam to
5 Merced River, the numerical standards vary seasonally from a low of 0.8 mg/L to an allowable
6 high of 5.8 mg/L; from Merced River to Vernalis, the numerical standards vary seasonally from
7 a low of 0.8 to a high of 2.6. (Allowance for the inflow of water from the Merced River accounts
8 for the more restrictive standard below the Merced.)

9 In the Basin Plan Amendments^{viii} underway by the Central Valley Board, no significant
10 changes are proposed in the existing numerical standards for salt and boron in the LSJR.
11 However, the Board is in the process of addressing the exceedance of salinity and boron
12 objectives at Vernalis, and the salt/boron impairment upstream of Vernalis, by extending control
13 programs upriver into the area that contributes the major loads of salt and boron to the LSJR,
14 namely the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley. The control program includes a plan and
15 schedule to establish WQO's and implement Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the SJR
16 upstream of Vernalis to Mendota Pool. Salt and boron control will be applied for both point and
17 nonpoint sources in the Lower San Joaquin River Basin. Controls will also be applied to limit or
18 mitigate the salt imported into the Westside area through the Delta Mendota Canal.

19 Because of the general direct correlation between boron and salinity concentrations in
20 irrigated lands in the LSJR Basin, and the similar conservative behavior of these substances in
21 water, the Central Valley Board asserts that the boron WQOs will be met if the salinity WQOs
22 are met.

23 *2. Considering the Costs of Implementation of the Basin Plan Amendments:*

24 The Central Valley Board has evaluated several possible measures for implementing the
25 revised WQOs. The proposed Basin Plan Amendments allows flexibility in means to accomplish
26 objectives. But, the extension upriver of the selenium objective and the implementation of a
27 definite plan for control of salt and boron loads in the LSJR have the potential to effect major
28 changes in the operations of many Westside irrigation districts.

1 Testifying to the U.S. House of Representatives on July 28, 2005, on behalf of the SJR
2 Exchange Contractors, Christopher L. White^{ix} said:

3
4 *“Farmers in the northern area of the San Luis Unit and adjacent areas within*
5 *the Exchange Contractors face a crisis. The California Regional Water Quality*
6 *Control Board is in effect terminating agricultural drainage to the San Joaquin*
7 *River by 2009. Without drainage, the land will become water logged and*
8 *unusable and farming will be extinguished within the area.”*

9 Whether or not that dire prediction holds true, Mr. White is certainly correct that meeting
10 WQOs—without additional freshwater flows in the LSJR—will be difficult. Detailed estimates
11 of costs are available from two sources: the Central Valley Board and the Bureau of
12 Reclamation. Because of different purposes and assumptions these estimates are not equivalent,
13 but both estimates are related in showing high costs for control of salinity and selenium.

14 In determining the costs of implementing its Resolution R5-2004-0108, the Central Valley
15 Board estimates^x that the annual equivalent costs of implementing the salt and boron control
16 program of non-point sources in the Lower San Joaquin River will range from \$27 to \$38 million
17 (2003 dollars, present worth basis, 20-year period). This cost estimate applies to 1.2 million
18 acres, of which the Westside San Joaquin is by far the primary contributor of salt and boron.
19 These estimates also assume that real-time management will be used to synchronize waste
20 discharges beneficially with the assimilative capacity of the LSJR. The staff of the Central
21 Valley Board did not identify specific cost estimates for selenium control but did note that the
22 constraint of having high selenium content in subsurface drainage from the Grasslands area
23 prevents utilizing a salt and boron control option that would range from \$15 to \$21 million/year
24 rather than \$27 to \$38 million.

25 In developing alternative plans to provide “drainage service”^{xi} to the Westside San
26 Joaquin Valley, the USBR has estimated Federal project costs^{xii} and non-federal expenditures
27 for a project area of some 730,000 acres of land. Though drainage service entails more than
28 meeting WQOs, the bulk of the costs and expenditures can be attributed to measures taken to
meet WQOs.

The annualized costs of the USBR’s alternatives for drainage service range from \$34 to
\$52 million (2002 dollars, present worth, 50-year period). The USBR’s estimate of the costs of

1 the most likely alternative, the “In-Valley/Water Needs Land Retirement” alternative, is \$47
2 million. Estimated annual costs of biotreatment of selenium and operation of related evaporation
3 basins comprise only \$7.4 million of this value, but this \$7.4 estimate does not include mitigation
4 for possible adverse effects on habitat and wildlife or costs for the ultimate disposal of selenium-
5 laden materials from evaporation basins.

6 In analyzing impact of the likely alternative on non-Federal payees of costs, the USBR
7 estimates that nonrecurring expenditures for onfarm and in-district measures will be \$92
8 million.^{xiii} Annualizing this value by proportioning, gives \$7 million local expenditures to be
9 added to the \$47 million Federal costs. Adding the USBR’s estimate of \$2 million local
10 operation and maintenance expenditures results in \$9 million/year onfarm and in-district costs of
11 the USBR alternative.

12 Thus, hypothetically, if the USBR plan works as intended, then for an estimated total
13 annualized cost of \$56 million/year, combined Federal and non-federal costs, irrigators on the
14 Westside San Joaquin Valley would meet current WQOs for salt, boron and selenium, in the
15 LSJR, and related wetlands, while addressing Westside drainage problems.

16 The USBR is scheduled to publish a feasibility level report in 2006 to include
17 refinements of costs and benefit. To date, the USBR has not considered how restoration flows
18 would affect the various strategies under consideration for meeting WQOs. Currently, when the
19 assimilative capacity of the San Joaquin River is insufficient to meet WQOs for salinity at
20 Vernalis, water is released from New Melones Reservoir on the Stanislaus River to boost river
21 flow.^{xiv} That is one example of a cost defrayment that could be taken into account by the USBR
22 in considering the potential benefits of restoration flows.

23 There is no question that the cost of managing the Westside agricultural drainage
24 problems so that WQOs will be met in the LSJR will be high. And as discussed below, there are
25 good reasons to question whether USBR’s drainage service plans will be successful in the
26 absence of high quality flows being restored to the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam.

1 B. Westside Drainage Problems and Restoration Flows

2 In response to a federal court order regarding the provision of drainage service to lands
3 on the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley, the Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) has identified
4 several alternatives, each of which would theoretically provide drainage service while meeting
5 California water quality objectives.^{xv}

6 Testifying to the HR Subcommittee on Water and Power, on July 28, 2005, USBR
7 Commissioner John Keys stated the USBR is leaning toward an alternative (the In-Valley/Water
8 Needs Land Retirement Alternative) that would collect 45,000 AF of drainage water from lands
9 showing high concentrations of salts and selenium in shallow ground waters. (An onfarm
10 drainage systems that growers would be responsible for installing—part of what the USBR terms
11 “on-farm and in district actions”—would not be completed until the end of the 50-year planning
12 period.) Collected waters would be conveyed to sequential processes of reuse and treatment that
13 would produce two separate types of effluent: (1), water suitable for blending with CVP water
14 for irrigation, and (2), a concentrate reject water of some 6,800 AF/yr., which would then
15 undergo treatment for selenium removal before discharge to evaporation basins
16 (a.k.a., “ponds”).^{xvi} Construction costs of evaporation basins, not including mitigation for adverse
17 effects on wildlife, are estimated as \$81,000,000 (present worth basis). Under this alternative,
18 194,000 acres of presently irrigated lands would be retired from irrigation and would not be
19 included in the integrated drainage/treatment/disposal system.

20 Treatment technologies for selenium have improved greatly since the original
21 investments in treatment research and field trials by the SJVDP and by water districts such as
22 Panoche and Westlands; however, attaining effluent target levels sufficiently safe for discharge
23 to evaporation ponds has not been demonstrated over any significant period of time at the pilot
24 stage, and has never been demonstrated at full scale.^{xvii}

25 But, let us assume that all the problems that over the years have beset other
26 technologically sensitive biological treatment processes can be overcome; and that 6,800 AF of
27 effluent, in which selenium does not exceed 10 µg/L, will be discharged to some 2,000 total
28 acres of evaporation ponds.

1 We are left with another uncertainty. Evaporation pond technology has advanced since
2 the days of the SJVDP, but not to the point that credible wildlife biologists who have made their
3 careers a study of ponds are assured that, based on peer-reviewed scientific investigations, the
4 ponds can be operated “bird free” or “bird safe”—which has been the basic performance
5 standard.^{xviii}

6 Currently, on the Westside San Joaquin Valley there are about 4,000 acres of evaporation
7 ponds in operation, or in the process of being closed. The USFWS points out that only one of
8 these ponds has been approved as meeting the requirements of the Central Valley Board as “bird
9 safe.” Most ponds are rich in invertebrates that provide abundant, selenium-laden food for
10 resident, migratory, and wintering birds. In view of the problems with existing ponds, despite
11 great efforts by irrigators and water districts, it is difficult to conceive of large ponds that will not
12 take on some of the hazardous characteristics of a Kesterson Reservoir.^{xix}

13 Though attention focuses on the risk aspects of evaporation facilities, reuse facilities are
14 not free of risk. Biomonitoring of birds attracted to a reuse site showed deformation of bird
15 embryos and avian eggs containing selenium in dry-weight body concentrations that were four
16 times the threshold level for embryo toxicity.^{xx}

17 Simply put, the alternative plan the USBR is apparently leaning toward—or any other in-
18 valley alternative of USBR—may not provide drainage service that meets the WQOs of the
19 LSJR.

20 If the reuse/treatment/ evaporation pond combination does not perform as expected, what
21 is the fallback position, other than wholesale land retirement (which has not been an objective of
22 the SWRCB or the Central Valley Board)? And anyone who has spent time—as I have—on the
23 ground in the Westside drainage areas, realizes that in the maze of canals, ditches, and drains in
24 those tens of thousands of acres of irrigated lands, there have been and are situations in which
25 selenium discharges get into the LSJR and cause exceedance of WQOs in the River.^{xxi}

26 Time is not an ally of the USBR drainage service plan. Water quality objectives are
27 becoming stricter in the near term—within five years—and more complex in the long-term. The
28 USBR plan will likely not be completed for several decades: the build-out of the onfarm
drainage system essential to collect drainage water is forecasted to be complete in the year 2056.

1 Quoted previously in this report, Mr. White spoke for the Exchange Contractors in
2 declaring that without drainage service a lot of irrigated lands will be shut down when the
3 Central Valley Board's regulations tighten up in 2010. The timing of the USBR drainage service
4 alternative that appears most likely to be selected is not in sync with the timing of necessary
5 water quality regulations.

6 The salmon restoration flows proposed by Dr. Kondolf range from 184,000 AF/dry year
7 to 356,000 AF/normal wet year. As proposed, these releases of high quality water from Millerton
8 Reservoir are distributed over the year in a manner that would appear to provide considerable
9 assimilative capacity benefits and have the potential to help Westside drainers meet water quality
10 objectives in the LSJR. Specifically, in addition to year-round base flows for restoration, Dr.
11 Kondolf calls for peak monthly flows from March through the April/May timeframe (depending
12 on year type), which will coincide for at least a few months with peak drainage flows, occurring
13 from February through August.^{xxii} There is a synergism between the needs for higher flows for
14 salmon and the needs for higher flows to assimilate waste discharges from agriculture.

15 Because restoration flows can be put on line long before USBR's proposed drainage
16 service plan can be adopted and implemented, and because augmented flows of high quality
17 water may be needed in both an initial phase and as a long-term element of any successful
18 drainage service plan, the USBR should welcome restoration flows as complementary, and
19 arguably essential, to its efforts to resolve the longstanding water quality problems caused by
20 Westside agricultural drainage.

21 Moreover, in addition to the assimilative capacity benefits provided directly by
22 restoration flows, Dr. Kondolf's proposed flow regime would produce a significant additional
23 benefit for parties such as the USBR who are working to solve chronic water quality and flow
24 issues in the LSJR. Restoration flows would serve as a new source of water and conveyance that
25 could be managed for water quality purposes. For example, water is currently acquired and
26 released from eastside tributaries as part of the VAMP process. However, the California
27 Department of Fish and Game and other stakeholders are requesting, as part of the State Board's
28 (SWRCB) periodic review, that flows be increased above present levels. The General Manager
of the Friant Water Authority was recently quoted on these renewed efforts to increase VAMP

1 flows: “Now there are those who want to revisit VAMP and double San Joaquin River fish
2 flows—and Friant is the only possible source for that amount of water.”^{xxiii} Having the
3 additional management tool of a re-connected SJR that could convey flows from Millerton
4 Reservoir would indeed be critical to any effort to augment flows in the LSJR and the Delta.

5 Finally, it is important to re-emphasize that restoration flows would provide USBR with
6 a new water quality management tool that could be used to provide water quality benefits along
7 the whole course of the river from Friant Dam to the Delta, in contrast with the current practice
8 of increasing flows from New Melones and only improving water quality downstream of the
9 confluence of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin Rivers.

10 C. Enhancing the Assimilative Capacity of the LSJR

11 *1. Greater Capacity to Assimilate Salt and Boron Loads*

12 In the Central Valley Board’s staff report of July 2004, real-time monitoring of quantity
13 and quality of flows in the LSJR is recommended as a means of allowing agricultural drainers to
14 time their discharges to use the assimilative capacity of the river. Quoting from page 2 of that
15 report: “...*this control program includes opportunities for dischargers to use real-time*
16 *allocations...Real-time load allocations will generally allow more loading to the LSJR...The*
17 *benefit of real-time management can be expanded through drainage re-operation...[which]*
18 *involves the timing of releases to the LSJR to coincide with periods of assimilative capacity...*”

19 The Central Valley Board will allow the USBR to: “*a) Meet DMC load allocations: or b)*
20 *Provide mitigation and/or dilution flows to create additional assimilative capacity for salt in the*
21 *SJR equivalent to salt loads in Delta Mendota Canal supply water in excess of their allocation.*”

22 The ability to increase assimilative capacity by adding higher quality flow to the SJR was
23 demonstrated in a field study conducted, August 19-30, 2004 when DMC water, containing
24 relatively low salinity compared to base flows in the LSJR, was released down Newman
25 Wasteway with the effect of lowering salt concentrations in the LSJR from a range of 1,500 to
26 2,000 EC to about 1,000 EC ($\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$). Dilution flows of 250 to 300 cfs augmented base SJR river
27 flows ranging from 200 to 600 cfs in this USBR experiment.

28 The Central Valley Regional Board has commented on how flows from Friant Dam could
be used in coordination with re-circulation in the Newman Wasteway and flows on other

1 tributaries to provide broad water quality benefits: "Increasing instream flow in the LSJR would
2 provide dilution and mixing options. ...For example, more releases of water from Friant Dam and
3 eastside tributary reservoirs to the LSJR, and recirculation of Delta Mendota Canal water back to
4 the LSJR via Newman Wasteway, would supplement flows and provide benefits to multiple
5 LSJR beneficial users." (Appendix 2, of Draft Final Staff Report, July 2004, CVRWQCB).

6 In analyzing the beneficial effects on the LSJR of the high-quality water released at
7 Friant Dam, we can also look to the change in water quality during periods when extended flood
8 releases from Friant Dam have re-connected the LSJR with its mainstem headwaters. Such
9 conditions were present in 1998. That year, when Friant releases were flowing by the Landers
10 gage (just upstream of the Merced River) the salinity of the SJR was measured at 50 to 55 EC.
11 However, in other years when there were no Friant releases to the River—and the LSJR
12 contained only waters flowing or drained from irrigated lands—the salinity of the SJR at Landers
13 was twenty times as high.^{xxiv}

14 This dramatic illustration from 1998 is not surprising. The mean EC of SJR water
15 directly below Friant Dam is 52.^{xxv} Though some increases in salt concentration may occur in
16 transit down the river, this high quality base flow will obviously provide major improvements in
17 the river's ability to assimilate salt and many other constituents, which is why it will be a great
18 asset in helping Westside drainers meet WQOs in the LSJR.

19 Moreover, some thousands of acres of irrigated lands in Grasslands—in what the SJVDP
20 classified as zone C of Grasslands in The Rainbow Report^{xxvi}—do not contain high
21 concentrations of selenium in the shallow ground water. These lands would seem to be prime
22 candidates for real-time management of matching salinity discharges to an increased assimilative
23 capacity of the LSJR.

24 2. *Dilution of the Concentrations of Selenium in Agricultural Discharges to the LSJR*

25 TMDLs for river bodies are based on the assimilative capacity of the receiving waters.
26 Scientists acknowledge the beneficial effects of dilution of water to lower the potential for
27 bioconcentration of selenium in biota. (Bioconcentration is the process by which living
28 organisms can retain and concentrate chemical present in their surrounding medium, which is
usually water.) Lowering the concentration of selenium in water through augmented flows from

1 Millerton Reservoir has the potential to lessen bioconcentration of selenium in organisms in the
2 LSJR.^{xxvii} Eastside streams generally contain amounts of selenium so low as to be undetectable
3 (associated with low concentrations of salt and boron, compared to Westside streams and
4 agricultural water discharges.)

5 Dr. Theresa Presser of the USGS, one of the most experienced and esteemed selenium
6 scientists in California, comments on past difficulties of Grassland Drainers in meeting WQOs
7 under low flow conditions in the San Joaquin River:

8
9 *“...the project [Grasslands Bypass] was not protective of the San Joaquin River*
10 *during low flow months because Se loads were in excess of those modeled to meet*
11 *a 5 µG/L objective. Threats to water bodies from Se are traditionally greatest*
12 *during low flows and dry years.”^{xxviii}*

13 From personal experience as manager of the SJVDP, I can attest that the local initiatives
14 and creativity evinced by the Grassland drainers influenced the substance of the Rainbow
15 Report—in the Grasslands Subarea Plan. Despite the responsible and costly effort that is the
16 Bypass Project, however, assurances that the Bypass project will meet future WQOs for
17 selenium have been questioned based on scientific analysis of the forecasts that Project personnel
18 used in applying for a renewal to continue the “experiment” of bypassing drainage around the
19 wetlands. Representing the USGS scientists, Presser concludes:

20 *“Dry-year water-quality standards for the San Joaquin River below the Merced*
21 *River are not met through the nine-year process of this EIS/EIR [to justify the*
22 *extension]. Loads in 2009 remain over 2-fold above those proposed by the state to*
23 *meet a 5-µg/L Se objective in 2010. The USEPA’s criterion of 5 µg/L cannot be*
24 *met in Mud Slough and the San Joaquin River above the Merced River...”* (See
25 last preceding footnote.).

26 In commenting on dilution of selenium loads to meet WQOs, scientists stress the
27 difference between selenium—which tends to increase in concentrations in organisms as it
28 moves up trophic levels from prey to predator—and salt and boron that do not. Dr. Presser, Dr.
Sam Luoma and other scientists are concerned about the load of selenium accumulating in the
Bay/Delta and the lack of rigorous technical and scientific monitoring of the fate and effects of
selenium in the LSJR. While acknowledging the general beneficial effects of augmenting low
flows of the SJR, they call for the establishment of a comprehensive, science-based program of

1 monitoring and investigation in the Lower San Joaquin River Basin and affected downriver
2 regions.

3 D. Ameliorating Other Water Quality Problems with Restoration Flows

4 The Basin Plan of the Central Valley Board designates an array of beneficial uses to be
5 served by the quality of San Joaquin River water in various sections of the River. The list
6 includes, but is not limited to: fish and wildlife, recreation, agriculture, domestic water supply,
7 municipal water supply, and industrial water supply. The capability of the SJR to serve these
8 uses is defined by the presence or absence of certain parameters of water quality in the water.
9 Other than salinity and selenium, several major problem areas have come under the scrutiny or
10 regulation of the Central Valley Board and have been the focus of scientific study.^{xxix}

11 The Central Valley Board lists several organophosphorous (OP) pesticides for load-
12 control limits (TMDL); and TMDLs are pending for several organochlorine (Ocl) pesticides. OP
13 pesticides from agricultural use cause aquatic life toxicity in the SJR. Increasing the SJR flow by
14 releases from Friant Dam will reduce these problematic concentrations. Similarly, there will be
15 major benefits from diluting the excessive concentrations of Ocl pesticides that continue to be
16 contributed to the SJR as a legacy of past practices. Lowering the concentrations of Ocls in SJR
17 waters is especially important because Ocls bioaccumulate in organisms and biomagnify through
18 the food web of life. This, in turn, will be helpful in meeting the goal of eventually rescinding
19 public health advisories for eating fish caught in the lower SJR and the Delta.

20 The impacts of SJR flows on water quality extend into the Stockton Deep Water Ship
21 Channel. The Central Valley Board has developed a TMDL to address the dissolved oxygen
22 (DO) impairment in the LSJR which harms fish and other aquatic life. The Regional Board has
23 concluded that this impairment is caused in part by reduced SJR flows, along with two other
24 factors: the deepening of the channel to accommodate shipping in the Stockton area, and
25 discharges of nutrients into the SJR. Load limits on nutrient contributions to the SJR fall heavily
26 on the City of Stockton, which is remedying its discharges of ammonia, one of the oxygen-
27 demanding substances that affect the Ship Channel. Tens of millions of dollars have been spent
28 and more are committed to ameliorating the impacts of the depletion of oxygen in the Ship
Channel. Under low-flow conditions in the channel, flushing is slow and the water body stratifies

1 to produce a zone devoid of oxygen. Mechanical aeration – an expensive, but potentially
2 effective strategy -- is being experimented with as one solution. Since monitoring has shown
3 that DO conditions in the Ship Channel generally improve with increased flow, additional flows
4 from restoration will improve the DO problem and reduce the need for costly control measures
5 such as aeration. Indeed, in adopting its TMDL for DO, the Regional Board has identified
6 increased flows as a possible solution to the impairment, but has cited its lack of authority over
7 water rights as the reason for not requiring USBR – the largest diverter on the SJR system -- to
8 increase flows through the ship channel. However, the TMDL does recommend that the State
9 Board consider using its water rights permit authority to impose such requirements.

10 Other substances causing water quality problems in the LSJR include: PCBs (for which a
11 TMDL is pending), dioxins/furans, mercury, pathogens, nutrients (leading to excessive growth of
12 aquatic plants), pyrethroid-based pesticides, total organic carbon (causing water utilities to
13 develop expensive treatment to control trihalomethane and other disinfection byproducts), and
14 herbicides (e.g., diuron). In each case, Friant Dam releases of high quality to the SJR will
15 provide dilution benefits and reduce the impacts on water quality of an array of substances of
16 concern.

17 E. Revision of Selenium Criteria; an Activity Relevant to Restoration Flows

18 I am including this section in my report because, of the constituents that are troublesome
19 for water users, selenium is one of the most critical in terms of the costs of preventing its entry
20 into water bodies and the ecological harm it can cause once in the water bodies.

21 Some in the agricultural community, in recognition of the high costs of controlling
22 selenium to meet WQOs, have expressed hope that the present numeric standards for selenium
23 will be softened. Presently, the EPA is in the process of revising the water quality criterion for
24 selenium for aquatic life.^{xxx} EPA staff scientists and peer experts agree generally that, because
25 selenium tends to bioaccumultate in the environment, regulators need to move toward a criterion
26 that when exceeded is more indicative of potential harm to biota than simply testing for
27 concentrations in water.^{xxxi} And EPA has proposed abandoning the present 5-μ/L standard in
28 favor of a tissue-based criterion. (Whether or not California regulators would follow that
guideline is another matter.)

1 California's water resources, Idaho's water resources, New Mexico's mineral and water
2 resources, river basin planning in Wisconsin, national water resources research, coordination of
3 state and federal water agencies in the ten-state Missouri River Basin, management of a national
4 mine reclamation program, water information programs of the USGS, and private consulting in
5 hydrology.

6 **Principal Experience in California:** Serving as an engineering geologist for Thomas Stetson,
7 Inc., Mr. Imhoff gathered field data and prepared exhibits for the lawsuits of: San Gabriel v.
8 Long Beach et al, Arizona v. California, and Inyo County v. Los Angeles. Then he served as
9 District Hydrologist of the Santa Clara Valley Water Conservation District and contributed to the
10 investigations of importation of South Bay Aqueduct water and San Luis Water into the Santa
11 Clara Valley. After many years of absence from California, Mr. Imhoff returned, as a Senior
12 Executive in Interior Department to manage the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program, from
13 1986 to 1991. He is a co-author of the "Rainbow Report." After retirement from the USGS, Mr.
14 Imhoff remained in California until 1996, working first as an Associate in the firm of Hydrologic
15 Consultants, Inc., and then as a private consultant for Natural Heritage Institute, on studies of the
16 conjunctive use of water. Until recent years he served as an Advisory Consultant to Boyle
17 Engineering Corporation, on a California project.

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20 **Listing of Experience in Water Quality Investigations:** Established a system for monitoring
21 and testing chloride and TDS concentrations of ground water in the Santa Clara Valley Water
22 Conservation District; supervised studies of DO, temperature, and bacterial contamination of
23 streams in southeast Wisconsin; drafted water quality criteria for the rivers of Idaho (Idaho
24 Department of Health); managed research programs on the quality of water in Maine's lakes and
25 the BOD/DO relationships in Maine's Rivers; directed the science-based program (SJVDP) in
26 the San Joaquin Valley that produced unprecedented and major findings on the source,
27 distribution, fate and impact of selenium, boron and salt; applied the findings of science and
28 engineering in the drafting of plans for managing drainage problems to meet water quality
objectives, protect human health, sustain agriculture, and protect the environment.

1 **EMPLOYMENT (REVERSE CHRONOLOGY):**

- 2 • Consulting in hydrology, while based in Davis, CA and Charlottesville, VA
- 3 • Manager (SES), San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program, Sacramento, California
- 4 • Chief (SES), national Office of Water Data Coordination, Washington, DC
- 5 • Senior Hydrologist, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Reston, Virginia
- 6 • Regional Director (SES), U.S. Office of Surface Mining, Indianapolis, IN
- 7 • Senior Environmental Planner, Resources and Land Investigations, USGS
- 8 • Director of Planning, Missouri River Basin Commission, Omaha, NB
- 9 • Director, Office of Water Resources Research, University of Maine, Orono
- 10 • Director of Planning, Idaho Water Resource Board, Boise
- 11 • Chief Natural Resources Planner, SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- 12 • Hydrological Consultant, Wisconsin Dept. of Resource Development, Madison
- 13 • Resources Planner, State of New Mexico, Santa Fe
- 14 • District Hydrologist, Santa Clara Valley Water Conservation District, CA
- 15 • Engineering Geologist, Stetson Consulting Engineers, Los Angeles

16 **Education, Licenses and Professional Recognition:** Mr. Imhoff holds a B.S. in geology from
17 the University of Utah and an M.S. in Water Resources Management from the University of
18 Wisconsin. He is a graduate of the Westinghouse School of Environmental Management. He is a
19 certified Professional Geologist (by exam) and was accredited as a professional planner (by
20 ACIP exam).

21 **Mr. Imhoff's awards include:**

- 22 • The William C. Ackermann Medal of the American Water Resources Association for
23 "Excellence in Water Management"
- 24 • The Distinguished Service Award of the Department of Interior for contributions to water
25 resources investigations and information programs
- 26 • The Presidential Rank of Meritorious Executive for the management of the San Joaquin
27 Valley Drainage Program (a State/federal/Stakeholder task force)
- 28 • U.S. House of Representatives Resolution, 102nd Congress, 2nd session, honoring Mr.
Imhoff for his career achievements and for his role in the Rainbow Report.

29 **Technical Publications and Presentations (last ten years):**

- 30 • "Understanding the Past: How we got here. An Overview of the 1990 Rainbow Report."
31 March 27, 2001. Sacramento, California. Proceedings published by the San Francisco
32 Estuary Project, Oakland, California.
- 33 • "System Earth," 2002. Series of earth science lectures in the Jefferson Institute of
34 Lifelong Learning, University of Virginia.

DATE: 9/17/05

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FOOTNOTES

ⁱ / For example, see reports and data of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program (SJVDP), and the Bureau of Reclamation. E.G., Appendix 1, CVRWQCB, TMDL Report for Salt and Boron in the LSJR, September 2003, peer review.

ⁱⁱ I refer to the considerable salt load that is imported into the Westside SJ via the DMC and San Luis Canal.

ⁱⁱⁱ / San Joaquin River Restoration Study Background Report, December 2002.

^{iv} / See Staff Report of the CVRWQCB, "Total Maximum Daily Load for Selenium in the Lower San Joaquin River, August 2001."

^v / Memorandum of 22 November 2004, from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Chief, Resources Management Division, USBR, South-Central California Area Office (correspondence 1-1-04-I-2958).

^{vi} / See USBR's report "Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation Information Report, 2005.

^{vii} / See a report of extensive monitoring in 1999-2000, by Eppinger, staff report for CVRWQCB.

^{viii} / See CVRWQCB Draft Final Staff Report of July 2004, "Amendments...for the Control of Salt and Boron Discharges into the Lower San Joaquin River" and CVRWQCB Resolution R5-2004-0108.

^{ix} / Christopher White is the General Manager and District Engineer of the Central California Irrigation Dist.

^x / See CVRWQCB draft final staff report for control of Salt and boron, Economic Analysis, July 2004.

^{xi} / "Drainage service is defined broadly to include any measure, structural or non-structural, that will reduce or eliminate the conditions causing growers to drain water from crop root zones. Taking land out of irrigation can be considered "drainage service."

^{xii} / USBR, "San Luis Drainage Feature Re-evaluation Draft EIS." See Table 2.12-1.

^{xiii} / Pages 17-9 and 17-10 of "San Luis Drainage Feature Re-evaluation Draft EIS"

^{xiv} / Page D-35, Appendix D, "San Luis Drainage Feature Re-evaluation Draft EIS"

^{xv} / USBR, May 2005, "San Luis Drainage Feature Re-evaluation," Draft EIS.

^{xvi} / USBR, March 2005, "Technical Appendices to the San Luis Drainage Re-evaluation," Draft EIS.

^{xvii} / See pages 42-49 of the SJVDP Report of 1990, the "Rainbow Report"; Frankenberger et al, "Advanced Treatment Technology in the Remediation of Seleniferous Drainage Waters and Sediments," Feb. 2004, Irrigation and Drainage System, vol.18, no.1, pp 19-42. Critical inquiries about the pilot systems touted by USBR in the Draft EIS are found in a USFWS review of the Draft EIS, memorandum of Nov. 17, 2004, correspondence item FWS/EC-05-005.

^{xviii} / Appendix G of USBR's draft EIS, "Ecological Risk Assessment, In-Valley Disposal Alternative."

^{xix} / See USFWS draft Report of February 2005 on the USBR draft EIS Feature Re-evaluation.

^{xx} / See Skorupa (1998).

^{xxi} / See source material citation of USGS (Presser) memo to USBR.

^{xxii} / CVRWQCB staff report of August 2001, "TMDL for Selenium in the LSJR."

^{xxiii} / R. Jacobsma, Friant Water Line, August 2005.

^{xxiv} See page 7, Lee memo to Imhoff

^{xxv} / Table on page 6-20 of Background Report

^{xxvi} / See page 139 of SJVDP report of 1990, "A Management Plan for Agricultural Subsurface Drainage..."

^{xxvii} / For explanation of this process see Dr. Sam Luoma's paper, "Understanding the Linkages," pp.20-27 of proceedings of a workshop, Beyond the Drain, March 27, 2001, Sacramento. Luoma does not vouchsafe, without site-specific investigation of bioaccumulation, for the beneficial effects of flow augmentation of selenium discharges.

^{xxviii} / See Presser memorandum to Delamore (USBR), February 26, 2001

^{xxix} / See Jones & Stokes negative declaration of Feb. 2005, the CVRWQCB executive report of October 2002 and Dr. Fred Lee's "Overview of Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta Water Quality Issues," 22 June 2004.

^{xxx} / EPA, "Draft Aquatic Life Criteria Document for Selenium," Federal Register 69 (242), Dec. 17, 2004

^{xxxi} / EPA, Peer Consultation Workshop on Selenium Aquatic Toxicity and Bioaccumulation, Report 822R98007

^{xxxii} / See: Hamilton, S. J. (2002). "Review of residue-based selenium toxicity threshold for freshwater fish,"

Ecotox. And Environ. Safety 56, 201-210.

^{xxxiii} / E.G., as presented by Dr. A. Dennis Lemly in "A Procedure for Setting Environmentally Safe TMDLs for Selenium in San Diego Creek and Newport Bay, California". (January, 2001)

^{xxxiv} / My remarks on selenium criterion-setting are based on an extensive review of the scientific literature, personal communications with leading scientists, and on a meeting with scientists of EPA in Washington DC on June 28, 2005. (All of these activities preceded and were unrelated to NRDC asking me to be an expert in this case.)

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3 **ATTACHMENT A – INFORMATION CONSIDERED**
4

5 *In preparing my Report, I considered the following information. My Report also references*
6 *various materials in footnotes. To the extent that any of the footnote references are not also*
7 *listed below, that was merely an oversight and those materials should be deemed part of this list.*
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