



News Release



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Judgment Protects Drinking Water Quality for 25 Million Californians

CONCORD – A Sacramento Judge ruled on December 4 that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared by the Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District (SCRSD) was inadequate and failed to consider the impacts of increasing their discharge of wastewater into the Sacramento River Delta and adversely impacting the drinking water source for 25 million Californians. The lawsuit against SCRSD was brought by a coalition of urban water agencies concerned that SCRSD ignored impacts to drinking water when planning to increase its discharge and did not consider sufficient treatment (including tertiary treatment) of wastewater, treatment that is required of other wastewater treatment facilities discharging to the Delta and its tributaries.

Sacramento Superior Court Judge Raymond Cadei issued a final ruling in the case brought by five urban water agencies. Contra Costa Water District (CCWD), the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Alameda County Water District, and Alameda County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (Zone 7 Water Agency) sued to protect drinking water quality from the degradation that would be caused by SRCSD's plan to increase its discharges of secondary-treated wastewater.. “This is a victory for drinking water quality,” said CCWD General Manager, Walter J. Bishop. “All of these water agencies came together to protect their customers and their source of drinking water, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Protecting water quality and public health is critical to our mission to provide high-quality water, and we look forward to working cooperatively with SCRSD to find solutions that meet everyone’s needs.” Zone 7 Water Agency’s General Manager, Jill Duerig stated, “We are thrilled that mitigating this additional stress on the Delta’s fragile ecosystem will be considered more fully as part of SRCSD’s environmental planning process.”

The water agencies sued over the adequacy of SRCSD's EIR on its 2020 Master Plan, which would raise its pollutant loadings to the Delta by more than 40%. Judge Cadei found for the plaintiffs on most of the arguments raised and required additional environmental review to address the inadequacies. Several instances of inadequate impacts analysis for drinking water constituents of concern, including salinity must be corrected. On this point, Judge Cadei faulted the defendants because they did not consider and resolve the data supplied by petitioner CCWD indicating that the projected increases in chloride from the SRCSD project would affect its ability to deliver high-quality water.

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