



Fact Sheet

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD | 1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 | Mailing Address: P. O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100 | www.waterboards.ca.gov

State Water Board to Consider Davis and Woodland Water Rights Applications on March 1, 2011

Yolo County Communities Turn in Water Rights Applications

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) conducts public hearings on a variety of issues. In this instance, the cities of Davis and Woodland are requesting the right to divert approximately 45,000-acre-feet of water from the Sacramento River for use in the Woodland and the Davis areas.

On average, two single family households in California use an acre-foot of water per year for landscape irrigation and indoor water use such as washing, showers and drinking. * In this instance, this water is to be used for municipal purposes and irrigation in both Davis and Woodland, with the University of California, Davis using water specific to its Fisheries and Aquaculture Research programs.

The Sacramento River as a Water Resource

Millions of Californians depend on water flowing down the Sacramento River to provide drinking water, and irrigation for agricultural uses. The State Water Board sets flow requirements on the river to assure that the river and the Bay Delta have enough fresh water flows to protect fish and wildlife and their habitat, including endangered and threatened species listed pursuant to the State and federal endangered species acts.

Water Rights Issuance

Because there is opposition to these applications for water rights, they were brought before the State Water Board for public hearing and discussion. In January 2011, a hearing was conducted to take in public comment and evidence on the two Yolo County city requests for water rights. **On March 1, 2011**, the State Water Board will convene to consider the merits of these two water right applications in light of the evidence received at the January hearing.

Water Quality and Environmental Protection in Place

During times of drought or reduced water resources, the State Water Board has the power to limit the ability of water right holders to receive the full allocation of water called for in their water rights. This is to ensure that minimum water flows remain in rivers such as the Sacramento River to meet environmental and water quality needs.

These two draft permits that will be considered by the State Water Board include conditions to restrict the cities' water diversions during times of reduced flow to protect other water right holders and the environment. If approved, during these periods of reduced flow, the cities will have to either pump groundwater or buy water from other water right holders within the basin to make up the difference. Water rights are generally prioritized based on when they were granted, "first in time, first in right", so junior water right holders are told to cut back first.

However, within the Delta (and elsewhere), this prioritization scheme further distinguishes between water that is used within the basin of origin and water that is exported to other locations. Preference is given to holders of water rights that use the water within the basin.

Bay Delta Ecosystem Water Flow Needs May Grow

During the last 12 months, the State Water Board prepared a report required by the Legislature to inform broad-based planning decisions being considered in the Delta Plan, the Bay Delta Conservation Plan, and future State Water Board planning decisions. The report presented determinations about the amount of water flow needed to fully protect fisheries in the Delta. The report was limited to consideration of flow conditions needed to fully protect fishery resources in the Delta given the existing infrastructure in the Delta and did not consider many other important uses of water, including urban and agricultural supply and preservation of cold water for endangered and threatened fish. Though the report provided important information that will be evaluated as the current Delta planning efforts proceed, it was intended to be informational, and has no regulatory effect relative to these two water rights applications before the State Water Board.

**For more information, Please visit the SWRCB website at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/>
For specifics on the application itself, please visit the SWRCB website and look at the latest agenda item at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/calendar/index.shtml#2011**

****Definition of an Acre-Foot of Water.*** An acre-foot of water is 325,851 gallons.
An acre-foot of water is enough to cover an acre (43,560 square feet) with water 1 foot deep.