



News Release

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For More Information, contact:

Katherine Evatt, FC: 209-296-5734

Bill Jennings, CSPA: 209-464-5067

Ronald Stork, FOR: 916-442-3155 x 220

EBMUD board votes 7-0 to drop Pardee Expansion from revised water plan

On Tuesday, April 24 in Oakland, the East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors voted unanimously to approve a revised district Water Supply Management Plan 2040 that drops the controversial expansion of Pardee Reservoir. The expansion would have destroyed at least a mile of the Mokelumne River, including a section eligible for National Wild and Scenic River designation.

The original WSMP 2040, adopted in October 2009, was successfully challenged in court by the Foothill Conservancy, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance and Friends of the River. A resulting court order required EBMUD to conduct further environmental review and consider participating in the expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir in Contra Costa County. The revised WSMP is a result of the revised environmental review. It includes a partnership with the Contra Costa Water District in the Los Vaqueros Expansion, expected to be completed later this year.

“We are very happy with the outcome of this long and challenging process,” said Foothill Conservancy President Katherine Evatt after the meeting. “We’re proud of our foothill communities for coming together to tell EBMUD “no” and to protect the Mokelumne River. We’re glad we filed the suit and saw it through. And we’re grateful to EBMUD for changing course. Their decision is right for the foothills, right for the East Bay, and right for the Mokelumne River. Now we can move on to permanently protecting the river with National Wild and Scenic River designation so no one has to go through a process like this on the upper Moke again.”

“The judge’s order led to a better outcome,” said Chris Shutes of the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance. “EBMUD has taken a stand to protect Delta inflow and water quality. West-of-Delta storage is a forward-thinking approach that should be front and center for the entire Bay Area.”

The proposed Pardee expansion would have flooded the Mokelumne River’s Middle Bar reach below Highway 49 and part of the Electra Run upstream. The lower end of the Electra Run has been found eligible for National Wild and Scenic River designation, and advocates want the designation to extend to the existing high pool of Pardee Reservoir.

“Every river eligible for National Wild and Scenic River designation is nationally significant,” said Friends of the River’s Ronald Stork. “They’re just as valuable as our national parks. That’s one of the reasons we joined in this important effort to save the Mokelumne.”

“This process worked,” said John A. Coleman, EBMUD board president. “We listened, we heard, and we acted. It has always been our intent to do the right thing for our customers and partners to get the best use possible out of this precious resource. Together, we will continue to work cooperatively as a region to solve other tough problems ahead.”

For more information, contact Katherine Evatt of Foothill Conservancy at 209-296-5734, Bill Jennings of CSPA at 209-464-5067, or Ronald Stork of Friends of the River at 916-442-3155 x 220.

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