

Salmon Water Now Press Release

Salmon Water Now Exposes Agribusiness Manipulating Delta Water Policy for Private Profit

Latest Release, "The Water Pirates" Comes as Federal Proceedings Marginalize Pro-Salmon, Pro-Delta Voices to Benefit Corporate Water Brokers

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Watch the Video:

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwqVc8Hbmqk&fmt=18>

Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/8521134>

San Francisco, CA - Salmon Water Now, a collaboration between fishermen and media professionals, has released a new video, "The Water Pirates," describing how agribusiness maintains a harmful stranglehold on water management policy in California. The video focuses on the controversial California water bond as well as U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's (D-CA) continued efforts to benefit her friend, campaign contributor, and agribusiness billionaire Stuart Resnick by attempting to expand the practice of private interests selling subsidized public water for huge profits to non-farm users - all while undermining efforts to restore vital Sacramento River salmon runs.

The video release comes at a time when two federal panels are looking at the science and policies at the heart of California's crisis. On Monday, the House Natural Resources Committee's Subcommittee on Water and Power, led by Rep. Grace F. Napolitano (D-CA), held a field hearing on California's water supply issues. The hearing was hosted by the Metropolitan Water District, the most politically-powerful urban user of water exported from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta. Meanwhile, a National Academy of Science (NAS) panel in Davis, CA is reviewing the current federal water management plans in the Delta.

"The Water Pirates" video highlights one of the central policy issues facing both federal panels and the state: the expanding practice of private individuals selling subsidized federal water for huge profits to non-farm users such as real estate developers. Unfortunately, Sen. Feinstein and others appear eager to expand this harmful practice.

The NAS panel came about after Mr. Resnick asked Senator Feinstein to request the review and earmark \$750,000 in taxpayer funds to make it happen. While the panel

will hear an earful from invited agribusiness representatives in support of overturning protections for fish in order to increase water exports south of the Delta, the NAS inexplicably failed to invite a single representative from California's quarter-billion dollar salmon fishing industry or from the Delta's many farming communities.

Fishing communities along one thousand miles of U.S. coastline in two states have lost hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of jobs in the last two years due to salmon closures caused in large part by poor water management in the Delta. These communities have a significant economic and cultural stake in the successful resolution of the current water debate. However, the NAS panel has thus far ignored them to instead focus on agribusiness interests.

Salmon Water Now works to raise awareness of the plight of wild salmon, salmon fishermen, and coastal communities dependent upon healthy freshwater flows in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta. The group believes that water management in the Delta is woefully inadequate to restore the strong salmon runs that once formed the backbone of the fishing industry in California and Oregon.

Great sacrifices have already been made in the form of two consecutive closed salmon seasons, intense hatchery programs, large job losses in the fisheries sector, and raised seafood prices for consumers. All of these sacrifices will be made in vain as long as water, our most precious resource, continues to be mismanaged for the exclusive benefit of California agribusiness. Now is the moment for California to adopt sustainable, equitable water management that will restore the Bay-Delta's salmon runs, bring back jobs, save coastal and Delta communities, and foster a newfound value for precious freshwater flows.

For more information, please visit www.SalmonWaterNow.org

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