

## DOCKETED

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<b>Project Title:</b>	MARIPOSA ENERGY PROJECT - Compliance
<b>TN #:</b>	205475
<b>Document Title:</b>	Byron Bethany IrrigationDistrict Diversion Order
<b>Description:</b>	BBID 1.5 million dollar fine
<b>Filer:</b>	Robert Sarvey
<b>Organization:</b>	Robert Sarvey
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STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS

**ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT**

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In the Matter of Unauthorized Diversion by

**BYRON-BETHANY IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

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SOURCE: Intake Channel to the Banks Pumping Plant (formerly Italian Slough)

COUNTY: Contra Costa

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**YOU ARE HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE THAT:**

1. Byron-Bethany Irrigation District (BBID or District) is alleged to have diverted and used water in violation of California Water Code section 1052, subdivision (a), which provides that the diversion or use of water subject to Division 2 of the Water Code other than as authorized in Division 2 is a trespass.
2. Water Code section 1052, subdivision (c), provides that any person or entity committing a trespass during a period for which the Governor has issued a proclamation of a state of drought emergency may be liable in an amount not to exceed the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each day the trespass occurs plus two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each acre-foot of water diverted or used in excess of that diverter's rights. Water Code section 1052, subdivision (d)(2), provides that civil liability may be imposed administratively by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) pursuant to Water Code section 1055.
3. Water Code section 1055, subdivision (a), provides that the Executive Director of the State Water Board may issue a complaint to any person or entity on whom Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) may be imposed. On June 5, 2012, the Executive Director delegated this authority to the Deputy Director for Water Rights. State Water Board Resolution 2012-0029 authorizes the Deputy Director for Water Rights to issue an order imposing an ACL when a complaint has been issued and no hearing has been requested within 20 days of receipt of the complaint. The Deputy Director for Water Rights has redelegated this authority to the Assistant Deputy Director for Water Rights pursuant to State Water Board Resolution 2012-0029.

**ALLEGATIONS**

4. On June 30, 2010, BBID submitted an Initial Statement of Water Diversion and Use (Statement), which the State Water Board, Division of Water Rights (Division) designated as Statement 021256 (S021256). Under S021256, BBID claims a pre-1914 appropriative water right to the Intake Channel to the Banks Pumping Plant, formerly Italian Slough, in Contra Costa County. The Statement also indicates that BBID diverted approximately 26,179 acre-feet (af) in 2009 for municipal and industrial and agricultural use within its boundaries.
5. On July 1, 2013, BBID submitted Supplemental Statements for S021256, for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012. BBID's Supplemental Statements each indicates that the District first put water to use in 1917, and that the purpose of use for the District's diversions is irrigation of 12,500 acres. The 2010 Supplement Statement indicates that BBID diverted 25,269 af and applied

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approximately 22,302 af to beneficial use. The 2011 Supplemental Statement indicates that BBID diverted 22,344 af and applied 19,779 af to beneficial use. The 2012 Supplemental Statement indicates that BBID diverted 32,167 af and applied 28,345 af to beneficial use.

6. BBID does not hold or claim any other appropriative or riparian water rights on record with the State Water Board, although S021256 indicates that BBID holds Contract No. 14-06-200-785-LTR1 with the United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). In 2014 and 2015, Reclamation's agricultural contractors in the Delta were allocated zero percent of their contract quantity (available at <http://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=49115> [last accessed June 30, 2015]). BBID confirmed in a public statement dated June 12, 2015, that it had received zero water supply from Reclamation in both 2014 and 2015 (available at <http://bbid.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/BBID-Curtailment-Response-FINAL1.pdf> [last accessed June 30, 2015].)
7. On January 17, 2014, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. issued Proclamation No. 1-17-2014, declaring a State of Emergency to exist in California due to severe drought conditions.
8. Also on January 17, 2014, the State Water Board issued a "Notice of Surface Water Shortage and Potential Curtailment of Water Right Diversions" (2014 Shortage Notice). The 2014 Shortage Notice alerts water right holders in critically dry watersheds that water may become unavailable to satisfy beneficial uses at junior priorities.
9. On April 25, 2014, Governor Brown issued a Proclamation of a Continued State of Emergency due to drought conditions, to strengthen the state's ability to manage water and habitat effectively in drought conditions.
10. On May 27, 2014, the State Water Board issued a "Notice of Unavailability of Water and Immediate Curtailment for Those Diverting Water in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Watershed with a post-1914 Appropriative Right" (2014 Unavailability Notice), which notifies all holders of post-1914 appropriative water rights within the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds of the lack of availability of water to serve their post-1914 water rights, with some minor exceptions for non-consumptive diversions. The 2014 Unavailability Notice did not apply to pre-1914 appropriative rights such as that claimed by BBID. The State Water Board notified the most senior right holders in stages as water became available to serve their rights, and by November 19, 2014, had notified all right holders of availability for all diversions in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds.
11. On January 23, 2015, the State Water Board issued a "Notice of Surface Water Shortage and Potential for Curtailment of Water Right Diversions for 2015" (2015 Shortage Notice). The 2015 Shortage Notice alerted water right holders in critically dry watersheds that water may become unavailable to satisfy beneficial uses at junior priorities.
12. On February 4, 2015, the State Water Board issued Order WR 2015-0002-DWR, requiring pre-1914 and riparian water right claimants representing the top 90 percent of such claimants by volume in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds and the Delta to submit information relating to their claimed water right, the monthly amounts of water diverted and the basis of right claimed for diversions in 2014, and monthly diversion information and anticipated monthly diversion information for each month starting with February, 2015, to be submitted by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each succeeding month until the drought ends.
13. BBID is subject to Order WR 2015-0002-DWR, and in response submitted information indicating that its predecessor, the Byron-Bethany Irrigation Company, recorded notice of an appropriation of water on or around May 18, 1914. Thus, BBID claims that its pre-1914 water right has a

priority date of May 18, 1914.<sup>1</sup>

14. BBID also submitted water diversion and use information for 2014, projected monthly diversions for 2015, and actual monthly diversions through May, 2015. BBID reports that it diverted 30,204 af in 2014 and projected diversions of 25,452 af in 2015. BBID's reported actual monthly diversion amounts for January through May, 2015, are generally similar to reported diversions for the same months in prior years where such information is available. BBID's reported projected diversions are similar to the reported actual diversions for the same months in prior years where such information is available. From August 1 to October 31, 2014, BBID reports it pumped 1,573 af of water under transfer that was approved by State Water Board Order dated August 27, 2014.
15. On April 1, 2015, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-29-15 (Executive Order) to strengthen the state's ability to manage water and habitat effectively in drought conditions and called on all Californians to redouble their efforts to conserve water. The Executive Order finds that the continuous severe drought conditions present urgent challenges across the state including water shortages for municipal water use and for agricultural production, increased wildfire activity, degraded habitat for fish and wildlife, threat of saltwater contamination, and additional water scarcity if drought conditions continue. The Executive Order confirms that the orders and provisions in the Governor's previous drought proclamations and orders, the January 17, 2014, Proclamation, April 25, 2015, Proclamation, and Executive Orders B-26-14 and B-28-14, remain in full force and effect. On April 2, 2015, the State Water Board issued another notice warning that notices of unavailability of water were likely to be issued soon.
16. On April 23, 2015, the State Water Board issued a "Notice of Unavailability of Water and Immediate Curtailment for Those Diverting Water in the San Joaquin River Watershed with a Post-1914 Appropriative Right" (April 23 Unavailability Notice), which notifies all holders of post-1914 appropriative water rights within the San Joaquin River watershed of the lack of availability of water to serve their post-1914 water rights, with some minor exceptions for non-consumptive diversions. The State Water Board issued a similar notice for post-1914 appropriative water rights within the Sacramento River watershed on May 1, 2015 (May 1 Unavailability Notice). The April 23 and May 1 Unavailability Notices do not apply to pre-1914 appropriative rights such as that claimed by BBID.
17. On June 12, 2015, the State Water Board issued a "Notice of Unavailability of Water and Need for Immediate Curtailment for Those Diverting Water in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Watersheds and Delta with a Pre-1914 Appropriative Claim Commencing During or After 1903" (June 12 Unavailability Notice), which notifies all holders of pre-1914 appropriative water rights with a priority date of 1903 and later within the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds of the lack of availability of water to serve their rights, with some minor exceptions for non-consumptive uses.
18. Drought management of water rights is necessary to ensure that water to which senior water right holders are entitled is actually available to them, which requires that some water remain in most streams to satisfy senior demands at the furthest downstream point of diversion of these senior water rights. The June 12 Unavailability Notice reflects the State Water Board's determination that the existing water available in the Sacramento-San Joaquin watersheds and the Delta is insufficient to meet the demands of diverters with claims of pre-1914 appropriative rights with a priority date of 1903 and later. Continued diversion when there is no water available under the priority of the right constitutes unauthorized water diversion and use. Unauthorized diversion is subject to enforcement. (Wat. Code § 1052.)

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<sup>1</sup> The term "pre-1914" appropriative water right means those appropriative rights commenced prior to December 19, 1914, the effective date of the Water Commission Act. Therefore, it is possible to have a "pre-1914" appropriative water right with a priority date in 1914.

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19. The State Water Board determines the availability of water for water rights of varying priorities in any watershed by comparing the current and projected available water supply with the total water right diversion demand.
20. To determine water availability, the Board relies upon the full natural flows of watersheds calculated by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for certain watersheds in its Bulletin 120 and in subsequent monthly updates. "Full natural flow," or "unimpaired runoff," represents the natural water production of a river basin, unaltered by upstream diversions, storage, storage releases, or by export or import of water to or from other watersheds. The full natural flow amount is different than the measured stream flows at the given measurement points because the measured flows may be higher or lower due to upstream operations. Forecasted flow data is uncertain, so DWR provides the data in the form of "levels of exceedance" or simply "exceedance" to show the statistical probability that the forecasted supply will occur. The exceedance is simply the percent of the time that the actual flow is expected to exceed the projected flow. The 90 percent exceedance hydrology assumes inflows from rainfall and snowmelt at levels that are likely to be met or exceeded by actual flows with a 90 percent probability, or in other words, there is a ten percent or less chance of actual conditions turning out to be this dry or drier. In April and early May, the State Water Board uses the 90% and 99% exceedance amounts for its analyses due to low flow conditions. DWR's daily natural flow calculations are also used in the analysis.
21. To determine water demand, the State Water Board relies on information supplied by water right holders on annual or triennial reports of water diversion and use required to be true and accurate to the best of the knowledge of the diverters. The Board also incorporates 2014 diversion data submitted pursuant to Order WR 2015-0002. All reported monthly water diversion data is compiled by watershed, type of right and priority dates. The Board performs quality control checks and removes obvious errors, excess reporting, removes demand for direct diversion for power, and makes additional changes based on stakeholders' input. The corrected demand data includes the 2014 reported data for 90% of the watershed demand plus, for the remaining diverters, an averaged diversion amount for 2010 through 2013. These monthly diversion demands are grouped into water right types (riparian, pre-1914 and post-1914 rights).
22. The State Water Board consistently adjusts the water availability and demand analyses based on new information obtained from stakeholders, or adjustments to projected flows from the DWR. State Water Board staff reviews this information and provides revisions to its data set and graphs that are all shown on the Watershed Analysis website ([http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/drought/analysis/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/analysis/)).
23. The State Water Board's Watershed Analysis website provides updated graphical summations and spreadsheets containing supporting analysis of the availability and demand analyses. The graphical summations show priorities with monthly demands for the total riparian demand at bottom, the pre-1914 demands added to riparian and depicted above the riparian demand. The monthly amounts are averaged into cubic feet per second for graphical purposes. See, for example, the combined Sacramento/San Joaquin River Basin Senior Supply/Demand Analysis ([http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/drought/analysis/docs/sacsjcombined.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/analysis/docs/sacsjcombined.pdf)). The Curtailment Analysis website also provides graphical summations of the San Joaquin River Basin Senior Supply/Demand Analysis with Proportional Delta Demand ([http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/drought/analysis/docs/sjprorated.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/analysis/docs/sjprorated.pdf)) and the Sacramento River Basin Senior Supply/Demand Analysis with Proportional Delta Demand ([http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water\\_issues/programs/drought/analysis/docs/sacpro rated.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/analysis/docs/sacpro rated.pdf)).
24. This analysis shows that by June 12, 2015, available supply was insufficient to meet the demands of appropriative rights with priority dates of 1903 and later throughout the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds and the Delta.

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25. The June 12 Unavailability Notice applies to S021256 because BBID claims a priority date of May 18, 1914. BBID received an electronic copy of the June 12 Unavailability Notice on June 12, 2015, via the Board's "Drought Updates" Lyris email list system, because Rick Gilmore, BBID's General Manager is a subscriber to that system (via email address [r.gilmore@bbid.org](mailto:r.gilmore@bbid.org)). Moreover, BBID issued a public statement on June 12, 2015, in response to the June 12 Unavailability Notice (available at <http://bbid.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/BBID-Curtailment-Response-FINAL1.pdf> [last accessed June 25, 2015].) BBID received a paper copy of the June 12 Unavailability Notice no later than June 15, 2015.
26. BBID's diversions are recorded by DWR and posted to the California Data Exchange Center (CDEC) (<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/queryDaily?BBI> also available at <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/docs/delta/DeltaHydrology.pdf>). CDEC reports that BBID has diverted water each day since the June 12 Unavailability Notice:

Date	Avg Diversion Rate (cfs)	Amount Diverted (af)	Date	Avg Diversion Rate (cfs)	Amount Diverted (af)
06/13/2015	91	180	06/20/2015	96	190
06/14/2015	122	242	06/21/2015	99	196
06/15/2015	79	156	06/22/2015	62	123
06/16/2015	83	164	06/23/2015	61	121
06/17/2015	78	154	06/24/2015	67	132
06/18/2015	91	180	06/25/2015	36	71
06/19/2015	80	158	06/26/2015	0	0

27. The daily diversion rates through June 24 are comparable to the District's average daily diversion rates reported for June 2014 (4,842 af/30 days/1.9835=81.4 cfs), and those BBID reported as anticipated for June 2015. This daily rate is in excess of the basic minimum health and safety needs of Mountain House Community Service District. This indicates that BBID has continued its normal diversions following the June 12 Unavailability Notice.
28. BBID diverted a total of approximately two thousand sixty-seven (2,067) acre-feet over the course of thirteen days following the June 12 Unavailability Notice, specifically from June 13 through June 25, 2015.
29. On July 15, 2015, the State Water Board issued a Clarification to the Unavailability Notices indicating that, to the extent that any of the notices described above contain language that may be construed as an order requiring you to curtail diversions under your affected water right, that language has been rescinded. Similarly, any language requiring affected water right holders to submit curtailment certification forms has been rescinded.
30. Diversion or use of water by an appropriative water right holder when there is insufficient water supply available for that water right is an unauthorized diversion or use of water subject to Division 2 of the Water Code. Water Code section 1052, subdivision (a) provides that unauthorized diversion or use of water is a trespass.
31. This enforcement action is based on lack of available water supply under the priority of the right. The Unavailability Notices were issued for the purpose of advising the public and water diverters of the lack of available water under the priority of the rights identified in each notice; the notices are not the basis for this enforcement action.

#### PROPOSED CIVIL LIABILITY

32. Water Code section 1052 provides that the maximum civil liability that can be imposed by the State Water Board in this matter for the unauthorized diversion and use of the water during a

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drought period is \$1,000 for each day of trespass plus \$2,500 for each acre-foot of water diverted or used in excess of that diverter's water rights.

33. Evidence demonstrates that BBID's unauthorized diversions began on June 13, 2015, and continued until June 25, 2015, for a total of thirteen (13) days. Over that period, BBID diverted approximately two thousand sixty-seven (2,067) acre-feet of water in excess of that available to serve its claimed water right.
34. Therefore, the maximum civil liability for the alleged violations is **\$5,180,500** [13 days at \$1,000 per day plus 2,067 acre-feet at \$2,500 per acre-foot].
35. In determining the amount of civil liability, California Water Code section 1055.3 requires that the State Water Board consider all relevant circumstances, including, but not limited to, the extent of harm caused by the violation, the nature and persistence of the violation, the length of time over which the violation occurs, and any corrective action taken by the violator.
36. In this case, BBID has made unauthorized diversions of water from the Intake Channel to the Banks Pumping Plant (formerly Italian Slough) during the most extreme drought in decades, when there was insufficient water supply available for BBID's claimed water right. BBID was aware that the State Water Board had determined that there was insufficient water supply available for BBID's claimed water right. These unauthorized diversions have reduced or threatened to reduce the amount of water available for downstream water right holders during an extreme drought emergency. Moreover, BBID's diversions likely reduced the water available for instream resources and riparian habitat within the Delta during an extreme drought emergency.
37. BBID received an economic advantage over other legitimate water diverters in the area by foregoing the costs of buying replacement water during the violation period. During 2015, irrigation districts north of the Delta have paid at least \$250 per acre-foot of replacement water. Thus, by illegally diverting 2,067 acre-feet of water from June 13 through June 25, BBID avoided purchased water costs of at least \$516,750.
38. The Division estimates that its staff cost to investigate the unauthorized diversion issues and develop the enforcement documents to be \$3,000.
39. BBID is known to be serving water to Mountain House Community Service District and to power generation facilities that may be deemed critical energy suppliers. BBID and Mountain House Community Service District took corrective actions to secure water available via contract and transfer. Although these supplies were not provided during the violation period identified above, they are recognized as progressive correction actions to prevent unauthorized diversions. Also taken into consideration is the fact that BBID has stopped its diversions from June 26.
40. Having taken into consideration the factors described above, the Assistant Deputy Director for Water Rights recommends an ACL for the unauthorized diversion of water in the amount of **\$1,553,250**. The recommended penalty is based on the circumstances known to this time, BBID's continued diversions despite lack of availability of water to serve its right during extreme ongoing drought conditions, and to provide a strong disincentive for continued unauthorized diversions by BBID and any similarly-situated parties. The Prosecution Team will consider adjustment of the recommended penalty if BBID provides evidence of the amounts of water pumped that were for health and safety needs or critical power generation.
41. Should the matter go to hearing, the State Water Board may consider a different liability based on the evidence received, including additional staff costs incurred, up to the maximum amount provided by law. It is estimated that if this this matter goes to hearing, additional staff costs incurred for the prosecution staff would be approximately \$10,000.

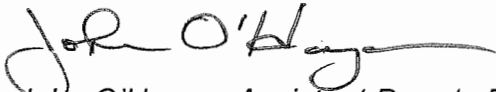
**RIGHT TO HEARING**

- 42. BBID may request a hearing on this matter before the State Water Board. Any such request for hearing must be in writing and received or postmarked within 20 days of the date this notice is received. (California Water Code, § 1055, subd. (b).)
- 43. If BBID requests a hearing, BBID will have an opportunity to be heard and to contest the allegations in this Complaint and the imposition of an ACL by the State Water Board. If a hearing is requested, separate notice setting the time and place for the hearing will be mailed not less than 10 days before the hearing date.
- 44. If BBID requests a hearing, the State Water Board will consider at the hearing whether to impose the civil liability, and, if so, whether to adjust the proposed liability within the amount authorized by statute. Based on the evidence received at the hearing, the State Water Board may take any appropriate action in accordance with sections 100, 275, and 1050 et seq. of the California Water Code and its responsibilities under the public trust doctrine. Any State Water Board order imposing an ACL shall become final and effective upon issuance.
- 45. If BBID does not wish to request a hearing, please remit a cashier's check or money order within 20 days of the date of this Complaint for the amount of the ACL set forth above to:

State Water Resources Control Board  
 Division of Water Rights  
 Enforcement Section  
 P.O. Box 2000  
 Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

- 46. If BBID does not request a hearing and does not remit the ACL amount, the State Water Board may seek recovery of the ACL amount as authorized by Water Code section 1055.4.

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD



*John O'Hagan, Assistant Deputy Director  
 Division of Water Rights*

Dated: JUL 20 2015