



**COUNTY OF PLACER**  
**Community Development/Resource Agency**

Michael J. Johnson, AICP  
Agency Director

**PLANNING**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Michael J. Johnson  
CDRA Director  
By Brett Storey, Senior Management Analyst

**DATE:** September 28, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Placer County Interests in Water Supply from the Yuba-Bear and Drum Spaulding project facilities.

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

Authorize the Board Chairman to sign a Letter of Interest by Placer County to the Directors of the Yuba-Bear and Drum-Spaulding Project Managers for their relicensing process.

**BACKGROUND:**

Recently, staff has been made aware that during the combined Yuba-Bear and Drum-Spaulding relicensing projects, several flow modeling studies requested by stakeholders have been accomplished and portray the impacts to existing consumptive water supply deliveries from increased instream flows downstream of various project facilities.

The results of these studies showed an increase in the number of years in which those Projects could not meet current consumptive demands. Staff would like to point out that model simulations should not be considered exact, however, the water supply issues raised by these latest model runs are a significant concern and would like your BOS to present our citizens interests in the Yuba-Bear/Drum-Spaulding relicensing process via a letter.

PCWA currently has contracts with PG&E for 125,400 acre-feet of water that it uses to provide water service to its customers in Placer County. NID also serves a portion of Placer County with about 25,000 acre-feet annually. PCWA is concerned that significant increases in summer and fall minimum instream flows could result in a corresponding decrease in water supplies available for consumptive use in Placer County. PCWA currently has significant unused water supply entitlements on the American River but with its existing infrastructure, PCWA could not replace lost water in most of the areas that are currently served from the Drum-Spaulding Project. A reduction in NID/PG&E water deliveries to Placer County could potentially have a profound effect on the lives of the people and the character and the economy of Placer County. Before Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) takes such an action, it should conduct a full assessment of the potential social, economic and environmental impacts within Placer County of any reductions in the current flows.

Our colleagues at PCWA have been very involved in the Yuba-Bear and Drum-Spaulding relicensing process and have graciously provided the county with analyses that have brought this to our attention and have requested our support as our interest and goals align on those proceedings. The County has time

to provide these interests to both of these fellow agencies and to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission who will ultimately decide on the future actions.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None

Respectfully submitted,



---

MICHAEL J. JOHNSON, AICP  
Director, Community Development / Resource Agency

Attached to this report for the Board's information/consideration are:

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: 09-28-10 Letter – County Interest in Water Supply

cc: Holly Heinzen, Assistant CEO  
Scott Finley, Supervising Deputy County Counsel

# County of Placer Board of Supervisors

175 FULWEILER AVENUE  
AUBURN, CALIFORNIA 95603  
530-889-4010 • FAX: 530-889-4009  
PLACER CO. TOLL FREE # 800-488-4308

F. C. "ROCKY" ROCKHOLM  
District 1

ROBERT M. WEYGANDT  
District 2

JIM HOLMES  
District 3

KIRK UHLER  
District 4

JENNIFER MONTGOMERY  
District 5



September 28, 2010

Steve Peirano, PG&E Drum Spaulding Project Relicensing Manager  
Mail Code N11C  
P.O. Box 770000  
San Francisco, CA 94177

Ronald Nelson, NID General Manager and Yuba Bear Project Relicensing Manager  
Nevada Irrigation District  
P.O.Box 1019  
Grass Valley, CA 95945

**Subject: Placer County Interests in Water Supply from the Yuba-Bear and Drum Spaulding project facilities**

Dear Sirs:

Recently, Placer County has been made aware that during the combined Yuba-Bear and Drum-Spaulding relicensing projects, several flow modeling studies requested by stakeholders have been accomplished and portray the impacts to existing consumptive water supply deliveries from increased instream flows downstream of various project facilities.

The results of these studies showed an increase in the number of years in which your Projects could not meet current consumptive demands. Placer County understands that model simulations should not be considered proposals and that modeling of extremes is often helpful to understand the capacity and flexibility of the system. However, we believe that the water supply issues raised by these latest model runs provide an opportunity for Placer County register its concerns and interests in the Yuba-Bear/Drum-Spaulding relicensing process.

In Placer County there are over 100,000 people in Placer County Water Agency's service area alone for whom water from the your Projects is their only source of water; for their daily lives, for their businesses, and for the local economy. Any loss of access to your Projects water to these citizens would be a serious, and for many, unmitigable.

The county has responsibilities for the General Plan and the welfare of its citizens. Our plans have been to manage the growth within the county with a balance of services (including water) that best fits the land, our

495

resources and the will of the citizens. The current General Plan includes the water from your projects and for most citizens could not be economically replaced if lost. Our hope is that through your relicensing process a full assessment of the potential social, economic and environmental impacts within Placer County of any reductions in water supply would be brought to the attention of each stakeholder and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Placer County staff has been participating in your relicensing process and will continue to do so to ensure that our citizens' interests are being addressed and folded into your final plans for future operations

Sincerely,

---

Kirk Uhler  
Chairman, Placer County Board of Supervisors

cc:

Congressman Tom McClintock  
Senator Diane Feinstein  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
Assemblyman Ted Gaines  
Assemblyman Rodger Niello  
Senator Sam Aanestad  
Assemblyman Dan Logue  
Placer County Board of Supervisors  
Tom Miller, Placer County Executive Officer  
PCWA Board of Directors and General Manager  
Auburn City Council and City Manager  
Colfax City Council and City Manager  
Lincoln City Council and City Manager  
Loomis Town Council and City Manager  
Rocklin City Council and City Manager  
Roseville City Council and City Manager