



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State re-releases its unscientific water grab proposal for the Tuolumne River

After over a year of “review,” the State Water Board publishes newest unimpaired flow proposal without changing much; State Water Board’s hearing and plan for adoption scheduled for Aug. 21-22.

Despite having well over a year to adequately address thousands of public comments from our region – **6,589 from the [Worth Your Fight](#) campaign alone** – the [State Water Resources Control Board today doubled down](#) on its proposal to mandate 40 percent of unimpaired flows along the Tuolumne River from February 1 to June 30 annually.

The State Water Board thinks this plan will have limited harmful effects. **But we know this water grab will have devastating impacts to our region, which is why thousands showed up and voiced frustrations when the State Water Board came to our communities.**

In March 2017, MID and TID filed joint comments addressing a number of technical and legal issues surrounding the State Water Board’s proposal. The comments also reference the most recent, most focused and most collaborative Tuolumne River science that has been conducted through the relicensing of the Don Pedro Project. **We are disappointed, but unfortunately not surprised, that State Water Board staff decided to ignore these site-specific, peer-reviewed studies.**

Apparently after a year of review and edits, the State Water Board feels it only needs to give our region 21 days to review and comment on the latest draft. The Districts are joining other water agencies to petition the State Water Board to give us more time to comment on this proposal that will drastically impact our communities. Comments will be accepted by the State Water Board through noon on Friday, July 27, 2018.

The State Water Board has scheduled a hearing to take place at its [Aug. 21-22 Board meeting in Sacramento](#). More information about the hearing day will be shared on Worth Your Fight’s [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) feeds as details develop.

In the time since MID and TID filed comments on the State Water Board’s Substitute Environmental Document (SED), the Districts have proposed the [Tuolumne River Management Plan](#); a balanced,

sustainable, achievable future for the River. Our plan describes a future that maintains water supply reliability for ag and urban users, identifies measures to protect fish populations and supports new recreational opportunities. The Tuolumne River Management Plan was informed by the latest site-specific science conducted on the Tuolumne as part of the federal relicensing of the Don Pedro Project.

The Districts have the ability to implement programs that will greatly enhance Tuolumne River habitat that can lead to greater fish spawning and production numbers. There are many factors that influence salmon numbers once salmon leave the Tuolumne River that are outside the District' control – San Joaquin River predation hotspots, Delta predation and ocean harvest, to name a few.

The Tuolumne River Management Plan is anticipated to increase fall-run Chinook salmon production in the Tuolumne River over 2½ times the current production. If the State Water Board was actually interested in protecting and improving the natural resources of the lower Tuolumne River they would recognize that the Districts' flow and non-flow measures would create the conditions for native fisheries to thrive far greater than its flow-centric SED.

In response to the SED's release, the Districts urge the public to follow Worth Your Fight's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) feeds as the Districts provide the most updated information regarding how to advocate against this reckless proposal. Advocates can also check out [WorthYourFight.org](#).

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About the Modesto Irrigation District (MID)

The Modesto Irrigation District, established in 1887 is a vertically integrated public utility located in California's Central Valley. MID provides irrigation water to approximately 3,100 agricultural customers irrigating close to 60,000 acres and electricity to more than 122,000 residential, commercial and agricultural accounts in Modesto, Empire, Salida, Waterford and Mountain House as well as parts of Escalon, Oakdale, Ripon and Riverbank. MID also treats, delivers and wholesales approximately 67,000 acre-feet of drinking water per year to the City of Modesto. For more information about MID visit www.mid.org and follow [@mod_irrigation](#) on Twitter.

About the Turlock Irrigation District (TID)

The Turlock Irrigation District, located in Turlock CA, is the first publicly owned Irrigation District and is one of only four today that provides irrigation water and power to residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural customers within its service area. TID has been in the retail electric business since 1923. TID provides safe, low-cost, reliable energy to a growing customer base that today exceeds 100,000 home, farm, business, industrial and municipal accounts. TID also serves 5,800 irrigation customers covering approximately 150,000 acres of farmland. For more information about TID visit www.tid.com and follow [@TurlockID](#) on Twitter.