



PCL Board Post to Members and Supporters

PCL is horrified and saddened by the racist terrorism and violence being unleashed in our nation. The failure of President Trump to immediately and unequivocally condemn racists, white supremacists, anti-Semites and domestic terrorists is equally outrageous. There is no moral equivalence between neo-Nazis and counter protesters, who literally put their lives on the line to advance equity and justice for all. Sorrow, fear and outrage are rational responses to what is happening. We must also strive to channel these emotions into action – intersectional, multi-issue, thoughtful and bold.

What is being perpetrated in this nation is a direct threat to everything that PCL holds dear and values and works every day to protect. PCL stands with all people and organizations dedicated to the ongoing struggle for truth, justice, equity and decency. Systemic racism continues to plague so many aspects of our society and economy, including environmental and land use policy. We must do more to overcome this shameful legacy, including within the conservation and environmental movements.

PCL is committed to deepening our analysis of issues through a racial justice lens. We will redouble efforts to actively engage and work with diverse communities and organizations. These actions are essential to ensuring the present and future well-being of all humans and the planet.

PCL Joins Lawsuit to Challenge Delta Tunnels Proposal

PCL has joined a coalition of conservation groups in a suit to block the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) approval of the controversial Delta tunnels project. The lawsuit was filed in Sacramento Superior Court by Planning and Conservation League, AquAlliance, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, California Water Impact Network, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, Friends of the River, Friends of Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Restore the Delta, Save Our Sandhill Cranes, and Sierra Club California.



The suit challenges the proposal to build two 35-mile-long tunnels to siphon water from the Sacramento River and San Francisco Bay-Delta for export to agricultural and urban water districts south of the Delta, which could cost up to \$67 billion to construct. The project would increase extinction risk for several endangered species and potentially devastate Delta farmers, Sacramento Valley communities, and fishermen throughout the region. The complaint states that DWR's approval violates the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Delta Reform Act, California's "Fully Protected Species" statutes and our state's Public Trust Doctrine.

DWR ignored project alternatives even though CEQA requires consideration of a range of reasonable alternatives. Conservation groups repeatedly called for analyses of alternatives that would increase freshwater flows and reduce water system reliance on Delta water through recycling, conservation and water use efficiency. Despite demands from the public that a new environmental review be prepared, the Department certified the flawed review and approved the project on July 21, 2017.

The 2009 Delta Reform Act mandated state water-policy reforms intended to solve the decades-long conflict over California's water resources and save endangered salmon runs. The tunnels project violates the Act's "coequal goals" of providing a more reliable water supply while protecting the Bay-Delta ecosystem. The required conservation plan and actions have been abandoned, and the tunnels are now simply a water diversion project.

DWR has never attempted to determine the water flows necessary to recover the Delta ecosystem. The Delta Reform Act prohibits construction of new Delta water conveyance facilities unless the intended water users pay for all costs, but it was recently revealed that the tunnels would require a \$6.5 billion taxpayer subsidy. DWR concealed its own economic analysis showing that a subsidy would be required. The county of Sacramento and cities of Antioch and Stockton filed separate lawsuits against DWR's approval. Conservation and fishing groups have previously filed two lawsuits challenging flawed federal Endangered Species Act permits for tunnel construction. Challenges are likely against issuance of state endangered species permits, the inadequate federal environmental review, additional permits from federal wildlife agencies, wetlands fill permits and water-rights changes.

The two giant Delta tunnels, both expected to be as wide as a four-story building is tall, would withdraw

enormous amounts of freshwater from the Sacramento River to pumping plants in the South Delta. The tunnels could divert up to 9,000 cubic feet per second, on top of diversions from the existing Delta pumping facilities of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project.

The water diversions would significantly degrade environmental conditions in the Delta by reducing flows, increasing salinity, damaging the food web and promoting harmful algal blooms. They would prevent flows needed for fish habitat and water quality, during critical life stages for protected fish species including chinook salmon, steelhead trout, green sturgeon, and delta and longfin smelt. Transmission lines associated with the tunnels project are also likely to harm and kill greater sandhill cranes, in violation of California's "fully protected species" statutes.

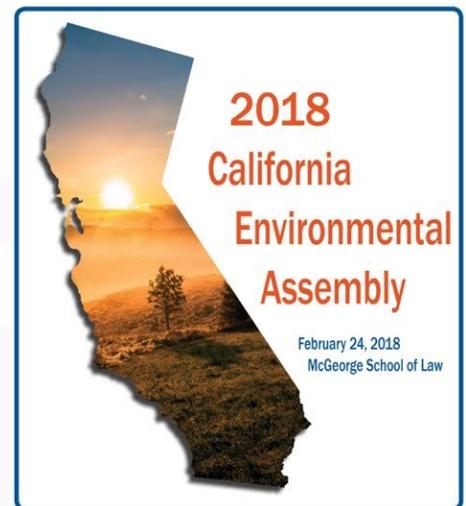
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PCL's 2018 Assembly & Symposium

Will Be Held Saturday

February 24th 2018

at the McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento
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