Osha Meserve, Local Agencies of the North Delta
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10:30 a.m. Press Call

Good morning everyone. I want to tell you a little bit about how the Delta Water Tunnel proponents are forging ahead with this project that makes no economic sense and will also lead to the extinction of our last salmon runs, as explained by Mr. Wright.

While the state and federal government tell us they want our comments on the recirculated EIR, they aggressively moving forward with getting the changes in water rights needed to construct the new diversions for the tunnels, as well as getting permission to fill almost 800 acres of wetlands for the tunnel project.

They have already settled in on just one alternative, well before the public review period is over. This alternative looks pretty much like the peripheral canal, which voters rejected in 1982. But this time, there won't be a vote if the government and the water contractors get their way.

The tunnels would be built to convey 9000 cubic feet per second of water. Keep in mind the highest the river has flowed near the proposed tunnel intakes is 8400 cfs this month. The tunnels would starve the Delta of fresh water and cause reverse flows in the Northern delta, much like we now see in the south Delta.

This time the tunnel proponents apparently think they're above the law. For instance in their water rights application they claimed they already owned the Delta farmland necessary to construct the massive intakes on the Sacramento river. But over 40 parcels would be taken, just to build the intakes.

After initially stating that other water users were "N/A" DWR had to amend its water rights application to admit that every water user in the Delta – over three thousand water rights -- may be injured by the project from the changes in water quality, quantity and levels the project will cause.

Tunnel proponents submitted an application to the US Army Corps of Engineers to fill almost 800 acres waters and wetlands in order to build the project. How could filling these wetlands be the right thing when we have already lost most of the wetlands in this state? In addition to the environmental devastation, Landowners in the project's pathway have been left unable to do anything with their properties for the last 8 years.

Local people and farms are under the gun as never before as DWR and the Bureau rush forward on their ill-conceived project to literally re-route the Sacramento River into

tunnels. As DWR and the Bureau prepare for a massive land and grab, the people of the Delta are fighting for their own future, the future of the Sacramento River, and the future if the entire San Francisco Bay Delta.