

## Comments on EIS/EIR Scoping for

### Bureau of Reclamation Long-Term North to South Water Transfer Program, Sacramento County, CA

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**According to U.S. Geological Survey water use data, the proposed long-term water transfer program could almost double the extraction of fresh groundwater from Butte and Glenn Counties.**

The data in the following table is extracted from a spreadsheet at the USGS website.<sup>1</sup>

<b>BUTTE &amp; GLENN CO. ESTIMATED WATER USE 2005</b>	Total Fresh Groundwater	Total Fresh Surface Water	Total Fresh Water
Butte, Mgal/day	308.210	481.350	789.560
Glenn, Mgal/day	278.330	462.430	740.760
Total, Mgal/day	586.540	943.780	1530.320
Total acre feet/day*	1,800	2,896	4,696
Total acre feet/year*	657,008	1,057,168	1,714,177

\* Based on 325,851.385 gallons equal one acre foot.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation-San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Long-Term North to South Water Transfer Program proposes to transfer up to 600,000 acre feet of water per year during the period 2012-2022. The process for facilitating these transfers could be crop idling or substituting groundwater for transferred agricultural surface water.

Widespread crop idling has a potential for significant economic impact on agribusinesses and individuals who need active planting, growing, harvesting, maintenance, support, and supply activities for revenue and income. And the problem would spread quickly beyond dedicated agricultural activities to a broad range of community businesses and services. This impact would occur in a rural area with already chronic underemployment problems.

In the long-term, groundwater substitution could be as harmful or worse. The 600,000 acre feet proposed for transfer equals 91 percent of 657,008 acre feet of fresh groundwater extracted from Butte and Glenn counties in 2005. In other words, the project would almost double groundwater extractions from an aquifer that is already under stress and is expected to be in even more difficulty if current long-term snowpack projections hold up.

The potential long-term impact of such a huge increase in groundwater extraction cannot be reasonably assessed during the time-frame of this EIS/EIR process. Prudence demands that the project be scrapped.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://water.usgs.gov/watuse/data/2005/index.html>, Estimated Use of Water in the United States, County-Level Data for 2005, caco2005.xls. (latest data available).