

CENTENNIAL RESERVOIR  
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING  
PUBLIC COMMENTS

Wednesday, March 9, 2016  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn Express  
121 Bank Street  
Grass Valley, CA 95945

1 MS. SUAREZ: D-I-A-N-N-A, S-U-A-R-E-Z. Diane  
2 Suarez, and I'm a resident of Placer County, and on  
3 behalf of the citizens of Colfax and Meadow Vista, we'd  
4 like to request a scoping meeting on our side of the  
5 river that we can get to easily.

6 I'm a resident of Colfax who lives down Milk  
7 Ranch Road close to the Bear River. My neighbors and I  
8 will be directly impacted by Parker Dam and Centennial  
9 Reservoir.

10 When this dam was originally proposed in 1925,  
11 there were not two other dams on the same river above  
12 and below the proposed site. If this project were to go  
13 through, there would be no river left, only a strain of  
14 water storage facilities.

15 My concern is the cumulative impacts on the  
16 landscape for three reservoirs in a single drainage  
17 channel with no river in between.

18 Right now we have a rich diversity of local  
19 wildlife that migrate through our neighborhood,  
20 including turkeys, deer, foxes, skunks cougars, bears,  
21 bobcats, small mammals, and a vast population of  
22 beautiful wild birds. How will removing habitat from  
23 the local wildlife protect it?

24 My concern is loss of suitable wildlife habitat  
25 and loss of connectivity for critical wildlife habitat.

1 I walk my dog down at the Bear River a few  
2 times a week. There is a nice campground, the Bear  
3 River campground, along the river that is fully occupied  
4 from opening season to winter when the County closes it  
5 by blocking the sites with large rocks.

6 People love that place. There is public river  
7 access with a parking lot and toilets connected to a  
8 group campsite that is also full all season long. I see  
9 families enjoying the river, kids tubing in the water  
10 and always hikers, bikers and dog walkers, and it is  
11 free.

12 The American River on the other side of the  
13 freeway costs \$10 just to park along the road. Bear  
14 River public access and campgrounds is a key  
15 recreational site to the local Placer County residents.

16 If this dam goes through, the people on my side  
17 of the river will lose all of this and have only a  
18 dead-end road that stops where the canal goes across on  
19 both Milk Ranch and Plumb Tree.

20 Another large group of river users enjoy  
21 standing in the river all day and panning for gold.  
22 This goes on all year long. There is a shop in town  
23 that sells all the supplies and tools that these people  
24 use. Other stores that sell food and camping supplies,  
25 as well as restaurants and most of the businesses in

1 town benefit greatly from the Bear River attracting  
2 people to this area. The economy of our town is largely  
3 dependent on the Bear River.

4 I am part of a Washoe/Miwok family indigenous  
5 to this area. I visit the river to gather some of the  
6 materials I use for ceremony and prayer, and some of my  
7 prayers are said at the river.

8 The animals and plants along the river deserve  
9 to have voices as well as the people. It is a sacred  
10 community full of individuals living their lives in an  
11 ecosystem that does not exist along side a reservoir.

12 The elderberries, the mock orange, willow,  
13 pearly whites, globe lilies, tiger lilies, bay laurel,  
14 big leaf maple, buckeye red blood, ancient canyon oak,  
15 giant dust fir trees create a sacred place that is far  
16 more valuable than what you propose.

17 Please put your facilities someplace else. The  
18 people who will get water from this dam are not the ones  
19 who will be impacted by it. In fact, the future need  
20 for this water has not been established, and less  
21 expensive alternatives such as silt removal from  
22 existing reservoirs and canal leakage have not been  
23 investigated.

24 Unlimited and unrestrained road is not the goal  
25 of the communities here in the foothills of the Sierra

1 Nevada mountains.

2           Most people move up here to get away from the  
3 rat race. Making our community a water storage facility  
4 for the cities is an insult to the local population and  
5 a travesty against the beauty that we've come here to  
6 enjoy.

7           In conclusion, I would urge you to realize that  
8 this idea from 1925 belongs in the past where it should  
9 stay. It is not the right project for our modern  
10 society and way of life that seeks to live in harmony  
11 with nature and people who respect living ecosystems.

12           MR. COE: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.  
13 My name is James Coe, C-O-E, and I live in the Grass  
14 Valley area.

15           And this project -- the Parker Dam was  
16 conceived way back in 1925, or so. At that time they  
17 had a drought so bad that the American River dried up,  
18 Sacramento River dried up. There weren't dams. There  
19 weren't storage, so since the last great drought of my  
20 memory in 1976, no storage had really been added to  
21 Northern California. Very little.

22           And conservation was supposed to save us, and  
23 recycling and groundwater injection, they were all  
24 supposed to be the solution. Hydrology doesn't work  
25 that way in this State.

1           If you don't have water, you can't conserve it.  
2 An example of that is what happened in the Valley.  
3 Farmers didn't have water. They couldn't conserve it,  
4 and their fields went invalid.

5           Storage -- inline dam storage is the only way  
6 we're going to capture that water that comes down in a  
7 few weeks at a time.

8           For example, this state is rich in water. On  
9 average years, 70 million acre feet run off the  
10 mountains. To put that in perspective, that's enough  
11 water for 350 million people.

12           Now, most of that will -- hopefully will go to  
13 the environment, and a lot of it will go to the  
14 agriculture industry, which keeps land opened and  
15 undeveloped, and if you provide a very affordable cost  
16 of water to our farmers in our county here, that will  
17 discourage development in the open spaces. So we  
18 need -- we need inline storage to capture that flow when  
19 it comes down.

20           Most of our flow will come down this year in a  
21 few weeks. Right now, Rollins is overflowing, Folsom is  
22 in a drought, flood control mode, because there isn't  
23 anyplace to put the water.

24           So what I would like to see in this study is to  
25 acknowledge -- recognize the fire risk of the homeless

1 camps down along the Bear River.

2 The Bear River is fun to fish, it's fun to  
3 kayak if you're healthy and strong enough to do it, and  
4 if you can fight off the poison oak in the homeless  
5 camps, you'd have fun down there.

6 But that lake will be more valuable for most  
7 people, the common good demands that lake.

8 Yes, some things are going to have to be  
9 sacrificed, but I would also like to see an analysis in  
10 your note project alternative, what is the present worth  
11 of not having that dam? What is the present worth of  
12 not having that project over the next 50 years?

13 The lost opportunity cost has got to be  
14 tremendous. Thank you.

15 MS. WAITE: Joy Waite. W-A-I-T-E.

16 I live in Chicago Park, and I'd like to ensure  
17 that in that --

18 Can you hear? Do you want me -- can you hear  
19 me?

20 MEMBERS: Yes.

21 MS. WAITE: I would like to ensure that when  
22 the budget information comes out, that everything  
23 possible gets included in the budget, not just the cost  
24 of building the dam itself.

25 But already there have been extreme

1 expenditures for the geological study and then for the  
2 EIR, and now -- but I want to make sure that in the  
3 budget includes the land purchases that are required by  
4 the 178 landowners affected, the land purchases that  
5 would be required by the mitigation for taking Oak  
6 Savannah away by inundating it, the cost of the roads  
7 and bridges that will be required because the Dunbar  
8 Bridge will be underwater by 200 feet, so if there's  
9 going to be no access between Placer and Nevada County  
10 besides 174 and the southern most road is besides that.

11           Whether there is going to be future hydro  
12 projects because apparently that has been taken out of  
13 the project currently, and is that going to be one hydro  
14 plant providing 100 megawatts or -- I mean,  
15 200 megawatts, which requires FERC licensing, or would  
16 it be two hydro plants only providing 100 megawatts to  
17 avoid FERC licensing?

18           And also now I see this new pipeline for --  
19 along Dog Bar Road, how much that would cost, and the --  
20 also the four bay that is planned near Lake Combie to  
21 support a new development and golf course.

22           MR. GARRETT: Jim Garrett. G-A-R-R-E-T-T.

23           And we live off of Magnolia about a half a mile  
24 west of Dog Bar, and fundamentally -- I don't want to  
25 get into the politics of this. There's going to be

1 plenty of that coming. It's already started here  
2 tonight.

3           Basically, we are in favor of the dam. We  
4 think that the increased water capacity is what is  
5 important here for the future.

6           We do have very many concerns primarily about  
7 regards to the transportation, road development and  
8 recreation in the final lake configuration, but  
9 fundamentally, we need more water.

10           MR. DREW: Jim Drew. D-R-E-W.

11           My family has been in Nevada County since the  
12 '60s, 1860s, and the water needs -- waters needs, of  
13 course, in our county have developed from the mining  
14 originally, and then has evolved into agriculture, which  
15 is my chief concern.

16           Nevada County has got a unique opportunity here  
17 to increase water storage, increase food production,  
18 maintain habitat. It's going to shift a little bit,  
19 sure, and I'm sure glad that there have been some  
20 statements made, and it's outlined in your proposals  
21 here of things that you really need to address because  
22 we really need to look close at those and see how they  
23 can be mitigated.

24           But Nevada County's agriculture is different  
25 than a lot of counties, like our Great Central Valley.

1 A lot of small farms, okay, and they can use that raw  
2 water that has been proposed on that Dog Bar pipeline.  
3 We've got to look at how that's going to play out.

4 But, you know, just about almost everybody  
5 has what you used to call it a victory garden, but there  
6 are so many of those going in now, small farmers, we  
7 need the water, this is an outstanding project, and, of  
8 course, I am in favor of that. I'll say that even  
9 though we're not supposed to state opinions in that,  
10 according to the guidelines.

11 Okay. And so let's take a good look at all of  
12 those things that are in your proposal, and I know  
13 you're going to do that. It's going to be a long  
14 process.

15 The previous speaker said, this is the first  
16 thing that's been proposed in California since the '70s,  
17 and that, and it's a unique opportunity for our county  
18 and for Placer County realizing, again, there's going to  
19 be a lot of mitigation.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. BARD: David Bard, B-A-R-D.

22 Rather than take up time to merely restate  
23 various things that have been said, I just wanted to say  
24 that my heart is completely with the first speaker,  
25 Ms. Suarez.

1 I also understand that population growth is  
2 something that is virtually out of our control, and is  
3 in itself out of control, and additional water will be  
4 needed, but I hope we can do a lot of mitigation.

5 And as a person who lives on the Bear River, I  
6 must say that I want a lot of careful attention paid for  
7 the things that Ms. Suarez said.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. RINELLA: Frank Rinella. Last name is  
10 R-I-N-E-L-L-A.

11 I'm a local resident and member of the  
12 Federation of Fly Fishers and a local member of one of  
13 the fly fishing clubs, and we have a concern about the  
14 loss of recreational area on the Bear River.

15 The fishery there, the loss of the Bear River  
16 Campground, and I'll be brief because we're going to  
17 actually submit a written comment, and I'll pass the  
18 time on.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. LITTON: First of all, thank you for the  
21 water. It's delicious. Very good.

22 One thing all the Nevada County residents agree  
23 on is protecting our rivers. We have stopped the dam  
24 from construction on the Yuba River in that past, and  
25 that's why we still have this incredible heritage which

1 all of us citizens do appreciate.

2           Hundreds of thousands of people visit our  
3 rivers every year. We all know the rivers are  
4 important, and it may be the one matter that unites us  
5 all. Republicans and Democrats agree, we protect the  
6 rivers. Young and old, we all protect the rivers.

7           Every year hundreds of us come together to  
8 remove tons and tons of garbage from more than 86 miles  
9 of our rivers. We take this very seriously.

10           The Nevada Irrigation District knows all too  
11 well where their clients reside. The tens of thousands  
12 of us who buy the water you capture are also ones who  
13 stand -- who stand up for the rivers at whatever cost.

14           Esthetically, when you build a reservoir that  
15 will almost never be full, are you -- you are severely  
16 decreasing the value of the lands in that area, not to  
17 mention the properties that will be inundated and lost.

18           How do you intend to make up for the  
19 immeasurable loss that you plan to burden us. Air  
20 quality is a big concern to all of us because reservoirs  
21 release methane. Methane is ten times more efficient,  
22 more effective at contributing to climate change than  
23 carbon dioxide, so how to you plan to zero that balance?

24           What are your plans to make up for the amount  
25 that you would contribute to climate change, especially

1 compared to the photosynthetic floor that you would be  
2 considering killing.

3           Cultural resources will severely be destroyed  
4 in this construction. My friends and I learned to kayak  
5 on that pristine stretch of river you're considering  
6 ruining.

7           Many of us go to that river for camping, for  
8 playing in the river, for observing wildlife, for  
9 photography. Our community relies on that river, as  
10 well as thousands of other people who aren't -- who we  
11 aren't hearing from tonight, especially those coming  
12 from Colfax, and others from Meadow Vista.

13           Can you all hear me all right in the back?

14           What cultural resources will you possibly  
15 contribute to the community to make up for this great  
16 loss?

17           Hazardous materials will be concentrated in the  
18 perspective reservoir. Six million pounds of mercury  
19 were released to the environment during the mining days,  
20 and this stretch of river already contains elevated  
21 amounts of mercury. Building this reservoir will put  
22 that mercury into the food chain, as it is absorbed and  
23 methylated by microbes, and then they make their way  
24 into fish that people eat.

25           Now, while you might think that putting up your

1 sign and telling people not to eat the fish, guess what,  
2 they still do, so NID would inevitably be responsible  
3 for putting toxic mercury-laden fish onto the plates of  
4 tourists and their citizens.

5           How do you plan to deal with the health risks  
6 that are -- you are inflicting upon these people, most  
7 endangered of them being pregnant mothers.

8           Terrestrial and aquatic -- terrestrial and  
9 aquatic biologic resources are the voices for whom we  
10 have to speak up for. Our local wildlife will be  
11 severely impacted with this dam. Not the only one who  
12 has seen a bear at the Bear River coming down to drink  
13 the water. Many more of our iconic animals who rely on  
14 this river like mountain lions, bobcats, river otters,  
15 bald eagles, et cetera, will all lose habitat if this  
16 dam takes place.

17           Those acres and acres of dried lake bed are  
18 essentially a biological wasteland compared to the rich  
19 ecosystem that we currently have.

20           Killing a river isn't just an inconvenience for  
21 traffic, it isn't just evicting a family from their home  
22 after three generations, this is life and death for  
23 other residents of our county, the other animals aside  
24 from us.

25           Imagine if we are river people, if you proceed

1 with this dam, you are taking families out of their  
2 homes, attacking our local wildlife, damaging our  
3 tourism and economy, putting poisonous fish onto our  
4 plates and exacerbating climate change.

5 This is a horrible act against all of us and  
6 we -- against the things that all of us hold most dear.

7 Surely, you will lose many of your customers if  
8 you proceed with this horrible idea, how you wish for us  
9 to view your impact upon this community.

10 Thank you very much.

11 MR. RICE: Erik Rice. R-I-C-E.

12 I'm concerned about transportation in the area  
13 with -- with cutting off Dog Bar Road, and I don't see  
14 where you're going to mitigate it.

15 Where's the access? Where's the bridge? What  
16 are you going to do to alleviate the traffic problem?

17 And Alta Sierra relies on the Dog Bar corridor  
18 for a fire escape. That's been the big controversy in  
19 the Lone Star and Sunshine Valley and Alta Sierra, and  
20 you're cutting off a roadway out of there.

21 I see nothing on the maps or anything talking  
22 about what we're going to do with traffic in the area.

23 I'm also very concerned with the recreational  
24 loss in the area. I think -- and NID in the past has  
25 taken and made this nice reservoir at Rollins Lake and

1 Scotts Flat Lake, and they charge you to go in and use  
2 the water.

3 Today you can go to the Bear River and  
4 recreate, whether it's kayaking or gold panning or  
5 tubing. My kids have been tubing down there for 30  
6 years, and -- and we park for free, and we use the river  
7 for free.

8 But what are you going to do when you build  
9 another lake? Are you going to charge us to go in like  
10 you charge us to go to Rollins Lake? We lose that as  
11 well, as the habitat.

12 And my biggest concern is the traffic flow  
13 there, and I think that you must build a bridge; you  
14 have to. You're cutting off Colfax.

15 The sports teams from Bear River and Colfax are  
16 constantly traveling to Dog Bar Road to get back and  
17 forth, and you more than triple their -- their trip to  
18 get to the schools now, so I think that's something you  
19 have to look at.

20 MR. SPRUNCK: My last name is Sprunck.  
21 S-P-R-U-N-C-K.

22 And I live in one of the houses that is going  
23 to be inundated, by the way.

24 There's been a lot of things said about --  
25 about this dam, but the truth is, when we lose this

1 Canyon, we're not going to get it back.

2 And I've lived there 25 years, and, you know,  
3 we're going to have one dam after another dam after  
4 another dam, and it's just going to be gone.

5 And I see that there's lots and lots of canyons  
6 throughout the Sierra that won't impact us in this way  
7 and cut us off from, you know, the access that we have  
8 right now.

9 You know, I've lived there so many years and  
10 have enjoyed the wildlife and the scenic values in this  
11 canyon, and -- and, I mean, there's other aspects of it.

12 I'm not a great speaker like some of these guys  
13 seem to be, but it is affecting me. In fact, it's  
14 already affecting me because I -- every decision now I  
15 make is based on possibly losing the home I've invested  
16 in for 25 years.

17 And I've actually reached out to NID several  
18 times to try to work out a solution so I come out of  
19 this whole, if possible, and I've got very limited  
20 response back, and I think that that's kind of -- well,  
21 it's making me very uneasy.

22 I seem to be the little guy, and they seem to  
23 be doing their thing and not really responding to my  
24 requests.

25 So, anyways, I know we need water for the

1 future, and I know that we need to grow and do things,  
2 but we also need to look at where we grow and how we  
3 grow, and how we treat the people that we come across,  
4 and I know that there's the good of the many, and I'm  
5 just a few, I'm just the little guy, but, you know, I  
6 think that the little guys need a little bit of time  
7 too.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. HEINSTROHM: So for the stenographer, I'm  
10 Kristen, K-R-I-S-T-E-N, Hein, H-E-I-N, Strohm,  
11 S-T-R-O-H-M. Thank you.

12 I'm a wildlife biologist, have been for 18  
13 years, and I work for Sierra Streams Institute. We are  
14 involved with a project with many stakeholders  
15 throughout the Bear River watershed, including private  
16 residents who live here, as well as many of the Federal,  
17 State, County and other agencies, other non-profit  
18 organizations who care about this watershed.

19 As part of this, we are compiling a conservance  
20 inventory of data related to the deep impacts that have  
21 already occurred in this watershed, as well as  
22 developing a restoration plan for this watershed.

23 I want to make sure that any decisions that are  
24 made or any environmental analysis of this EIR are  
25 considering all of that information, and all of those

1 collaborative consensus-based plans are being developed  
2 by the stakeholders.

3 I also want to make sure that everyone here  
4 knows that this is also a process that they can get  
5 involved in, so definitely come talk to me or visit our  
6 website at [sierrastreams.org](http://sierrastreams.org) to get more information on  
7 that potential process.

8 Some of our issues that we are concerned about  
9 that need to be addressed in the Environmental Impact  
10 Report includes the methylation of Mercury, which was  
11 discussed by one additional person.

12 We have an enormous amount of mercury in the  
13 system, and the areas that have the highest amount of  
14 mercury are our existing dams, are the reservoirs at  
15 Combie and Rollins.

16 Also, the process with which water is moved  
17 within our reservoir actually changes the way that the  
18 mercury, which is toxic to humans as well as to  
19 wildlife. A lot of people here have been talking about  
20 the importance of water for humans. We also need to  
21 think about the health effects on humans as well.

22 The process within which mercury is transformed  
23 into a bioavailable form in a reservoir is different  
24 from that in which is flowing down a river. That needs  
25 to be analyzed in-depth.

1           We also need to be analyzing the downstream of  
2 that, so not only within the proposed reservoir, but  
3 also what is going to be happening with the mercury and  
4 the many other toxins, such as arsenic and lead, which  
5 are coming in from the upstream tributaries.

6           How are those going to be changed by the  
7 effects of the reservoir in the downstream areas as  
8 well?

9           Methylation of mercury is an issue for  
10 restoration projects as far away as the Delta with  
11 mercury coming down here. Endangered species, such as  
12 the giant garter snake in the Sacramento Valley are  
13 being affected with their health. We have studies that  
14 demonstrate that by mercury in our area, as well as the  
15 people who are living here. Sierra Streams Institute is  
16 performing a number of studies on public health relating  
17 to this.

18           This is just one of many areas that we are  
19 concerned about.

20           I definitely also as a wildlife biologist was  
21 very surprised to see the statement on this board that  
22 says that habitat was actually going to be increased and  
23 improved for fisheries, for example.

24           A reservoir is a warm water fishery, not a cold  
25 water fishery, so river is a cold water fishery, which

1 has more than 1,000 native rainbow and brown trout per  
2 mile in the upper reaches of this area that is proposed  
3 to be transformed into a reservoir, which then would be  
4 a warm water fisheries reporting non-native bass, which,  
5 by the way, also accumulates more mercury into the  
6 system and then also have hypertrophic effects on  
7 wildlife, such as bald eagles, a number of other species  
8 that then eat those fish as well as the people.

9 Also, the number of special status species, so  
10 endangered, rare and other threatened species that were  
11 listed in the notice of preparation that was produced by  
12 NID is much smaller than the list of species that  
13 actually occur in the watershed or have potential to  
14 occur in this watershed.

15 There are many additional species that need to  
16 be addressed. That's going to be coming in a list, and  
17 also the issue of wildlife movement corridor.

18 If you have six miles of an additional dam in  
19 between the two dams, there is not going to be access  
20 for wildlife to move from one side of the river to the  
21 other.

22 Also, in terms of land use for the people as  
23 well as wildlife movement, if you actually look at the  
24 map of the watershed and the parcels and the roads,  
25 everything that is going on with land use in the

1 watershed, which is in the conservance inventory that we  
2 have, you will see that in the middle elevation where  
3 this reservoir is proposed, that is the area of highest  
4 density of parcels, highest density of roads, most  
5 limits of movement per wildlife and also the fewest  
6 opportunities for large tracks of land to be set aside  
7 as habitat mitigation and recreation mitigation.

8           So this is something where the largest tracks  
9 in the area of middle watershed are those along this  
10 area of the Bear River between the two existing dams.  
11 Those are opportunities that would be lost.

12           I think it's really important that as we are  
13 evaluating mitigation options, we realistically evaluate  
14 whether sufficient mitigation opportunities exist within  
15 the watershed that would be of enough area and enough  
16 quality to actually remediate the effects of the dam.

17           These are a few of many.

18           The Nisenan tribes, in addition to the United  
19 Auburn Indian Community, there's the Nevada City  
20 Rancheria and the Colfax Rancheria, those need to be  
21 consulted when you're looking at cultural resources in  
22 addition to United Auburn. There is a long history of  
23 their life here.

24           I'll give somebody else a chance. More will be  
25 coming in written form. Thank you.

1 MS. CANANN: Hi. I'm Catherine Canann  
2 C-A-N-A-N-N. I'm 16 years old, and I live in Nevada  
3 County.

4 And I'm opposed to this dam. I talked to  
5 Chris -- Nick Wilcox from the NID, and I asked him why  
6 he thinks it's okay to use eminent domain, and he said  
7 because we've been doing that for years, and that is not  
8 okay with me.

9 Just because people have been oppressed for  
10 years, doesn't mean you can hurt people. Just because  
11 someone is hurting someone, does not mean you can hurt  
12 someone else.

13 Plus, the fish in this river need the river to  
14 go up and down, and fish ladders only work for three  
15 percent of species. So how are you going to fix that?  
16 Have fun.

17 Who are the customers to the NID? I looked it  
18 up over and over again. I can't figure out who NID is  
19 giving water to.

20 And I spoke to someone from SYRCL who told me  
21 that the amount of water that NID supplies to the actual  
22 citizens is only five percent of their water source, so  
23 we can live without you.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. GACY: Gacy, G-A-C-Y, and so I have a

1 couple of points to make. Okay.

2 So I have a couple of questions.

3 I don't know if there's like -- that would be  
4 answered or I can e-mail them, maybe it would be better.

5 I want to know whether the people who are being  
6 displaced up there are low income or otherwise able to  
7 move because that can be really important.

8 Also, what forest are going to be considered  
9 for mitigation, and who -- that my good friend just  
10 brought up, who are the primary recipients of the water?  
11 That can be really important. I think that --

12 Yeah. And so one thing that's important for  
13 me -- okay.

14 So I'm from Boulder, I'm from Boulder,  
15 Colorado, so I -- my relation to the topic is relatively  
16 minimal, but I've been fighting things like this in my  
17 own hometown, and so I ask you like if we're not having  
18 the problem here, and if we succeed in having the dam  
19 not happen, then what's going to happen to whoever has  
20 to deal with it next?

21 So until we make it financially -- financially  
22 and environmentally viable for corporations and  
23 companies to, like, think about this in an environmental  
24 standpoint, then somebody else is going to have to fight  
25 it.

1           And so, yeah, we need to look at it from a new  
2 perspective instead of looking at, well, don't take away  
3 my house, don't take away my kid's river. We need to  
4 look at it from a perspective of making it viable for  
5 everybody and attractive for the companies to make it  
6 viable, if that makes sense.

7           Thank you.

8           MS. BRISSON: Sure. My name is Janet Brisson,  
9 B-R-I-S-S-O-N.

10           I live about a mile-and-a-half from the Dog Bar  
11 Bridge. We bought our property 25 years ago because of  
12 the Dog Bar Bridge and easy access to I-80, and then  
13 fell in love with the river. There is not another piece  
14 of -- or another river like it.

15           Folsom Dam, Shasta Dam, those lakes when it's  
16 August, and it's low, they're down right ugly. I don't  
17 know how animals can go down those steep sides to get  
18 water.

19           We're talking about putting a lake 250 feet  
20 deep in a fire corridor like the -- like she just said,  
21 how are these animals going to migrate across the river?

22           One thing that nobody has addressed on the  
23 environmental impact is if you do put this lake there  
24 and do take away the Dog Bar Bridge and people have to  
25 go to Highway 49, you're going past three schools.

1           What's going to be the impact rush hour with  
2 kids coming and going on Dog Bar -- at that point it  
3 would be Magnolia and Combie Road, and then onto  
4 Highway 49, rush hour with all this additional traffic.  
5 There has to be some sort of environmental impact.

6           Thanks.

7           MS. BRADY: My last name is Brady, B-R-A-D-Y.

8           And I'm a resident of Wolf Creek Road, South  
9 County off of Sierra Ranches, and I would just echo the  
10 concerns Mr. Rice and our last speaker made that traffic  
11 congestion is a huge issue for all of us who live north  
12 of Magnolia Road and west of Dog Bar.

13           There's -- if you flood Dog Bar Road and  
14 Magnolia Road, parts of it, we're cut off from timely  
15 access to both Highway 80 and the southern route out to  
16 Highway 49, and the roads inside the Alta Sierra  
17 community are not built to handle a lot of extra  
18 congestion.

19           They're windy, they're steep. A lot of the  
20 roads don't have shoulders, so if you end up with a lot  
21 more traffic coming up through Alta Sierra to get to 49  
22 through Lime Kiln or Alta Sierra Drive, you're going to  
23 have a real mess, and there's potential for accidents  
24 and just a lot of frustration and congestion.

25           So we would really, really appreciate the

1 environmental impact studies to look at traffic  
2 mitigation.

3           Also, Mr. Rice mentioned fire evacuation. If  
4 you're cutting off extra fire evacuation routes to that  
5 area, we've already been identified as high risk for  
6 wildfires.

7           We paid the extra Board of Equalization fee and  
8 extra fees to the fire department, so we -- fires are a  
9 concern for us, and our evacuation routes are a concern.

10           We've also got questions about the impact on  
11 wells. A lot of us are on well water. What happens  
12 when you put a large reservoir in? I don't know how  
13 that effects the groundwater, but I'd appreciate that  
14 being studied.

15           And then I'm not a hydrology engineer, but I  
16 have been reading that there are proposed alternatives  
17 to the dam. Some of what I've heard is optimizing  
18 existing facilities, enlarging existing facilities, or  
19 collaborating with some of the existing facilities.

20           There's another item that I read that involves  
21 optimizing the American River sub-basin groundwater and  
22 the American River sub-basin, and then something to do  
23 with recharging water through the Murton Fount  
24 formation.

25           I don't know what those things are, but I'm

1 sure you've got engineers who do, so I would ask that  
2 you please study all the alternatives very carefully  
3 before proceeding with the dam.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. DARDICK: Last name is Dardick,  
6 D-A-R-D-I-C-K.

7 You're getting very good at holding this.

8 So good evening. My name is Kaleb Dardick. I'm  
9 the Executive Director of SYRCL, the South Yuba River  
10 Citizens League.

11 SYRCL's mission is to protect the Yuba, which  
12 we've been doing for over 30 years now, and SYRCL is  
13 very concerned about the Centennial Dam proposal.

14 We have many questions about its potential  
15 negative impacts on the Yuba River. As you probably  
16 know, half of the South and Middle Yuba River water  
17 already gets diverted to the Bear River, and Centennial  
18 could demand more.

19 If you think about a dam that may not be full  
20 all the time, there might be a difficult type call to  
21 keep it filled. Where will that water come from?

22 So we are hoping the EIR will tell us much more  
23 about to what extent you're relying on the Yuba and  
24 existing water to fill this dam.

25 NID talks about this project addressing drought

1 and climate change. In order to really understand the  
2 purpose and need for this project, we need a thorough  
3 study of the latest climate change science, including  
4 projected impacts on the Yuba and Bear watersheds.

5 There is so much we don't know about what's  
6 coming.

7 A very important part of this process is making  
8 sure NID studies alternatives to this dam and reservoir,  
9 as the last speaker said. What is the full range of  
10 alternative means by which NID could respond to the  
11 effects of climate change and drought instead of  
12 building this dam?

13 We'd like to know to what extent NID needs  
14 could be met through water conservation and supporting  
15 efforts to restore headwater forests and meadows, which  
16 we know are a great way, environmental way to hold  
17 water.

18 SYRCL's position is that in a time of record  
19 drought and climate change, we need creative solutions  
20 to address our local water needs, and we want to know if  
21 there are better ways for NID to meet its future water  
22 needs rather than construct a big, new, expensive dam.

23 We're also really concerned about NID's  
24 approach to buying up BLM land and by going around the  
25 local BLM office to acquire this land.

1           This looks like an end run to avoid Federal  
2           protections for the environment that had been hard won  
3           by our community over the years. The EIR should address  
4           how the loss of Federal protections will be honored for  
5           respective by NID and future agreements.

6           I do want to thank NID for extending the  
7           comment period and for doing such a great job of getting  
8           people out, and I encourage all of you here to fully  
9           participate. If you don't speak tonight, please submit  
10          written comments.

11          And we have provided -- I only made 50 copies.  
12          We passed them out.

13          We have information on how to write effective  
14          comment letters, suggested things you can write about at  
15          our website, [yubariver.org/centennialdam](http://yubariver.org/centennialdam).

16          Encourage you to use that reference, and to  
17          also let other people -- if 150 people are willing to  
18          come out, I imagine there's ten times as many who care  
19          but couldn't get out tonight for childcare or other  
20          reasons. Please reach out to them.

21          And, of course, SYRCL will be submitting  
22          extensive comments on this, and I appreciate the extra  
23          time.

24          Thank you.

25          MR. REEDY: Reedy. R-E-E-D-Y.

1           Good evening, folks. I am a river scientist  
2 with SYRCL, and I will be contributing to written  
3 comments as part of -- a lot of people under the  
4 umbrella of the Foothill Water Network, so I'll keep my  
5 comments to what I think are -- just a couple of  
6 thoughts I can't resist to share, and hopefully add some  
7 unique value to -- or additional value to some of the  
8 really thoughtful and inspiring comments we've already  
9 heard, starting with Ms. Suarez.

10           The Bear River deserves to be fully, fully  
11 cared for and analyze the environmental impacts of  
12 inundating six miles of what is a valuable river  
13 ecosystem, but I do want to speak to --

14           Well, first of all, this is the thought. That  
15 the environment is not a customer of NID's or any  
16 corporation or any agency or any organization or any  
17 people.

18           The environment is the context for everything  
19 of value, life, health, economy, beauty, so let's --  
20 let's remember that as we go through this environmental  
21 review process and engage in this process.

22           I've been working for seven years with many  
23 other people, including NID and many of their wonderful  
24 staff on an environmental process of re-licensing the  
25 existing dams that NID owns and their diversions and

1 their hydroelectric facilities as regulated by the  
2 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

3 And so much care has gone into actually  
4 restoring the sections of the Yuba River that are so  
5 heavily diverted by those facilities, and so much care  
6 into thinking about the water is precious, and it's  
7 valuable.

8 So how much water is released, what time of  
9 year, it all makes a difference, and we are expecting to  
10 see some really significant restoration and improvement  
11 of our beloved structures in the Yuba River, Canyon  
12 Creek, the Middle Yuba River, the South Yuba River as a  
13 result of that whole process that's been going on and  
14 not yet complete.

15 So it's very important to understand how this  
16 additional storage facility on the Bear River might  
17 impact those gains or improvements Yuba River that are  
18 not yet secured, but we're anxiously awaiting.

19 So certainly expect that to be part of the EIR.

20 The other thought I wanted to share is that the  
21 water that washes over the existing dams in the Bear  
22 River and flows out towards Sacramento is not wasted  
23 water. The -- this time of year, especially.

24 The biggest environmental problem in  
25 California, my opinion, and many others, is our ailing

1 Sacramento River Delta ecosystem, and it is water at  
2 this time of year and on later into the spring that is  
3 desperately needed.

4 Every acre foot of extra water, fresh water  
5 that flows into the Delta is the most important thing to  
6 restore that ecosystem, so that needs to be part of the  
7 EIR too in terms of what is the loss of environmental  
8 benefits downstream.

9 And as far as those comments earlier about  
10 groundwater, the entire groundwater capacity of the  
11 Central Valley exceeds all the dams in California in  
12 terms of storage capacity, and as most of you know, our  
13 groundwater aquifers in the Central Valley are depleted,  
14 and it's a huge problem of how we're going to replenish  
15 those groundwater reserves.

16 So when we're talking about storing any  
17 amount -- and I think it's really only a few of the  
18 years, any amount of storage could be achieved by this  
19 dam, that is taking away in some respects from  
20 opportunities for recharge of that natural groundwater  
21 downstream.

22 So those downstream effects need to be very  
23 carefully looked at as well.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. NOLL: My name is Kate Noll. I am a high

1 school senior. I am from Austin, Texas. I'm currently  
2 here with the Woolman Semester School, along with two  
3 other students who have spoken tonight.

4 And I am no stranger to drought conditions.  
5 I'm not from this area, but Texas has been in severe  
6 drought since 2010. So I -- there's a lot of stuff like  
7 this going on in my hometown, which is why it's so  
8 important to me.

9 So the water demand is increasing. This is  
10 also a lot of questions, not really a speech, per se,  
11 but the demand for water is increasing because there is  
12 not as much of it, but -- like if water demand  
13 decreases, would there be such a need for the dam?  
14 Would --

15 What measures have been taken to conserve the  
16 water that we do have in this area?

17 Who will benefit most from the dam?

18 As it's been said, there is no proof that NID  
19 is supplying water to the people and the small towns  
20 that will be receiving water from the dam, so what is --

21 Who is benefitting most from the dam?

22 And what is the socioeconomic background of the  
23 people benefitting? Do they benefit over the people  
24 from lower socioeconomic backgrounds that are being  
25 removed from their homes?

1           Why is this not an issue to the NID?

2           How does the location of the dam impact the  
3 community surrounding it? How is the location  
4 determined? Will there be compensation for the people  
5 being removed from their homes? And who is being  
6 displaced from their homes because of the dam?

7           How will this dam impact the lives of the  
8 indigenous people of this area, and has there been  
9 consideration for this?

10           What are the plans for protection from mercury  
11 poisoning? And why is this not being addressed, and  
12 why -- if there is already such a mercury problem in the  
13 area, why are we continuing to build dams?

14           It is not always going to rain, and we are  
15 depending on past rainfall measures to fill up the dam,  
16 to fill up the reservoir. 110,000 acre feet of water is  
17 a ton of water that the area already doesn't have.

18           Like I said before, there's no proof that the  
19 NID is providing water to the people and to the small  
20 towns in the area, and based off of this and the  
21 environmental impact and Nick Wilcox's answer of, we've  
22 been doing this for years isn't good enough.

23           MR. BURNETT: Burnett. B-U-R-N-E-T-T.

24           My name is Peter Burnett. I'm a resident of  
25 Nevada County, property owner along the Dog Bar

1 corridor. I'm about two-and-a-half miles up from the  
2 Bear River, and I use the Dog Bar Bridge daily for  
3 commute.

4 A number of people here tonight expressed  
5 concern regarding traffic and traffic mitigation. I  
6 think it's a real serious issue, and all the research  
7 that I've done -- and all the NID websites and all the  
8 links and all the documents I have been able to find,  
9 I've seen nothing that talks about real solutions for  
10 traffic mitigation.

11 On one hand, it's a convenience issue, but on  
12 another, it's a real life safety issue.

13 I've had three fires within about a mile of my  
14 house in the last two years, and that's my exit, that's  
15 my path out.

16 So what do I do? Wildfire's coming up, and I  
17 drive up Mount Olive, drive into the fire to go to Grass  
18 Valley? How is this going to get handled?

19 MS. RIVENES: My name's Rivenes.

20 R-I-V-E-N-E-S.

21 I really don't have anything much to add to the  
22 really inspiring thoughtful comments of you all tonight.  
23 It's just really gratifying to be in a community with  
24 the kind of thinking and hearing that you all have for  
25 the environment and, of course, for your own home, sense

1 of place, so on. It's -- it's really very inspiring.

2 So I won't add anything to it, but thank you  
3 all for coming.

4 MR. BINNER: Ray Binner. B-I-N-N-E-R.

5 I'm a retired City of Roseville Water  
6 Distribution Operator, Class III, and I can tell you  
7 from my experience that what has been said in here about  
8 groundwater recharging is a little misconceiving.

9 Groundwater recharging has been done, I think,  
10 for quite a long time in California, couple of decades.

11 We started groundwater recharging in the City  
12 of Roseville because we didn't have enough storage.  
13 It's too expensive to build water storage tanks, so what  
14 we did is drilled wells in the neighborhoods and pumped  
15 water into the ground and stored it, treated water, so  
16 you're getting rid of the mercury. You're killing two  
17 birds with one stone.

18 And like the other gentleman said, you can  
19 store a lot more water in the aquifer than you can in  
20 any reservoir or any storage shed.

21 Also, City of Roseville, almost all the golf  
22 courses, all of them are on reclaimed water. I don't  
23 know of any that is on reclaimed water, Nevada County.

24 Almost all of the lighting and landscaping is  
25 on reclaimed water. I don't think any of it is on

1 reclaimed water in this county.

2           So contrary to what the other gentleman said,  
3 we have a long way to go. Building dams is a -- is a  
4 19th Century technology. People are saying they want  
5 technology. It's already here. Ground recharging  
6 works.

7           We have sightings in the Central Valley, and  
8 that's what is going to bring us back. Not building  
9 dams.

10           Thank you.

11           MS. VIERRA: V-I-E-R-R-A.

12           My husband and I have recently moved up here to  
13 Colfax, but the touching thing that I have gotten, and I  
14 can say many words here this evening, but I received two  
15 letters in the mail today from my granddaughters. They  
16 are both 8 and 10, and I would like to quickly read to  
17 you what they had to say about this project.

18           They are handwritten, there is no technology,  
19 no iPad, no computer, nothing.

20           Dear NID, my name is Heidi. I am eight years  
21 old. My grandma and grandpa live on Dog Bar Road. The  
22 Bear River goes through my grandma's backyard. The dam  
23 would be -- the dam would destroy my happy place at her  
24 house and destroy her house.

25           I have a lot of fun catching frogs and baby

1 frogs. It isn't a good idea and would mean to  
2 destroy -- it would be mean to destroy the nature.  
3 Please don't build a dam.

4 Signed, Heidi Vierra.

5 She's eight.

6 My granddaughter who is ten. I will make it  
7 brief because she wrote a five-page letter. Okay.

8 My name is Samantha Vierra. I am ten. My  
9 grandma lives on Dog Bar Road. The Bear River runs  
10 through her backyard. The dam would destroy our fun  
11 with her place at her house.

12 This place is like my heaven. Winter, spring  
13 summer and fall. I would go there in a second to the  
14 chance to play. You would destroy everything that she  
15 cares about, her garden, plants, and worst of all, the  
16 wild animals like the deer, coyotes, turkeys, fish,  
17 frogs, mountain lion, and all kinds of birds.

18 Some animals might be able to run away, but you  
19 will be wiping out their homes. There are so many  
20 memories that we have already had here at her home. She  
21 has an art room where we spend the long summer days  
22 there painting, drawing, doing crafts that you could  
23 even think of.

24 The next time we go there, she's going to teach  
25 me how to make jewelry, but if I'm not strong enough, I

1 will have to wait. I will never be able to sit on the  
2 art room porch and listen to the river and watch the  
3 birds.

4 If you decide to make these dams, some of my  
5 recent memories -- you must buy my grandma a new house  
6 with a river in her backyard. Big property with a cushy  
7 home and also make her home for the animals and not all  
8 about you or us.

9 We will have to make fish ladders on the dam so  
10 the fish could go up and down the river. It has to have  
11 a garden area for my grandma to work, and it has to have  
12 a big house just like the one she has now. But those  
13 are if you build a dam. I hope you will not. If you --

14 If you do, please consider all these things,  
15 especially the houses that you will destroy, animals and  
16 the people.

17 Please do not think that I am not a nice kid.  
18 All I'm trying to do is say, please don't build the dam.

19 MR. VIERRA: V-I-E-R-R-A, Bradley Vierra.

20 That's my mom right there. We live on the Bear  
21 River. I've loved it. It's been a home for us, and it  
22 's been a sanctuary that we were able to go, have fun,  
23 bring friends, family and everybody else with that.

24 And there is too much ecosystem, there's too  
25 much family, there's too many houses, and there's too

1 many people that I have seen that have been devastated  
2 from just even the thought of this dam being made, and  
3 for how many people that can be completely ruined by  
4 this dam being made.

5 I really believe just a little bit of water  
6 source is not even worth it when we are able just to  
7 make a water source out of all the things that we  
8 already have.

9 So that's all.

10 MR. FOWLER: F-O-W-L-E-R.

11 Thank you. I am an NID raw water purchaser. I  
12 use the water that I buy from the Irrigation District to  
13 grow food. My wife and I farm in the South County, and  
14 then we also graze about 1,500 acres between Nevada  
15 County and Placer County, so we use that water to create  
16 food that is actually sold here locally in the  
17 community.

18 I also have concerns about the environmental  
19 impacts and the traffic impacts of this project. And my  
20 hope as well --

21 Two things. With my concerns, I think any of  
22 us would be foolish to not have questions or concerns at  
23 this stage when we're so early into it.

24 My hope is that the agency can mitigate these  
25 concerns, and we can achieve some kind of a balance. I

1 think right now I'm generally in favor of the project.  
2 I know I'm not supposed to say that, but I'm concerned  
3 about water storage and the ability to create food in  
4 the future locally, and what I'd like --

5 As far as an analysis, I would like to see an  
6 economic analysis of the raw water, agricultural uses of  
7 the District's water.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. SPRUNCK: Cheri, C-H-E-R-I, Sprunck,  
10 S-P-R-U-N-C-K.

11 The dog face butterfly I understand is unique  
12 to the Bear River, so, you know, that's something to be  
13 considered, and I've seen ringtail cats also known as  
14 miner's cats down there, so that's something that wasn't  
15 mentioned by other people, and I've also found  
16 Native-American artifact down there.

17 That's it.

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, CATHERINE D. LAPLANTE, a Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of California, do hereby certify:

That I am a disinterested person herein; that the foregoing comments was by me duly reported in shorthand by me, CATHERINE D. LAPLANTE, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, and thereafter transcribed into typewriting; that the foregoing was transcribed to the best of my ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereby certify this transcript at my office in the County of Placer, State of California, this 17th day of March, 2016.

*Catherine D. Laplante*

CATHERINE D. LAPLANTE, CSR #10140



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