

Commentary Censored and Refused by the Herald's Royal Calkins July 2009

Greed is The Enemy of Enough

by David Dilworth, for Helping Our Peninsula's Environment

Greed has driven the size of all previous water solutions for our Peninsula including the 1995 gigantic growth-inducing Carmel Valley Dam and a similarly massive desalination plan in 1993 - both rejected by voters.

Greed, driven by Cal-Am, by developers after easy money and those who just want unfettered growth, has tried often but failed to force these giant growth projects on our community. They even went to Sacramento and twice came close to destroying our right to vote on water projects.

As California's Governor Brown once said "They have no concept of Enough."

The reason the forces of greed refuse to simply solve our water problem - is **they want more**. With a few shining exceptions, they refuse to relax their stubborn grip on excess to consider or support a plan that would quickly fully legalize our water supply problem and restore healthy flows to the Carmel River: The Water District's smaller desalination plant at Sand City combined with other small projects like storing Carmel River winter water in the sands at Fort Ord for our summer use.

This project, composed in 2003, is Three Bears solution. It is "right-sized" - big enough to solve our problem, but not too big to allow excessive growth. It should be the least cost solution and could be up and running in 3 years, as opposed to 5 years or more for the other bigger projects.

But greed brought this solution to a grinding halt thanks to the Water District votes by **Cal-AM's Larry Foy, who got elected to the Board, Sand City's Mayor Pendergrass who never votes against growth, Pacific Grove's Michelle Knight and Supervisor Dave Potter**. If not for their votes we could be drinking legal water from that project today.

This right-sized" project got back on track in January 2008 thanks to the surprise brave effort by Carmel Valley's Bob Brower, and now this real solution is the highest priority for the Water District.

Law requires the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to evaluate all reasonable alternatives, but greed still holds their reins of power. The PUC, which in the past 30+ years has always rubber stamped **Cal-Am's demands for more, more and more**, prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) which adamantly refuses to even describe this right-sized community acceptable solution.

The PUC's EIR tries to force us to choose only giant growth alternatives; asking essentially "**Do you prefer to be poisoned, hung or shot?**"

What's hidden is that this "right-sized" solution is not a speculative whim, it is a genuine alternative with a large completed Administrative Draft EIR, with substantial hydrogeological work already completed, and which now enjoys 6-1 Board support of our Water District (lacking Sand City's Pendergrass and his conflict of interest because of Sand City's own tiny desalination project).

So if only the forces of greed would compromise like the rest of us have had to - we could actually be drinking legal water - very soon.

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