



PROGRESSIVE

VITICULTURE

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Dear Members of the California State Water Resources Board:

My name is Stan Grant and I am a vineyard consultant. It has been my great pleasure to work in the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta for over 29 years. Actually, my Delta involvement began while I was completing my graduate degree with a vineyard internship in the Courtland area near where the proposed inlet bays for the twin tunnels project are to be located. Over the intervening years, the Delta wine grape region has steadily grown in stature within the California wine industry largely due to its unique climate and soils. As you might guess, I am against the twin tunnels project. Here are a couple of reasons for my position.

The tunnels project would consume agricultural land for inlet bays and other features, as well as cover other agricultural land with construction debris. Uniquely Delta soils cover these lands. Most of the soils that line the inside of levees developed from Placer mining debris deposited over a hundred years ago. These alluvial fan soils include those of the Sycamore, Tyndall, and Merritt series, which occur nowhere else in California. Due to their ample drainage, pears have been traditionally grown on them, but increasingly they are used for wine grapes. The older basin, flood plain, and backswamp soils that lie further inland are also unique to the Delta. Sacramento, Omni, and Egbert are among the soil series in this group. These soils support a wide range of crops, including alfalfa, safflower, tomatoes, and wine grapes. The Delta soils I have listed here and others do not occur anywhere else in California and therefore, their loss to the twin tunnels project cannot be truly mitigated. In other words, the loss of land to the tunnels project would irrevocably harm the unique Delta agricultural environment.

Diversion of water through the twin tunnels will alter of stream flows, reducing the rate and volume of water passing through and out of the Delta. I can only speculate about the effects of altered stream flow on the availability water to Delta agriculture, but I am confident about what they mean for irrigation water quality. During our recent drought, my client's vineyards located near the outlet end of the Delta have experienced late season chloride toxicity due saltwater intrusion. Such toxicity damages leaves and decreases ripening capacities of grapevines, and in severe cases, it alters wine flavor with salty characteristics. The affected vineyards were highly valued Zinfandel vineyards, some which were planted in 1879 and 1906. In effect, the reduced flow due to operation of the twin tunnels will be like a severe drought every year, with salt water intruding well into the Delta and detrimentally influencing many farms and their products.

These two reasons are more than sufficient for me to oppose the twin tunnels projects. When placed next to the negative affects of the tunnels on wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, and quality of life for Delta communities, and the exorbitant costs of their construction, they are more than compelling. Even when compared to the stated benefits the tunnels (increased reliability of water for southern California and reduced fish kills) the costs are far too great.

Sincerely,

Stan Grant