

Environmental Hysterics say Bulb Farmers Poison Smith River Air and Water

November 14, 2024

Opinion

It is not often that the Board of Supervisors chamber is filled to capacity, especially when it's not the County employees complaining about not being paid enough. October 22nd, the Board Chamber was not only filled with County employees, but the environmental whackos of the County were present, too.

It should not be a surprise that the County's employees were all about more money, while the environmental maniacs circulated another claim the lily bulb farmers are the latest in the blame game of poisoning the air and water in the Smith River estuary. Where's Grant Werschull when you need him?

It couldn't have been more than six months ago, that it was the hundred-year-old mine tailings in the head waters of the Smith River that were the problem. The Smith River Alliance and the US Forest Service teamed up to make the claim that the century old mines had left copper and other heavy metals to leach into the creeks that fed the Smith River. These contaminants were claimed to have poisoned the drinking water used to feed the Smith River Community's water supply. This turned out not to be the case. Oh, really you don't say?

Prior to the bulb farmers and the mine tailings, it was the Westbrook dairy farm and the proposed safety improvements on Highway 199. The problem was, that no contaminants were found in the Smith River watershed each and every time the claim was made. Makes one wonder who the next victim will be.

What caused all the excitement in the first place was a presentation by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's Brenna Sullivan regarding the Smith River CEQA Lily Bulb Order. In plain language, it's the Water Board's effort to regulate lily bulb farmers use of water and the possible contaminants it may contain. While there was concern about the two-year time frame necessary to construct the plan, Sullivan went on to state that voluntary efforts by the bulb growers had significantly reduced fears there was any water contamination.

For decades the water which feeds both the Smith River and Crescent City have been tested for all manner of contaminants and shown to be more than fit to drink. In each of the afore-mentioned cases, there was immediate concern by the Board as if there was no mechanism for monitoring the County's drinking water. As to the derangement of those telling tales of all manner of negative health concerns, one can only wonder if they are under the same state of delusion that certain members of the Board of Supervisors find themselves within.

"Get the Agriculture Commissioner on it," exclaimed Supervisor Valerie Starkey, essentially accepting the conga line of victims' testimony as valid. What in the world about the Smith River water that elicits all manner of consternation when it has been pronounced repeatedly that it is perfectly safe to drink. Why can't those spinning tales of difficulty breathing, skin rashes, headaches, poisoned water or even the big "C" not understand that it is very likely something else that is causing their collective ailments and leave the few remaining lily bulb farmers alone.

It seems that for years it has become the sole task of the varied environmental groups that focus on the Smith River to find fault with any sort of activity near or in the waters of the Smith. Critics clearly have no understanding air and water in the State of California are so heavily regulated and monitored that very little is left to be concerned about. Not that this group is listening, but once again, when will the environmental maniacs frequent the Flynn Center again and share their health woes? And who will be "poisoned" next? Ridiculous!