



Westlands Water District

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WESTLANDS' FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

THE WEEKLY REPORT ON CALIFORNIA'S BROKEN WATER SYSTEM

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Even the Obama Administration is not immune from the critics' misrepresentations about the Drainage Settlement



It's clear that opponents of farming are having difficulty manufacturing legitimate reasons to oppose the drainage settlement between the federal government and Westlands Water District.

Opponents first tried to sell the idea that the settlement was a “sweetheart deal negotiated without transparency.” But the “sweetheart deal” misrepresentation did not pass the smell test for a number of reasons. Mainly because you would have to believe that President Obama's Department of Interior, under Secretary Sally Jewel, intentionally negotiated a bad deal with Westlands. And you would have to believe that President Obama's Department of Justice, under Attorney General Loretta Lynch, closed their eyes and approved the bad legal settlement. And you would have to believe that the Obama White House signed off on a deal despite the vociferous objections of the allies of the Administration and professional opponents of farming in California's Central Valley. None of that is believable because none of the assertions from the Westlands opponents are true.

Now, the opponents are peddling the idea that volumes of federal and state environmental laws and regulations are insufficient to oversee Westlands' management of drainage. In addition to the environmental restrictions, they ignore the authority of the Bureau of Reclamation to withhold water deliveries if Westlands fails to manage drainage in accordance with the law and the agreement.

Of course, there's nothing new here. The claims and omissions of the anti-farm groups are simply designed to raise illegitimate issues in an attempt to drive a false narrative and encourage opposition.

At a time when bipartisanship is hard to find, shouldn't a settlement supported by both the Obama Administration and the Trump Administration be celebrated as sign of a compromise? We think so.

It's time for honesty in the very worthwhile debate about how YOUR water is being prioritized.