



Big Ag, Big Oil, and the California Water Crisis

Climate change is wreaking havoc on California's water stability. The state is mired in long-term drought, punctuated by relatively brief periods of extreme precipitation and catastrophic flooding. But the impacts of climate change on state water supplies only tell part of the story. Most of California's water goes not for individual use, but instead to corporate agricultural and fossil fuel interests (Big Ag and Big Oil). These users reap tremendous profits, while more than 1 million Californians lack access to clean water.

Incidentally, these corporate agricultural and fossil fuel interests — consuming an exorbitant amount of freshwater resources in California — are also prime contributors to our global climate crisis.

California's water system was developed decades ago, during a historic period of water abundance. But as that brief period faded and climate chaos accelerated, large corporate interests have maintained their water access through massive donations to politicians, lobbying, and "philanthropic" giving.

Moving forward, California cannot continue to allow these powerful interests to use and abuse the state's water. Large almond operations owned by Beverly Hills billionaires, large factory farms that produce

tremendous waste while using enough water to supply whole cities, and the fossil fuel industry that continues to fuel the climate crisis it spent years covering up can no longer be allowed to dictate California water policy or misuse vast quantities of the state's water.

California Governor Gavin Newsom has started to make moves to rein in some of the worst abuses from oil production by championing legislation to stop oil drilling near homes and schools. But when it comes to water policy and the most egregious water abuses, he has been silent. Instead, he has championed industrial water schemes like desalination, large-scale water recycling, and building a massive tunnel around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. All of these