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Dear Editor,

California has been in a drought 18 out of the last 20 years. We need to plan for what is real, and the reality of water availability in California has become painfully obvious. There's not enough water to go around.

A University of California study published in 2014, "100 Years of California's Water Rights System: Patterns, Trends and Uncertainty," revealed that we have long been dependent on what is commonly called "paper water." The state has promised more water to water rights holders than we actually have in our rivers and streams.

The study notes, "In arid regions such as California, over-allocation of surface water coupled with trends of decreasing supply suggest that new water demands will be met by re-allocation from existing uses. Without improvements to the water rights system, growing human and environmental demands portend an intensification of regional water scarcity and social conflict."

We cannot wish water into existence, no matter who has the "rights" to it. We need to PLAN accordingly NOW!

The Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) released their updated Urban Water Management Plan in May. The plan is a check-up to see if a water district is on schedule to divert, store, purify, deliver, conserve, reclaim, and secure the rights to sufficient water to meet the needs of its service area over the next twenty years. For example, the plan projects a five-fold increase in agricultural water usage in the Copperopolis area between 2025 and 2045.

Do you want your rate money to pay to improve water efficiency and security for your neighborhood, or do you want to pay to support new development, agricultural or otherwise, that demands water we simply do not have? Please let CCWD know your answer to that question. You can find CCWD's Urban Water Management Plan and their contact information on their website: ccwd.org.

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