

Good News for Conservation Advocates - Nestlé Cancels Contract for McCloud Water Bottling Project

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The Protect Our Waters Coalition (composed of the McCloud Watershed Council, California Trout, and Trout Unlimited) is pleased to learn that Nestlé Waters North America has agreed to cancel its contract with the McCloud Community Services District (District) to build a water bottling facility in the town of McCloud.

After ongoing concern among McCloud residents and conservationists about the plans for the Nestlé plant highlighted major flaws in the environmental review process for the facility, the company agreed to conduct additional scientific studies and to scale back the size of the proposed plant. In cancelling this contract with the District, Nestlé has taken a major step toward a more environmentally responsible project in the town. Nestlé still owns the land where a future plant could be located and all indications are that the company will pursue a new contract that is more responsive to concerns raised by residents.

Coalition member organizations remain apprehensive about the impact the plant would have on McCloud economically and on the environment, as highlighted recently by California Attorney General Jerry Brown in a public letter to the Siskiyou County Planning Department. Although the company has agreed to conduct additional scientific study, it has not yet committed to holding off on engaging in a new contract for a bottling plant until such study is complete.

The coalition strongly urges Nestlé to wait until all information is known before submitting a revised proposal to the District. If the project does eventually move forward, the coalition wishes to ensure that the company is held accountable to do everything possible to mitigate the plant's environmental impacts and maximize the economic benefits for McCloud.

We are heartened by Nestlé's good faith effort to improve relations with the town of McCloud and everyone who understands how special this watershed is and we hope that Nestlé will continue to act responsibly in the region by completing additional vigorous scientific study before proposing terms for a new contract. We've said all along that a responsible contract can only be drafted once we understand how a plant might impact the watershed and what mitigation measures might be implemented to protect the region.

About the Protect Our Waters Coalition: Protect Our Waters Coalition formed to ensure the ecological and hydrological integrity of Mt. Shasta's unique headwater areas for future generations. Current members include Trout Unlimited, California Trout and the McCloud Watershed Council.