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STATEMENT TO THE PLANNING INSPECTOR IN SUPPORT OF MY 27/7/2022
OBJECTION TO SOUTHERN WATER (SW)'S DROUGHT ORDER APPLICATION:
DP2022-11421816546.

Sir,

I wish to have the following Statement in support of my Objection Letter dated 27 July to the above Application to be read to the Inquiry in view of my inability to virtually attend.

1. I loath having been put in the position requiring me to have to write a Statement in the following terms.
2. Due to no fault of mine & thousands of others I need to oppose this drought order which if permitted risks serious damage to the environment, particularly of the precious River Test. And which, I understand if rejected, could risk the water supply to a huge number of SW's customers including myself, my wife, Mr Inspector yours possibly as well, all without choice, customers of the monopoly supply by that private company.
3. We pay our due charges for a properly sourced, continuous water supply, and in addition, through our taxes, we also all pay for the services of the Environment Agency, to over-see the above with due diligence & an acceptable level of scientific responsibility properly exercised on our behalves.
4. Need I say it that fresh water is second only to oxygen for the survival of ALL land based life and I also have to state that, in my opinion, the EA is complicit by omission of allowing this dangerously unscientific state of affairs to occur. We have all known for years that our climate was warming & drying and no apparent foresight has been exercised by the responsible Authority.
5. I also believe that the information contained in current published Reports stating that 'fresh water supply being "stressed" has been know for at least 4-5 years with no adequate physical action shown to have taken place. I also appreciate that this could have been considered a Stochastic event but that is not acceptable in the light of constant warnings for many years about climate change, particularly the risk of warming & drying in the Southern half of England. All of which would have been available in more detail to both SW & EA than to me.

6. SW has written to me about a planned new reservoir in Portsmouth. If completed on time in 2029 that will be around 10 years too late. And as warming & consequential drying remain, consumption will continue to exceed supply so where will the water come from to even begin filling it?

7. Both the above and other piecemeal plans are misguided, unscientific and will not solve the root causes of this increasingly dire situation.

8. I believe the Inspector has to postpone any decision on this most dangerous state of affairs for 6 months and instruct the EA & SW to immediately start urgent talks to draw up a long term scientific strategy for a realistic supply of fresh water for this climate change effected whole region. After which the Planning Inspectorate would urgently reconsider fresh proposals.

9. In my opinion there is already a huge supply of fresh water contained within the courses of all rivers of the region between source and reaching the salt-polluted sea. This water has to be contained and only allowed to empty into the sea under strict control with appropriate sluices & fish passes. SW would have to accept there would be additional costs of extraction lower down river courses and from purification but it would allow the upper reaches of such rivers & streams to remain virtually undamaged. I realise this is a revolutionary solution but at this point in our history I believe it is unavoidable.

10. I trust the Inspector will take a scientific, even if revolutionary, view to solve this exceptionally serious looming disaster.

Christopher Dodd BA rtd