



Story: Who is taking California's water?

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IBWA Comment:

Attempting to cast bottled water as the antihero of California's ongoing drought is both false and misleading. False, because the amount of all groundwater used for bottled water production barely registers on the radar of California groundwater use, and misleading because it just feeds into a mythology of "big water."

Bottled water production from groundwater sources accounts for less than 0.02 percent of the total groundwater withdrawn in the U.S. each year. California almond growers alone use 1.1 trillion gallons of groundwater annually. That's about 10% of the state's water usage. However, the entire U.S. bottled water market is only about 10 billion gallons.

100% of bottled water is intended for human consumption, the highest and most efficient use of water. Conversely, only about 2% of tap water is actually consumed. The rest is used in agriculture, households, and for industrial applications.

In addition, nearly all of the bottled water sold in the U.S. is sourced domestically. The vast majority of bottled water companies in the U.S. are small, community-based businesses using local water sources and distributing their products within an average radius of 300 miles from their bottling facilities. The reality is that imported bottled water accounts for only 1.3% of the U.S. market.

Consumers are not buying bottled water because of some elaborate marketing campaign; they are choosing bottled water instead of less healthy packaged beverages. Most people who drink bottled water also drink tap water, and that's fine as far as we are concerned. Water is the healthiest beverage, and bottled water provides consumers with a safe, convenient, refreshing, and responsible choice.

Readers can learn more at www.bottledwater.org.