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FLOOR DEBATE

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particular year. And that would be, if they...if we were doing that, it would be a serious confusion in thinking, because that is the public water, and you would be essentially paying people not to use the public water. That's surface water. In the 1970s, along come the center-pivots, and all of a sudden, ground water, from being a source only of domestic wells, becomes a source of irrigation water. And from the early 1970s to the present, that development has occurred, in an historical sense, so rapidly that now there are approximately nine ground water producers to every surface water producers. The political power in this structure now is with the ground water producers. The important thing to note about the basic...the difference in the basic law between surface water users and ground water users is that for ground water users, at the behest of producers and ground water irrigators, we created in the Legislature a different basic operating principle. Legally, it's called correlative rights. What it means is that in times of shortage or drought, instead of the last in time being cut off, everybody shares equally in the damage or the drawback or drawdown because of drought or because of limited legal rights or whatever. So we've had these systems out here that operate under two completely different principles in time of drought. And therein has occurred some of the major difficulties that we experience, especially as we've come to know and come to relate ground water use to surface water use. Everybody understands now that in certain reaches of rivers the river is underground, accepting water seeping in from ground water. And in other parts of the river, it may be the opposite; the river may flow underground into the ground water. And the great expense that we're enduring right now to do these models is reflective of the complexity of these systems from place to place and from time to time, depending on precipitation and the configuration of the landscape. But even under the correlative rights principle, where everybody shares equally in any sort of drought, the state is not called upon to pay anybody anything. Both systems, surface water and ground water, are designed to work and give to the producers the maximum amount that can be given to them under the principles that they agreed to abide by and operate under. It seeks to maximize it, but it does not guarantee anybody anything--never has, and in my opinion, never should. Now we're getting into a situation--and I'm going to back up again, but