

# Commission denies legal compensation for FLOW

**By Chuck Anderson**  
Press-Banner

The California Public Utilities Commission may deny payment of a \$49,719 legal bill incurred by Felton Friends of Locally Owned Water as it fought a proposed California-American Water Co. rate increase and the planned consolidation of its Felton and Monterey systems in 2004 and 2005.

PUC staff has recommended denial of "intervenor compensation" on grounds FLOW did not make a "substantial contribution" to the commission's proceedings. The request is on the agenda for a commission meeting Thursday, April 27, in San Francisco.

Allowed by the PUC to intervene, FLOW hired attorney Edward O'Neill of San Francisco, who had worked on Cal-Am cases previously, to prepare briefs, argue the case and question witnesses. But in a 17-page proposed decision, the PUC

staff concluded that other agencies provided the primary evidence and arguments that assisted the hearing officer in reaching a decision.

FLOW contended that it had contributed regarding eight separate issues, but the proposed decision characterizes FLOW's participation

as providing "no original analysis" and only endorsing "the evidentiary presentations of others."

The commission could grant compensation despite the recommendation. When the PUC allows intervenor compensation, the utility involved pays

the legal bill.

FLOW expects to have a representative at the PUC meeting, but it hasn't decided whether to make a presentation, spokesman Evan Jacobs said.

## At a glance

■ PUC meetings are Webcast. To hear or view the Thursday meeting, the link will be at [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).