

American Whitewater • Bay Institute • California Outdoors • California Save Our Streams Council • California Sportfishing Protection Alliance • California Water Impact Network • Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center • Coastside Habitat Coalition • Delta Fly Fishers • Diablo Valley Fly Fishermen • EarthJustice Legal Defense Fund • Endangered Habitats League • Endangered Species Coalition • Environmental Law Foundation • Environmental Protection Information Center • Environment Now • Fish Revolution • Flycasters of San Jose • Food and Water Watch • Foothill Conservancy • Friends of the Eel River • Friends of the River • Golden Gate Salmon Association • Golden West Women Flyfishers • GreenTown Los Altos • Institute for Fisheries Resources • Klamath Riverkeeper • Merced River Conservation Committee • Natural Heritage Institute • Nature in the City • Natural Resources Defense Council • Northern California Council Federation of Fly Fishers • Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations • Pacific Rivers Council • Pasadena Casting Club • Planning and Conservation League • Public Trust Alliance • Restore the Delta • SalmonAID • San Francisco Herring Association • Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition • Sierra Club of California • Small Boat Commercial Fishermen's Association • Southern California Watershed Alliance • Southwest Council Federation of Fly Fishers • South Yuba River Citizens League • Tri-City Ecology Center • Tuolumne River Trust • Wholly H2O • Wild Equity Institute

October 30, 2014

Ms. Felicia Marcus, Chair
c/o Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

RE: NON-PROFITS ACROSS CALIFORNIA SUPPORT RESTORING FRESHWATER FLOWS FROM THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES TO THE ESTUARY

Dear Chairwoman Marcus:

We are writing on behalf of millions of members and supporters in California who care deeply about the Public Trust resources of the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary and Central Valley rivers to urge the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to use its authority to set significantly more protective standards for fresh water flow from the San Joaquin River and its tributaries to the estuary and to limit salinity in the lower San Joaquin and southern Delta.

An overwhelming amount of science indicates that major improvements in flow and salinity conditions are necessary to protect Public Trust resources and beneficial uses of water associated

with sustainable fisheries and recreational uses. The native fish, wildlife, and habitats of California's Great Central Valley depend on healthy rivers and clean water flowing into our estuary, and so do our members. Healthy riverine and estuarine environments support vibrant fisheries including, among others: recreational fishing for steelhead, sturgeon, and flounder and both recreational and commercial fishing for Chinook salmon and Pacific herring. These fisheries support jobs, communities, and food processing and distribution systems all along California's coast and throughout the Central Valley watershed. Similarly, freshwater flows in our rivers and into our estuary support myriad recreational opportunities from kayaking and rafting to bird watching to swimming. Water quality conditions also impact drinking water and agricultural operations in the Delta. The SWRCB has heard repeatedly that the status quo – Delta inflows averaging only one-third of the runoff available in the San Joaquin watershed during the winter and spring and highly degraded south Delta water quality – has resulted in impairment of numerous Public Trust resources and beneficial uses. Our members are negatively impacted by these impairments and the extremely degraded conditions that cause them.

We also regard phase 1 of your update to the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (WQCP) as a litmus test of the SWRCB's support for implementing the Public Trust Doctrine across the state and for achieving established targets for doubling of anadromous fish populations in the Central Valley, and a forerunner of how the Board will approach phase 2 of the WQCP update (regarding Sacramento River basin, in-Delta, and through-Delta flows). Following the consensus recommendations of the scientific and management communities (including the SWRCB's own 2010 staff report) in phase 1 will set the appropriate physical and regulatory context for consideration of much needed, larger-scale improvements throughout the Bay-Delta estuary. On the other hand, a failure to follow the science on phase 1 will auger poorly for the SWRCB's willingness and ability to set adequate water quality conditions in phase 2.

In order to ensure that the unacceptable status quo conditions in the lower San Joaquin River and southern Delta do not persist, we urge the SWRCB to require that:

- As close to 60% as possible of the San Joaquin River's natural flow (and no less than half) reach the Delta during the first six months of each year.
- To the maximum extent possible, winter-spring flows recreate natural patterns (magnitude, duration, timing, and frequency) of freshwater flow.
- Adaptive management of flows and other non-flow restoration measures focus on attainment of specific and measurable biological and physical outcomes (such as the CVPIA/AFRP and existing WQCP anadromous fish doubling targets).
- Flows in summer and fall be sufficient to maintain fish, wildlife, water quality, and recreational benefits in the Bay-Delta, lower San Joaquin, and San Joaquin tributaries.

As noted above, the vast majority of published papers and testimony submitted to the SWRCB from academic, non-profit, and agency scientists clearly indicate that significant improvements in San Joaquin River inflows and south Delta water quality are urgently needed to protect the public trust. The recent drought only serves to remind us of how precarious and desperate conditions are in our river and estuarine ecosystems as a result of past over-allocation of precious fresh water supplies. We urge the SWRCB to seize this once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore balance between the needs of extractive water users and the those of the species and ecosystems of the lower San Joaquin River and Bay-Delta estuary, as well as the people and communities that depend on those ecosystems for their livelihood, recreational opportunities, and water supplies.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Greacen	Friends of the Eel River	Arcata
Amber Shelton	Environmental Protection Information Center	Arcata
Mike Hudson	Small Boat Commercial Salmon Fishermen's Association	Berkeley
Lloyd Carter	California Save our Streams Council	Clovis
Nate Rangel	California Outdoors	Coloma
Dave Steindorf	American Whitewater	Cullowhee, NC
Lowell Ashbaugh	Northern California Council Federation of Fly Fishers	Davis
Greg Haller	Pacific Rivers Council	Eugene, OR
Donna Olsen	Tri-City Ecology Center	Fremont
Cecily Smith	Foothill Conservancy	Jackson
Kit Gordon	Greentown Los Altos	Los Altos
Dan Silver	Endangered Habitats League	Los Angeles
Caryn Mandlebaum	Environment Now	Los Angeles
Michael Martin	Merced River Conservation Committee	Mariposa
Patrick Koepele	Tuolumne River Trust	Modesto
Caleb Dardick	South Yuba River Citizens League	Nevada City
Michael Schweit	Southwest Council Federation of Fly Fishermen	Northridge
Jim Wheaton	Environmental Law Foundation	Oakland
Elizabeth Dougherty	Wholly H2O	Oakland
Konrad Fisher	Klamath Riverkeeper	Orleans
John Tobin	Pasadena Casting Club	Pasadena
Mark Rockwell	Endangered Species Coalition	Penn Valley
John McManus	GGSA	Petaluma
Eric Wessleman	Friends of the River	Sacramento
Annie Pham	Sierra Club California	Sacramento

Rebecca Crebbin-Coates	Planning and Conservation League	Sacramento
Trent Orr	EarthJustice Legal Defense Fund	San Francisco
Crystal Sanders	Fish Revolution	San Francisco
Adam Scow	Food and Water Watch	San Francisco
Cindy Charles	Golden West Women Flyfishers	San Francisco
Jerry Meral, Ph.D.	Natural Heritage Institute	San Francisco
Amber Hasselbring	Nature in the City	San Francisco
Kate Poole	NRDC	San Francisco
Zeke Grader	PCFFA & Institute for Fisheries Resources	San Francisco
Michael Warburton	Public Trust Alliance	San Francisco
Jessie Raeder	SalmonAID	San Francisco
Stuart Gross	San Francisco Herring Association	San Francisco
Gary Bobker	The Bay Institute	San Francisco
Brent Plater	Wild Equity Institute	San Francisco
George Cattermole	Coastside Habitat Coalition	San Gregorio
Chuck Hammerstad	Flycasters of San Jose	San Jose
Richard McMurtry	Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition	San Jose
Carolee Krieger	California Water Impact Network	Santa Barbara
Connor Everts	Southern California Watershed Alliance	Santa Monica
Ron Forbes	Delta Fly Fishers	Stockton
Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla	Restore the Delta	Stockton
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Twain Harte
Ted Shapas	Diablo Valley Fly Fishermen	Walnut Creek
Bill Jennings	California Sportfishing Protection Alliance	Woodland