



Comment Letter - 2016 Bay Delta Plan Amendment & SED 3-13-2017

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board

I am a resident of the Gallinas Watershed in Marin County. Our creek feeds into the San Pablo Bay or the North end of SF Bay. This month the Environmental Forum of Marin and the Gallinas Watershed Council held a four person panel discussion on The Twin Tunnels and the critical need of freshwater flows to SF Bay.

What I Learned at the March 8 Twin Tunnels Lecture:

•“Between 1975 and 2014, the unimpaired runoff in the watershed was only low enough to create a “supercritically dry” year **once**, in 1977. But upstream diversions captured so much runoff during those four decades that the Bay experienced “supercritically dry” conditions – the amount of inflow typical in extreme drought – in **19 years** instead of only one. The resulting collapse of the Bay’s ecosystem is no surprise.”

From The Bay Institute’s Report, San Francis Bay: The Freshwater-Starved Estuary.

“Periods when the average salinity was as high as in the past half-century previously occurred only three times in the last 1,600 years – during recent droughts, January – July salinity was the highest it has been in 400 years.”

This low flow is encouraging invasive species and driving the decline of native species. In other words it is not the drought that is killing the bay but the dams and diversions of water to other purposes. Please protect our bay and delta and the freshwater flows required to do so.

•On June 24, 2016, “...the Delta Plan that the Delta Stewardship Council had adopted in May 2013” was overturned and ruled invalid because “it failed to include “quantified or otherwise measurable targets associated with achieving reduced Delta reliance, reduced environmental harm from invasive species, restoring more natural flows, and increased water supply reliability” as required by the Delta Reform Act.” From statement released by Stephan C. Volker, June 27 2016. Do not repeat the mistakes of the past. Please protect our bay and delta and the freshwater flows required to do so.

•In 2013, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife determined that 50-60% of unimpaired flow from February to June should remain instream to protect and restore salmon and the health of our rivers. The Tuolumne River Trust. And yet The Water Board’s proposal falls short of what science shows is necessary to protect and restore our rivers.

Sincerely,

Dan Monte

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