

**From:** John Stokes  
**To:** [commentletters](#)  
**Subject:** Comment Letter – 2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment & SED.  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 14, 2017 11:50:08 AM



Dear Clerk to the Board Townsend,

I am a fisherman and am very concerned about the long term viability of Central Valley runs of native salmon and steelhead. Our waterways have been manipulated for the past several decades to provide for agricultural and municipal uses, with severe negative impacts on our native fish.

Phase 1 of the Bay-Delta Plan provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to better balance the way water is allocated so that such fishes - and the commercial and recreational angling economies they support (some \$1.4 billion for salmon alone) - can be restored and sustained. The San Joaquin River has been most impacted. I strongly support boosting flow standards for the lower San Joaquin River and its tributaries so as to provide more water when salmon and steelhead need it most. However, new flow standards should be even higher than proposed. It is my understanding that the most current scientific consensus is that a minimum of 60 percent unimpaired flow is required to recover salmon and steelhead runs in the San Joaquin River system to self-sustaining levels.

In addition, the water board must objectively consider the wide-ranging benefits that all Californians receive from healthy fisheries and river ecosystems, as well as the specific requirements of fisheries and anglers. Significant opportunities exist to meet enhanced water quality standards, and to save salmon and steelhead from extinction in California, with minimal impact to the agricultural sector. But these opportunities must be fully considered and supported by new policy.

As you are aware, California has already tried or considered strategies for saving salmon and steelhead favored by large water users. None of these strategies have been successful or proven practical. Central Valley salmon and steelhead runs are on the brink of extinction, and our commercial salmon industry is on life support. We can no longer afford to experiment with strategies that don't include more water.

The truth is that fish species, in particular, have been shouldering most of the burden of providing water for California, for decades. Dedication of more water, delivered at key times, must be the primary tactic for recovering fisheries and the Bay-Delta's ecosystem.

Please modify your current proposal and sufficiently boost flow standards for the lower San Joaquin River watershed to protect salmon and steelhead..

Respectfully submitted,

Sincerely,

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