



**From:** Judith Murphy  
**To:** [commentletters](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Bay Delta Plan Amendment  
**Date:** Monday, March 13, 2017 6:14:23 PM

---

I have lived in the SF Bay area since beginning college here decades ago. Our bay is the treasure that makes the entire area so desirable and successful.

Historically, natural flow of water from the mountains kept our estuaries, tidelands and the bay healthy. In recent years the upstream diversions of natural flow from the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Merced and lower San Joaquin Rivers have greatly negatively impacted the greater bay. The State Water Board issued a report titled *Development of Flow Criteria for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Ecosystem* (2010) that determined that approximately 60% of unimpaired flow between February and June would be fully protective of fish and wildlife in the lower San Joaquin River and its three major tributaries.

Despite this, on average less than 50% of the freshwater flow from the Central Valley reaches the Bay, and in some years less than 35%. Reducing inflows shifts the size and location of the ecologically-important *salinity mixing zone*, affecting all water life from microscopic to large mammals. Between 1975 and 2014, the natural unimpaired runoff in the watershed was only low enough to create a “supercritically dry” year once, but upstream diversions captured so much runoff during those four decades that the Bay experienced “supercritically dry” conditions in 19 years instead of just one.

This impacts the Pacific flyway and millions of migrating birds. But I am most concerned about the impact on our salmon. There are important ecological reasons to protect the salmon as a keystone species, but more importantly to me the economic impacts on fisherman and markets are huge. The commercial salmon fishery in California is on the brink of disaster. The salmon population was so low in 2008 and 2009 that the commercial fishing season had to be cancelled, resulting in the loss of more than 2,200 jobs and \$255 million in annual revenue.

Much of the water diversion goes to the central valley. If they were growing food for us and providing livelihood for multitudes of small farmers this would be more compelling. But most of this diverted water goes to huge industrial level farming and the produce is exported out of the country. So California water is being taken from the millions in the bay area and degrading our bay and deltas to provide profits for large agricultural corporations.

The state needs to use its mandate to determine which beneficial uses have priority, and prioritize this water - which is a public trust resource - more appropriately. Please protect at least 50% of the natural runoff from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Ecosystem for the Bay Delta.

Thank you,

Judith Murphy  
[judithamurphy@prodigy.net](mailto:judithamurphy@prodigy.net)  
650-851-2766  
cell 650-440-0541

