

From: Michael Koterba
To: [commentletters](#)
Subject: Comments can be e-mailed to Letter – 2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment
Date: Wednesday, November 30, 2016 11:04:28 AM



Dear Water Board Members:

Having spent the vast majority of my life working for county, state, and federal agencies who needed to develop sound, sustainable, multi-use policies to manage water resources, I am recommending that you maintain the 50-60 percent flow levers that scientific evidence indicates would provide the flows needed to support delta ecosystem biology and anadromous fish species. Although this is just one major use associated with delta and river flows, it is the use that best indicates the general health of the entire system. My professional experience showed again and again that (1) communities do not change their consumptive use patterns, and in particular never voluntarily reduce their consumptive use for an extended period of time, and (2) that only truly do so when required by laws with punitive consequences or there are economic incentives to do so. Inevitably, I have seen this irrational behavior lead to the complete mining of groundwater from aquifers, or complete capture of stream water from rivers systems, leading to sterile water-barren ecosystems, within one or at most two generations. Often the above has occurred with many other costly consequences--complete loss of river systems for any other use purposes, land subsidence, saline water intrusion, and damages to subteranean and surface infrastructure. When the initial actions were taken, no one really wanted to know, or more often listened to those who more clearly understood, what the consequences would be. The day the Water Board no longer clearly strives to preserve the flows needed to maintain the Delta ecosystem and anadromous fish populations is the day the Delta and the rivers that flow to it simply become a pond and pipe system to provide water solely for southern California consumptive use. It is clear that southern California will never conserve, reuse, or otherwise diminish their demand for water in any meaningful way as long as the Board just keeps giving them water from the north. It is also clear that those in northern California has no real political sway when it comes to State actions. What is really needed and California has managed to dodge for the last half century (since the Az vs Ca 1968 Supreme Court decision) is a state wide groundwater and surface water management plan. Whereas Az has succeeded and California has miserably failed is not that they won but that they also were required in this SC decision to develop such a plan and they did based on a sound scientific basis and many interagency negotiations. If they Board takes measures which forces the State to develop such a plan more quickly, that is the best decision it could make. If the Board simply rolls over and allows large diversions of delta water south then they will simply have told southern Californians that they once again can just turn on the taps.

Regards

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