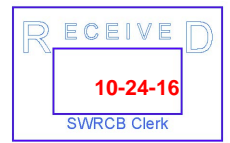


Oct. 13, 2016
Oakland, CA



Jeanine Townsend
State Water Resource Control Board
1001 I St., 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814-0100

Dear Ms. Townsend,

I'm writing to express my concern about the Water Board's proposal to require water flows in the lower San Joaquin river be 40% of the natural unimpeded flow. As a resident of Oakland for 9 years, as an ecologist with two degrees in natural resource management (B.S. University of Michigan, M.S. Cornell University), and as an ornithologist who leads birding outings around the Bay, in the Delta, and the Central Valley, I am very concerned that your plan perpetuates the starving of these rivers and the species + ecosystems that depend on them.

I strongly encourage the Water Board to reject this proposal, and insist on a plan that follows your own science and require a sufficient amount of water to keep our native species thriving.

I'm sure you're aware that ~~to~~ 6 years ago, the Water Board itself published a study showing that at least 60% of unimpeded flows were needed to completely protect wildlife populations the lower San Joaquin basin. Why ~~ever~~ isn't the Board following its own science?

Too many local native species are un-necessarily endangered by the current ridiculously low river flows (smelt, sturgeon, salmon, etc.). You and everyone else associated with the Board have a choice: you can be remembered heroically as having saved these iconic species; or your own grandchildren will shake their head wondering how could this Board be so short-sighted and irresponsible as to allow so many species go extinct.

We need much more than 40% of unimpeded flows to restore the salmon runs that once featured 100's of thousands of fish, but have had no fish return in recent years. We need much more than 40% of the water in these rivers to support the millions of birds migrating to and through the Bay, Delta, and Central Valley wetlands.

Here in the Bay Area, we have dramatically reduced our household, commercial, and industrial water use. It's far past time to demand much more reductions in usage by our largest water users: the agricultural water districts. ~~we~~ With conservation akin to other water-challenged areas like Australia + Israel, and ~~reducing~~ ^{switching away from} thirsty crops (like Alfalfa) and crops that require year-round, every-year watering (like vineyards) and crops primarily for export (like Almonds) we could easily allow more than 60% of unimpeded flow without harming our economy.

Please make sure the Board rejects the current proposal and insist on restoring flows to at least 60% of natural, unimpeded flows.

Thank you,
FRED WERNER, Oakland CA