



Dear People of the SWRCB,

You have a difficult job to do regarding the San Joaquin water flow hearings and I am not going to pretend I have any answers. All I can do is offer thoughts that seem most important to me in how you craft your decision:

1. I disagree strongly with the notion now being pitched by corporate-farm and regional growth advocates that any fresh water running to the ocean is "wasted." It is natural and desirable that California rivers run to the sea, and that they DO NOT become just the sum total of all the pesticide and herbicide-laden farm runoff and sewage outfalls from the cities and farmland along their banks.
2. Central Valley and Sierra water consumers (and I am one of those) must understand that it is time to live within their means, water-wise; that it is time to END water demand for continued urban growth and corporate farm expansions.
3. The "irreversible damage" to his district claimed by Representative Bigelow for increased river flow is ACTUALLY the irreversible damage caused to the Central Valley underground aquifer caused by over-pumping it faster than it can EVER be replenished. Over-pumping is permanently destroying the water-carrying capacity of this aquifers, which is a finite resource that has been, and is, grossly overused.
4. Upstream water consumers must understand that their water demands will have a negative impact on downstream consumers: farmland lost to salinity, destruction of wildlife habitat and wildlife, loss of human recreation, etc. Water is a very finite resource and what is demanded and taken by one group of users will now negatively affect others. There is no free lunch.

Thanks for your consideration,
Fred Staal

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Staal".

4100 Triangle Rd
Mariposa, CA 95338

209-966-2314

For your reference below, is a comment I made on Representative Bigelow's FaceBook page in response to his request for comments to the SWRCB to support lowered downstream flows.

"Fred Staal-Robles: I must disagree. Every area wants more than its share of water these days, whether it is to fuel continued urban growth or for corporate farm expansions. I do not doubt that Central Valley/Sierra water consumers will keep demanding more and more San Joaquin river water until its flow is nothing more than the sum of all the farm runoff and sewage outfalls from the cities along its banks.

To reduce flows in the river introduces salinity to the farmlands farther down along the river, putting those farmers out of business. It also impacts ALL the life downstream along the river, animal, plant, and human. I suppose the State Water Resources Control Board is trying to find a balance to all the competing demands. It ain't gonna be easy.

So please make your case without the scare tactics like "irreversible damage" - the only irreversible damage is pumping the CV underground aquifers faster than they can ever be replenished - or promoting the notion that any fresh water running to the ocean is "wasted."

It is natural and desirable that rivers run to the sea, that they not be turned into just ditches for pesticide and herbicide-laden farmland runoff and sewer outfalls. Somewhere along the line we have to say enough is enough, and try and live within our means.

PS, I HAVE LIVED MOST RECENTLY IN THE SIERRA FOOTHILLS (4 YEAR) & IN THE SACRAMENTO RIVER DELTA (18 YEARS), SO I HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF BOTH'S NEEDS,