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To: "AB2121Policy@waterboards.ca.gov" <AB2121Policy@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Thu, Apr 24, 2008 8:22 AM
Subject: Comments on the Draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy

April 24, 2008
Chair & Members Tam Doduc
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Tam Doduc,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy. As all Californians know, the state's salmon and steelhead fisheries are in trouble. One of the biggest problems is clear: too many of our rivers and streams simply lack the water to support fish. I urge you to take decisive action with the Instream Flow Policy to conserve stream flows and to help put salmon and steelhead back on the road to recovery.

The final Policy must include a few basic things: scientifically-based criteria to limit diversions when stream flows drop below a certain level, measures to guard against the cumulative effects of multiple diversions, restrictions on new on-stream reservoirs, mandates for universal monitoring and reporting of both water diversions and stream flows, and provisions to periodically review the effectiveness of the Policy.

The Policy should take a broad, watershed-scale approach to the problem. It should provide incentives for landowners to go above and beyond the minimum required by the Policy, including measures to improve stream flows during the critical dry season. The State Water Board also needs to establish strong programs to ensure compliance with the law. Finally, the Board should conduct an honest assessment of the funding and staffing needed to implement the Policy and request adequate resources to get the job done.

With those steps, the Instream Flow Policy can be a crucial step forward for conservation in California. After more than 15 years of hard work by Trout Unlimited and others, it is time to finalize the Policy and get about the business of bringing back the fish.

I think the issues at hand have been talked about enough that everyone understands there are needs here. California has long been known as a state of cutting edge advancement in all things. It is time to be a leader in conservation as well and prove to the rest of the world that booming population and a solid economy can also support smart and long term solutions to preserving the Earth's natural resources.

Closing the salmon fishery is one part of two absolutely necessary steps to ending and correcting the astonishing decline in the anadromous fish populations in the state. Part two is to provide enough clean water to bring back the environment to the conditions that once provided a nursery for the lower 48's largest salmon run. Preventing the harvest of the remaining adult salmon is a good thing. It does us no good if they don't have a place to spawn so that there off spring can continue to grow and return year after year. It seems clear that without better stream flow management we may be in danger of going the route of the Buffalo. Clearly the State of California is smart enough to realize something has to be

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STATE WATER RESOURCES
CONTROL BOARD

done in order to prove that we are sophisticated enough to learn from our country's past mistakes.

Sincerely

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