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To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
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Subject: AB2121 Policy - February 2010 Draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy

Members of the California State Water Resources Control Board:

My wife and I own one of the more modest homes at Sea Ranch in California, which this Spring we are trying to sell.

So it is with considerable dismay that that I have recently learned of regulations that the State Water Resources Control Board is proposing that would greatly reduce even essential water to this community. The suddenness and severity of this proposal seems likely to kill the already difficult market for Sea Ranch homes until the matter is resolved. And should the decision be made to proceed with severe restrictions, a consequence will likely be a considerable decline in value of what we (and many others) had expected to be an important retirement asset.

The health of the Gualala River, and the role it plays as a spawning ground for fish, has long been a subject of interest to us. For the twenty-three years that we have owned this property, we have actively supported -- and helped pay for -- various projects aimed at using water from the Gualala river conservatively and wisely, including the building of a substantial reservoir and improvements to the water distribution network. During this time, our community has worked cooperatively with all regulatory agencies.

Therefore it is troubling to learn that SWRCB's proposed policy puts so much pressure on the Sea Ranch community when it is "logging" in the area that has accounted for much of the loss of water flow during the dry season. More generally, I note what seems to be valid criticism of the proposed policy having been drawn with a broad brush, not being concerned with unique geological, biological and also economic characteristics of this specific region.

Environmental issues deserve and receive great support from the State of California. Sustaining this requires that California tax payers and voters continue to believe that decisions are being made fairly and wisely. Poor handling of the present matter will raise questions in quite a few minds as to just how well this is being done, and erode support for environmental controls of all kinds.

I urge the Board to remove the considerable threat that it has placed over the Sea Ranch community.

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