

commentletters - Comment Letter-AB2121 Policy; February 2010 Draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy; Strong Objection to this Draft Policy and Request for Extension of Time

From: "Richard Knarr" <rjknarr@mcn.org>
To: <commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 3/21/2010 12:14 PM
Subject: Comment Letter-AB2121 Policy; February 2010 Draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy; Strong Objection to this Draft Policy and Request for Extension of Time
CC: <ecarillo@sonoma-county.org>

I request that these comments be made part of the administrative record for the Proposed Policy for Maintaining Instream Flows in Northern California Coastal Streams.

The Proposed Policy would severely reduce the quantity of water available for domestic use and fire protection on The Sea Ranch, the community where my permanent residence is located. Our Board of Directors and Water Company have shown that the water supply would be reduced to 15-25 percent of the needed amount and that The Sea Ranch would be without a water supply for weeks or months, even in normal years. Under drought conditions, the situation would, of course, be much worse.

The Proposed Policy is focused solely on the benefit to the streams and fish populations. It must be revised to balance the burden to local residents and businesses with the benefit. If my community is left without a water supply for weeks or months, it will be virtually unliveable and the values of its properties will plummet to near zero, causing a sharp decrease in property tax revenues and increased unemployment (The Sea Ranch has approximately fifty full-time employees).

Any new Policy must allow adjustments based on the unique characteristics of each affected stream. The aquifer from which The Sea Ranch pumps its water is adjacent to and beneath the South Gualala River, and extends several hundred feet deep into the San Andreas Fault zone. The SWRCB should be required to demonstrate, using scientifically sound methods, that our pumping from the aquifer is causing harm to the river and/or its fish populations. Absent such a demonstration, the drastic reduction in the quantity allowed to be extracted is not justified, and the resulting economic burden on the community need not occur.

I request that the SWRCB extend the comment period on the Proposed Policy for 90 days, and schedule hearings and workshops in the north coast region so that those citizens whose homes and livelihoods will be affected by the SWRCB's decisions may be heard.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Yours Sincerely,

Richard D. Knarr

cc: Supervisor Efen Carrillo, Fifth District Supervisor, County of Sonoma
Assemblyperson Wesley Chesbro
Senator Pat Wiggins
Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

