
From: Esther Nigenda <enigenda@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, July 27, 2018 7:42 AM
To: LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov; WQCP1Comments
Subject: Comment Letter – Revisions to Proposed Bay-Delta Plan Amendments

Categories: Yellow Category

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board

Dear Water Board Members,

I am writing in support of your July 7, 2018 proposal, alternative 3, to require a 40% of unimpaired flow, within a range of 30 -50% for the San Joaquin River and its tributaries.

Agricultural interests, cities and other water users (myself included) will ask if this is amount of unimpaired flow is a [reasonable use of water](#).

Yes, protecting our environment is a reasonable use of water. And, not only should our ecosystems have the most senior of water rights since they were here before any of the other competing interests, it is critically important to preserve these ecosystems for our children and our children's children.

But I support the increase in flows because in spite of some belt tightening **we are still wasting the water we have**. At the height of the most recent drought, in 2016, dewatering for the underground construction of 8 residential basements in Palo Alto resulted in 136 million gallons of groundwater pumped and dumped into the Bay.

This practice is neither unique to Palo Alto nor limited to residential construction but happens wherever the water table is high. Palo Alto happens to be the only city I know of that is currently measuring and trying to regulate the amount of groundwater that is, without being used for any beneficial purpose (contrary to water law) directly pumped into the Bay. Imagine the amount of groundwater wasted in the construction of commercial projects covering several acres!

As for farmers, I heard that for some of them, reducing their water allocation means they have less water to sell. If they are selling the water, they are not farming and do not need the water. They need the money. Other farmers are exporting California's water in the form of alfalfa and other water intensive crops to other countries.

We can all do better. Until and unless cities, farms, industrial and other interests and individuals use water more responsibly we cannot plead water need. Change is difficult but at the end of the day we all need to be more responsible about water use and re-use.

Thank you for your service to our great State,

Esther Nigenda, Ph.D.

www.SavePaloAltosGroundwater.org