

Hearing in the Matter of California Department of Water Resources and United States Bureau of
Reclamation Request for a Change in Point of Diversion for California WaterFix, Part II
Testimony of Trina Cunningham
On Behalf of AquAlliance

I, Trina Cunningham, do hereby declare:

Since time immemorial, the Maidu people in their ancestral homelands inclusive of the lands known as the Upper Feather River as well as the North Fork of the Yuba River have depended and maintained tribal responsibility to headwaters including seeps, springs, rainwater, and snowmelt. These waters continuously flowed from the uppermost reaches of the Northern Sierra Nevada Mountain Range and the Southern Cascade Mountain Range all the way out into the ocean, and then back again through rainwater and snow runoff.

Anadromous fish travelled throughout these watersheds, bringing important nutrient cycles, sustaining biodiversity, and were an important food source for the Maidu people as well as being a critical nutrient source to plant and animal beings in our homelands. Maidu people have carefully tended upland forests, meadows, and waterways to ensure optimal health and abundance of species that we in turn depend on.

Beginning with waters in the ocean, the hydrologic impacts to fisheries and other aquatic species have had a vast web effect on the plants, animals, and people originating from these geographically and biologically rich communities. Species decline due to water use in California and changes of hydrologic cycles have negatively impacted tribes.

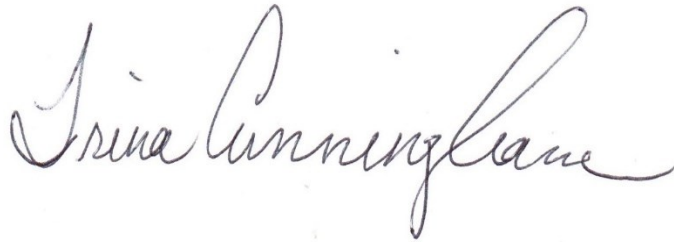
Enacting tribal responsibilities began with creation. We are to know every geographical detail of our landscape, and every living being within that landscape. We are to understand the cycles of the sun, moon, and the stars. We are to understand the cycles of lightness and dark, of day length and seasonal shifts. We are to understand the transfer of energy in both the seen and unseen world. We are to understand water, from the highest peaks to the ocean, and back again. We are to gage our community structures accordingly, realizing that our actions greatly impact the necessary cycles that we in turn depend on. This dependence includes not only our physical health, but our mental, emotional, and most importantly our spiritual health and growth. In order for our health to be optimal, we must maintain optimal health of the world that we are part of.

The waters that flow from the highest peaks of our ancestral homelands feed the groundwater and the surface water of the Delta. We now are challenged to enact our tribal responsibility and face cultural extinction while continuously residing in our ancestral homelands. We have been required to bear witness to the detachment and destruction of the geologic region and species that once thrived in abundance in these regions. We have been required to bear witness, and even participate in, the detachment and destruction of our culture and our communities.

Water transfers have already adversely impacted the fisheries that contributed quantified and unquantified benefits to upland ecosystem benefit as well as the human communities that depend on them.

This is a project that would be bestowing an unknown bond debt on future generations. As part of tribal responsibility we feel that we have to think of current environmental, social, fiscal, and spiritual issues as well as the issues of future generations.

Executed on the 28th day of November, 2017 in Chico, California

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Trina Cunningham". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.