WEST STANISLAUS IRRIGATION DISTRICT

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June 9, 2015

State Water Resources Control Board
Chairwoman Felicia Marcus, and all Board Members
P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812
Fax: 916-341-5620

RE: Sacramento River Temperature Plan

Dear Ms. Marcus:

As California continues to struggle with the unprecedented effects of this drought, the most powerful solutions thus implemented have been realized through the collaboration of the state and federal projects managers and fisheries biologists, State Water Resources Control Board staff, and public water agencies contracted with the federal Central Valley Project and State Water Project. On May 29, Executive Director Tom Howard issued notice suspending the Shasta Temperature Management Plan provisionally approved on May 14 due to new information regarding temperatures in Lake Shasta. As a result, the families, farms, and communities throughout the San Joaquin and Silicon Valleys desperately dependent upon the minimal amount of water the Plan provides made numerous decisions to commit precious resources that are now in jeopardy.

While I recognize the need to sufficiently protect endangered fish species, I also understand that much of what is being discussed behind closed doors could result in unparalleled socio-economic upheaval with significantly disproportionate biological benefit. Given the great risk, I write to ask you to commit to three actions that would greatly increase the likelihood that we successfully cope with this extreme circumstance. First, public water agencies must be an integral part of developing the solution. We have unique, unrepresented responsibilities to the public, operational capabilities, and expertise. It is unfathomable that in trying to address this extraordinary problem, state and federal agencies have chosen to take some of their most effective tools off the table. Second, whatever solution is implemented must include non-flow interventions as it is clear that an insufficient volume of cold water is available to meet desired temperature targets. Excluding non-flow actions will result in less than possible protections for salmon. Lastly, once a solution is crafted, the Board should not present a new or different standard, essentially creating yet another hurdle to a workable solution.

I respect the great responsibility the Board has to protect Sacramento salmon and balance other objectives. Public water agencies also share immense responsibility. Given there is simply insufficient cold water to accomplish the temperature objectives, I am hopeful that the Board will adopt a new plan that maximizes the availability of our limited water supply and implements non-flow actions. Absent careful and creative construction of a new Plan, the intricate agreements that link the limited water

stored in Shasta Reservoir to every part of the state could unravel creating the most significant socio-economic disruption to the communities I serve since the recent Great Recession. This outcome is avoidable and I commit to help in any way appropriate to ensure that it is.

Sincerely,

Robert Pierce, P.E.
General Manager

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cc: Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL STATE WATER RESOURCE CONTROL BOARD MEMBERS: Jeanine.townsend@waterboards.ca.gov
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West Stanislaus Irrigation District Board of Directors