

From: mrmefind@aol.com
To: [commentletters](#)
Subject: Public comment letter
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I am a native of Merced and an educator, having taught here for the past 32 years. I am also an environmentalist and have been a founding member of both the Merced Recycling Coalition and the Central Valley Safe Environment Network, as well as a past member of the Sierra Club.

One might think that because of this history, I am all for increased flows in our rivers. Nothing could be further from the truth! Along with everyone else at Monday's hearing, I am very concerned about the lack of sound science behind, and the seemingly myopic solution to our fisheries problem that the board has proposed. I am also concerned about how the dominos will fall in our area should this solution be enforced.

Water is the lifeblood of agriculture in this "breadbasket of the world." As author Mark Arax said in *West of the West*, "Nowhere else in the world brings together land, sun, soil and water in such harmony." Taking 40 to 60 per cent of our water is simply untenable because, without this sustaining liquid, our crops will wither, our fields will be fallowed and, ultimately, we will perish.

To turn the tables, I would like the board to consider how each of you would react if you were directed to eat and drink 40 to 60 per cent less food and water? While I understand that this is a simple analogy, still, the message is clear – you would perish.

As an educator, I also am very concerned about my students' well being should our access to clean water be shockingly limited. I'm also concerned that the timing of these hearings may have excluded many Latinos who traditionally return to Mexico for the holidays.

Finally, and in keeping with the season, a story of redemption is appropriate: The CA Water Resources Board has been characterized locally as "the Grinch who stole Christmas." For those who don't

remember, the Grinch starts with a heart “two sizes too small” and does all he can to steal Christmas (*water*) from the Whos of Whoville (*Merced*). In the end, the Grinch realizes the errors of his ways and redeems himself by returning the stolen goods (*water*) to Whoville (*Merced*).

With such redemptive possibilities in mind, I ask, that you drop the questionable science behind the “one size fits all” approach and adopt the comprehensive alternatives provided by MID’s Merced River SAFE Plan.

/s/ Marc Medefind