

To:
Ryan Broderick
Director
California Department of Fish and Game

Lester Snow
Director
California Department of Water Resources

Dear Sirs:

The California Striped Bass Association requests that the Two Agency Agreement (Agreement) be renegotiated as it has failed to provide adequate protection for the striped bass and other Delta fish populations. The striped bass population in the Bay-Delta once several million adults strong in the 1950's and 1960's declined sharply through the 70's, 80's, and 90's. While stocking in the 80's and 90's under the Agreement helped to stabilize the population, cancellation of stocking in 2001 and implementation of the 1995 Water Quality Control Plan Delta Standards have led to record low production of young striped bass in recent years. Adult population estimates in recent years have raised a controversy that has yet to be resolved. There remain concerns that protections for the population are not adequate to sustain this important sport fishery. In fact, since 1995 previous hard won protections for the striped bass and Delta fishes have been dropped in favor of higher exports. The California Striped Bass Association (CSBA) commissioned the attached review of the striped bass population data to determine if the present 1995 Water Quality Standards, or the California Bay Delta Authority (CBDA – formerly CALFED), the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA), the Striped Bass Stamp, and the Delta Pumping Plant mitigation programs (Four Pumps and Tracy Mitigation programs) are providing adequate protection for the striped bass and other Delta fish populations.

Based on the attached review it is the position of the CSBA that striped bass remain an important element of the fishery resources of the Bay-Delta and a critical indicator of estuary health, and that the decline or lack of recovery in the striped bass population does not bode well for the Bay-Delta ecosystem. The CSBA is not asking for re-initiation of prior stocking programs to enhance the striped bass population, we simply request Bay-Delta resource and management agencies adhere to existing legal protections of the Bay-Delta Water Quality Standards and prior commitments of the CVPIA, CBDA/CALFED, Tracy Mitigation Agreement, Striped Bass Stamp Program, and CDFG/CDWR Two-Agency Fish Agreement (Four Pumps Mitigation Program). The Two-Agency Agreement between the Department of Fish and Game and the Department of Water Resources should be renegotiated to provide added protections to striped bass, delta smelt, and San Joaquin salmon. Export limitations as originally agreed upon by DFG and DWR in the 1982 Two-Agency Agreement should be reconsidered to protect the fish populations. Reverse flows in the lower San Joaquin River should not be allowed in spring and early summer. New fish protections facilities and improved salvage systems should be implemented at the south Delta pumping plants to reduce the loss of fish. Fish

restoration funds should be better allocated to improve survival of Delta fishes. Finally, project operations and protection facilities once directed toward protecting striped bass and over the past decade redirected toward other fish and increased water export, should be again redirected to provide protections guaranteed striped bass by the CVPIA and state laws. Such protections will also benefit delta smelt and San Joaquin salmon.

The CSBA welcomes the opportunity to work more closely with resource and management agencies involved with the Bay-Delta. We have commissioned the state legislature to pass a bill that provides status to the striped bass population on par with native fishes that receive protection under the state and federal endangered species acts. Similar protections are afforded striped bass by the federal government via the CVPIA.

Sincerely,

CSBA Board of Directors