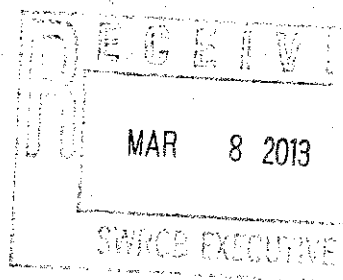


40224 Arroyo Dr.
Irvine, Ca 92617
March 3, 2013

Jeanine Townsend
Clerk of the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
Sacramento, CA 95814-0100



RE: Comment Letter – Bay Delta Plan SED

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to urge you to help restore the ecosystem of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, especially for the salmon. As you know, unimpaired flow of 60% is recommended to protect the fish and wildlife. The flow of 35% that is currently being considered is just not enough.

Salmon is very important to California's economy, by providing a healthy salmon industries (commercial and recreational) and a multitude of jobs. The Chinook salmon is a huge part of the Pacific coast's \$200 million commercial and recreational fishing industry.¹ In fact, it has been estimated "that a full recovery of California's Central Valley Chinook salmon runs can potentially provide \$5.7 billion in new economic activity for the state and the creation of 94,000 new jobs", and it was also estimated that the 2009 shut down "of the salmon fishery [cost] California \$1.4 billion in lost economic activity and 23,000 jobs in both the commercial and recreational saltwater fishing sectors."² Increasing the unimpaired flow of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to 60% will greatly benefit California, economically, by ensuring annual salmon runs remain strong now and into the future.

Also, please take into consideration the current allocation and usage of the state's limited water supplies. It is a well known fact that 80 – 85% of California's water is used by agriculture, but agriculture produces less than 2.5% of the state's income. As one example of the questionable use of water in the state is the production of alfalfa. Alfalfa is an especially bad crop to grow in water-restricted California because of its low crop value and high water demand; alfalfa produces only one tenth of 1% of the state's economy, but taking 20% of the state's developed water supply. "An alfalfa farm using 240 acre- feet of water generates \$60,000 in sales, while a semiconductor plant using the same amount of water generates 5,000 times that amount, or \$300 million. (And while such a farm could function with as few as two workers, the semiconductor plant would employ 2,000.)"³ Similar arguments can be made against growing rice and cotton in the

¹ <http://baykeeper.org/news/column/california%E2%80%99s-salmon-brink-extinction>

² <http://asafishing.org/newsroom/news-releases/economic-data-supports-efforts-to-recover-californias-salmon-fisheries/>

³ <http://geosun.sjsu.edu/~sedlock/Uses.Users.pdf>

dessert. Does it make sense devastate and valuable ecosystem to obtain such small returns? Please consider, also, the greater good for both us, now, and for future generations.

Considering the water history and ownership rights in California, I know it will be difficult to steer in the direction of what makes sense on the basis of science and the greater good. I hope you can endeavor to try.

Thank you,

Laura Weiden