

Ms. Karen Niiya, Senior Engineer
Division of Water Rights
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95814

STATE WATER RESOURCES
CONTROL BOARD

2008 APR 18 PM 4:13

DIV. OF WATER RIGHTS
SACRAMENTO

Re: Comment Letter – AB 2121 Policy

- We are landowners in Napa County and the proposed policy will directly impact us. We own 16 acres of vineyards and divert water from an unnamed creek for irrigation purposes.
- An application was filed in 1999 to appropriate only 2 acre feet for storage in an off-stream reservoir.
- The proposed policy will directly impact the farming interests of our family/business.
- Implementation of the Policy will result in further delays in water right processing because the majority of applicants and petitioners will need to seek a variance due to the stringent bypass and diversion rate limitations in the Policy. The variance criteria are not clearly defined in the Policy; therefore, we believe that processing of numerous variance requests will exacerbate the already back-logged workload of the State Water Board staff, and further delay approval of our pending action(s).
- We have cooperated with State Water Board staff in the processing of our water right application but have been pending for almost ten years.
- The Policy does not provide a balance to the competing needs for water as it fails to weigh the many benefits derived from the agricultural, domestic and industrial uses of water.
- We are concerned that the severe and costly compliance measures imposed on our project will result in drastically reduced water yields and possibly loss of our productive farmland. There is no indication in the Policy that the fishery resources would actually benefit from our implementation of such measures.
- The State Water Board should concentrate on fixing the water right process. Applicants deserve clear and effective guidance as to how to obtain a water right permit. The Draft Policy should be rejected and replaced with one that balances economic interests and environmental protection.

Sincerely,

Greg & Karen Crouse

cc: Tam Doduc, Chair, SWRCB
SWRCB Members: Arthur Baggett, Jr., Charles Hoppin, Frances Spivy-Weber, Gary Wolff