

From: marian.cruz2903@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Marian Cruz](#)
To: [commentletters](#)
Subject: Support for a new wetlands protection policy
Date: Monday, September 18, 2017 9:46:23 AM



Dear Clerk to the Board Jeanine Townsend,

As someone who cares deeply about the protection of our state's wetlands and the habitat they provide for migratory birds, I am writing to support the California Water Resources Control Board's efforts to create a new wetlands protection policy.

This effort is particularly important following the announcement by the federal government of its intention to roll back the Waters of the United States rule. Given the historical losses of California's wetlands, it is vital that the Board move quickly to ensure these protections.

Our last-remaining wetlands are critical for the health of our waterways and wildlife. Wetlands improve water quality by filtering toxins, protect communities against flooding, and help to replenish groundwater supplies. They also provide essential habitat for millions of ducks, geese, songbirds and shorebirds that migrate along the Pacific Flyway each year, and support fish, snakes, and other animals.

I support the provisions of the draft plan that establish authority under the state's Porter-Cologne Act to protect isolated wetlands. I am also pleased to see the emphasis on avoiding and/or minimizing harm to wetlands over just requiring mitigation for impacts, which is often inadequate is poorly enforced. Finally, the provisions for standardizing procedures for permitting across jurisdictions will avoid a region-by-region approach that allows some Regional Boards to be less protective of wetlands than others. These rules create more certainty for landowners, farmers, industry, and the public.

Before the policy is adopted, it should be strengthened to ensure there is no net loss of wetlands due to further human activities and development. The policy should also close the loophole that allows development of agricultural lands that were created after dredging or filling native wetlands ("prior converted wetlands"). If left unchanged, this loophole would allow landowners to "convert" natural wetlands to cropland, then develop it for urban or industrial uses.

Thank you for taking this action to provide protection for California's valuable last-remaining wetlands.

Sincerely,
Ms. Marian Cruz
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
marian.cruz2903@gmail.com