



March 25, 2012
State Water Resources Control Board Members
c/o Jeanin Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1101 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Dear State Water Board Members,

Thank you for all of your hard work in making the decisions to manage California's precious water supply. I understand that you are in the process of updating the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan to meet the co-equal goals of ecosystem protection and ~~water quality~~. I am a citizen concerned about the future of salmon in California.

Of all of the indigenous peoples on our planet, California is one of the only places where there were sedentary societies living off of natural abundance. In fact, one of the reasons farming was not developed by indigenous people in our Mediterranean climate is because there was such a great natural abundance of salmon.

Today, salmon are the link that connects people, agriculture, economics, industry, and ecosystems. The natives figured out how to thrive in California by living off of the natural abundance provided by wild salmon. Today, we have all but wiped out that natural abundance.

My background is in agriculture. I understand all of the hard work that goes along with farming, as I have spent many long, hard days under the hot California sun. I also understand the feeling that a farmer gets when he or she provides food to people. To be brief, it is quite amazing to be the backbone of society as a food producer.

The decision that you are making will set a precedent for future actions along the San Joaquin River and all other rivers in California. To put it simply, you have to decide if you want to revitalize the salmon population, or let it dwindle towards non-existence. You are the overseer of our rivers, and it is your responsibility to make the right decision for them.

Think about the future of California not just for tomorrow, but for the many generations to come. Salmon are an amazing and delicious wild food source that has been here for millions of years. We can revitalize their populations if we act now, and revitalize the fishing industry at the same time. Salmon are an incredibly important part of our economy: they provide income for fishermen, the tourism industry, and the restaurants and markets that sell salmon.

It is up to you to make the decision about whether salmon runs will be restored or if they will be depleted. You must simply choose which the higher priority is: salmon or farmers. We all know that farmers have long been protected by water subsidies. It is time to incentivize the farmers to be more efficient with their water use and be more selective with the crops they grow. Put the fish first, and the farmers will follow.

Sincerely,

Grant Livingston
(707) 529-4762