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December 8, 2016

Felicia Marcus, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
PO Box 100
Sacramento CA 95812-0100

Subject: Comment Letter – 2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment & SED

For 65 years our company – Garton Tractor Inc – has proudly served the Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Merced County area. We’ve grown from a literally “ma and pop” store (my father and mother) to employing over 240 individuals. Our business has seen and survived times of drought, recessions, falling commodity prices, government regulations, drastic weather, and large decrease in farm producers; but none of these obstacles can compare with the devastation that will occur due to the proposal by the water board to divert water away from our communities. The consequences are far reaching - as agriculture touches many non-ag industries and small business – from furniture stores to trucking, from non-profit to school functions such as FFA and 4H.

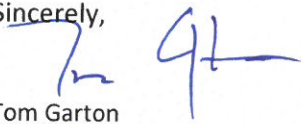
The effects of such proposal more than likely would be severely harmful to our business resulting in massive layoffs and financial uncertainty.

Local water control is best served by those who know our area and residence of our county. Turlock Irrigation District serves us well and by undermining their authority and expertise in the water business will cost us, the residence and business’s, of the greater Central Valley.

The answer to our water problem is not control but quantity. As a tax payer, businessman, employer and resident, I don’t understand why more storage is never discussed. The answer to the problem is the same – more storage!

Before your board votes to harm our agricultural economy and more specifically our business, our drinking water and community, please work with the local water districts (many of whom have peer-reviewed, most recent science) to look at non-flow measures that can accomplish realistic goals for the environment and the Bay-Delta before considering a flow-centric approach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Garton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Garton

Turlock, Ca 95380
209-632-3931