

From: Julia Burke
To: [commentletters](#)
Subject: Bay Visions letter re: 2016 Bay Delta Plan Amendment & SED
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Attachments: [State Water Resources Control Board rev.docx](#)



December 6, 2016

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk of the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814-0100

Comment Letter – 2016 Bay Delta Plan Amendment & SED

Dear State Water Resources Control Board Members

The lives of so many organisms start in the brackish water of our very special Bay-Delta, the West Coast's largest estuary. These in turn feed more than 500 species of wildlife, many of which, like salmon, are keystone species in an immense ecological food web. It is a major stopover for the Pacific Flyway and the conduit for salmon, steelhead and sturgeon moving from the Pacific Ocean to spawn in inland streams and rivers.

Our organization, Bay Visions, is made up of members of 6 garden clubs in the Bay Area who have banded together around our efforts to restore and protect the bay ecosystems. Our clubs all have projects at various places around the San Francisco Bay and Elkhorn Slough where we propagate and plant native plants in the transition zone above the wetlands. While working on these projects, we have come to appreciate the beauty and importance of the habitat as well as recognizing how much of the natural wetlands crucial to bay health have been lost to development. The time to restore the bay is now. We have seen how easy it is for nature to return and thrive when it is just given a chance. If we can just allow enough fresh water to flow into the bay to sustain the fish and other wildlife, the entire ecosystem will thrive. Fish will return in abundance and move back into the rivers to spawn. When they die, their bodies will provide fertilizer and nutrients for the plants and other animals hundreds of miles from the bay. Over 100 species depend on salmon. We need to restore the balance to this elegant natural system. The simple way is to just let the water flow. As gardeners, we recognize that agriculture needs water as well. However, it may not need as much as it is using. Certainly thirsty crops could be replaced by others that don't need as much water and may even produce more food per acre. We are all doing this in our gardens. Water efficient irrigation like drip systems are much more effective than overhead sprinklers. We are all replacing our lawns with drought tolerant plants. Surely agriculture, which uses the majority of the California's water, could embrace conservation at the same level that we do.

The recent passage of measure AA in the San Francisco Bay area shows the result of us all working together to collaborate on a solution to the pressing problem of bay restoration. The State Water Board in its 2010 report recommended that 60% of unimpaired river flow between February and June would fully protect fish and wildlife in the lower San Joaquin River and its three major tributaries. We urge you to do as much as you can to increase the flow during this crucial time.

Members of Bay Visions
Julia Burke, Piedmont Garden Club
Patty Dunlap, Piedmont Garden Club
Faith Brown, Marin Garden Club
Mary Hufty, Woodside-Atherton Garden Club
Peggie MacLeod, Woodside-Atherton Garden Club
Margie Murphy, Orinda Garden Club
Carol Wolfman, Orinda Garden Club
Jane Scribner, Hillsborough Garden Club
Fidela Schneider, Carmel-By-The-Sea Garden Club

Suan Uydess, Carmel-By-The-Sea Garden Club