

**From:** [Jeff Creech](#)  
**To:** [WQCP](#)  
**Subject:** Restore the flows in the San Joaquin  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 30, 2016 12:00:17 PM

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Dear Clerk to the Board State Water Resources Control Board,

As a supporter of American Rivers, Tuolumne River Trust, Merced River Conservation Committee and Golden West Women's Fly Fishers, I am writing today to urge you to increase flows and fishery protections in the San Joaquin River and its tributaries, including the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced rivers. As part of your obligations under state and federal law, we urge you to develop a Water Quality Control Plan that will protect water quality, restore floodplain habitat, double salmon populations and create a more sustainable water future for local farms and communities.

In particular, the Board should:

1. Order dam owners to release significantly more water to the river and its tributaries, particularly during the spring when vulnerable young salmon and steelhead migrate to the ocean.
2. Require federal, state, and local agencies to work together to restore floodplain and wetland habitats along the river for fish and wildlife.
3. Enforce state and federal laws to protect water quality and double salmon populations.

The San Joaquin is Central California's largest river, supporting endangered fish and wildlife, cities and towns and one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world. However, the river is so overtapped that it has run completely dry in stretches during recent years. Due to low flows, many reaches are too warm to support salmon and steelhead trout. Outdated levees have destroyed critical floodplain wetlands and exacerbated flood risk. Poor water management in the basin has led American Rivers to list the San Joaquin among America's Most Endangered Rivers® of 2016.

The Board must act soon to increase flows and restore habitat in the San Joaquin and its tributaries so that the watershed is healthy enough to support fish and wildlife, sustainable agriculture, and resilient communities for generations to come. This year's drought will not be California's last, and a healthier San Joaquin will enable the river and its many stakeholders to better weather the next one.

Your leadership is essential to ensure that critical measures are included in the Water Quality Control Plan that can help put the San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Rivers on the path to recovery. I urge you to join the citizens, businesses, ranchers, boaters, anglers, outfitters and thousands of others calling for the restoration of the San Joaquin and its tributaries to support robust salmon runs, sustainable agriculture and healthy communities.

Sincerely,

Jeff Creech

1701 Salem Rd  
C-15  
Burlington, NJ 08016