



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

September 19, 2016

Chairwoman Felicia Marcus  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairwoman Marcus:

State Water Board staff recently released a draft proposal to update minimum flow standards for the Lower San Joaquin River to the Delta. This is only one part of the information needed. To provide a complete picture of the needs in the Delta, I urge the Board to move quickly to complete the remainder of their analysis on the Sacramento River basin.

Delay may be too costly. The need to improve our aquatic ecosystems is urgent. Many communities are paralyzed and fearful of a lengthy and unpredictable regulatory process. Voluntary agreements in which water rights holders improve stream flows and restore habitat could offer a faster, less contentious, and more durable outcome.

I have directed my departments at the Natural Resources Agency to explore the potential for a comprehensive agreement on environmental flows in both the San Joaquin and Sacramento River basins. I have asked them to report back to me by the end of October with their assessment and a schedule that enables California to start improving water quality in the Delta and its tributaries beginning in 2017. I urge the Water Board to use its authorities to assure that the process can accommodate this acceleration. We ask that the Board and staff prioritize analysis and implementation of voluntary agreements.

Sincerely,

  
Edmund G. Brown

CC: Members, State Water Resources Control Board