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Lisa Sunday Vela

July 7, 2022

State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via Email

Dear Chair Esquivel and Board Members:

The San Joaquin County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (SJCHCC) stands in support of the May 24, 2022 Petition of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, Save California Salmon, Little Manila Rising, and Restore the Delta, as Stockton area organizations calling on the State Water Resources Control Board to open a rulemaking to timely review and update the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary ("Bay-Delta Plan").

As an organization representing over 350 members and the thousands of Latino-owned businesses in San Joaquin County, we know that improving water quality and flow conditions for the Delta is essential for improving environmental health and related public health challenges associated with pollution, mitigating climate change impacts, access to waterways, and restoring public trust resources.

Low flows and poor water quality have imperiled native fish species, created conditions that enable harmful algal blooms to thrive, and made waters hazardous for residents who rely on them for basic needs and wellness. Delta communities of color are particularly impacted by the reduction in flows and the degraded state of Bay-Delta waterways. These impacts perpetuate a legacy of dispossession and alienation of how California has managed its waterways throughout history.

The State Water Board has clear duties under the law to responsibly manage Bay-Delta waters. The Board must review the Bay-Delta Plan every three years in accordance with the Clean Water Act and the Porter-Cologne Act, and it must update the water quality standards in it to protect public trust resources, prevent unreasonable diversion and use of water, and safeguard the full range of beneficial uses of Bay-Delta waters. In doing so, the State Water Board must abide by the State's numerous commitments to center public participation in the review and decision-making process.

The State Water Board has failed to conduct a comprehensive review of Bay-Delta water quality standards for sixteen years and it has failed to increase instream flow requirements to anywhere near the levels that the Board has determined are necessary to protect public trust resources.

The Petition for Rulemaking is an opportunity for the State Water Board to fulfill its legal duties to responsibly manage Bay-Delta waters and reverse the pattern of putting water exporters before the needs of Delta communities and the health of our ecosystem. We respectfully urge the State Water Board to reconsider this matter for public hearing and to move forward with an open, participatory, and comprehensive review and update of the Bay-Delta Plan sought in the Petition.

Sincerely,



Lisa Vela, Chief Executive Officer
San Joaquin County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce