



February 20, 2023

Eileen Sobeck
Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Dear Ms. Sobeck:

On behalf of the more than 200 Southern California Water Coalition members, I would like to convey my support for Governor Newsom's Executive Order of Feb. 14 (N-3-23) to direct a series of water management actions, including a temporary suspension of a wet-year flow requirement stemming back to 1999 that did not anticipate the extreme weather patterns California is now experiencing. The State Water Resources Control Board adopted this requirement as part of Water Rights Decision 1641, which has maintained water quality conditions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta over the years. It has been supplemented with additional pumping restrictions via the state and federal Endangered Species Acts as well.

The Southern California Water Coalition was created in 1983, in response to drought, to coordinate the activities of cities, counties, special districts, the business community, labor and agriculture interests in the stewardship and protection of Southern California's water supplies. Our members come from Kern, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial and San Diego Counties representing nearly 29 million of our state's 40 million residents.

It is our understanding that before you is a request for a temporary urgency change petition to relieve one requirement of this 1999 regulation that pertains to providing additional flows in February and March. Twenty years ago, California could have high confidence that if the winter started off with a healthy snowpack, some storms would continue throughout the spring to result in an overall wet season. Today we can have no such confidence due to the weather extremes our state is experiencing.

We see this as a common sense, prudent action that will allow California to adapt in the face of the changed climate conditions. Having short intense periods of rain and longer drier and hotter periods is the new normal. It is incumbent on us all to support balanced beneficial uses and time the release of water supplies, including cold water for the environment and fish, to ensure we have the water that is needed for health and safety water for our urban communities, to sustain our economy and farms, and to protect our ecosystems and natural habitats.





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While we hope more major storms are still coming and that the Sierra watersheds and river systems will swell with runoff yet again, we cannot count on luck for something as important as a reliable water supply for our state. Temporarily suspending this one requirement, while maintaining all other environmental protections, is a prudent action to support a balance of beneficial uses. We continue to support wet-year flow at a later date to support the wildlife and environment in the Delta. This circumstance exemplifies how we must adapt to our changed weather circumstances that previous decisions simply did not envision. The climate has changed and so must our actions.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding our support for the Governor's Executive Order.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Wilson", is placed below the word "Sincerely,".

Charles Wilson
Executive Director

cc: Governor Gavin Newsom
Yana Garcia, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources
Joaquin Esquivel, Chair, State Water Resources Control Board
Karla Nemeth, Director, Department of Water Resources
Chuck Bonham, Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

