

Merced County Office of Education

Steve M. Tietjen, Ed.D., Superintendent



Equal Opportunity Employer

March 16, 2017

Public Comment
2016 Bay-Delta Plan Amendment & SED
Deadline: 3/17/17 12:00 noon

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



Dear Ms. Townsend:

This letter is to express our concerns with the State Water Board's proposal to increase unimpaired flows from the Merced, Tuolumne and Stanislaus rivers by 40%. This plan puts the 70,000 pre K-12 students in Merced County at grave risk and exacerbates the economic and educational challenges that our students already face.

On Monday, March 20th the Merced County Board of Education will adopt the enclosed Resolution No. 2017-08 Recognition of Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary whereas the proposed significant increases to river flows will eliminate the use of this stored water for irrigation purposes and therefore the recharging of groundwater basins as it has done for over 100 years of agricultural use in Merced County.

The Merced County Board of Education opposes the illegitimate taking of water from Merced County that is necessary for the health and welfare of its' citizens and wants it known that the current proposal for the increase of flows of the Merced, Tuolumne and Stanislaus rivers is unacceptable and will be fought through every legal means necessary.

Sincerely,

STEVE M. TIETJEN, Ed.D.
County Superintendent of Schools

SMT/yc

Enclosure

cc: Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Assemblyman Adam C. Gray
Mr. Thomas Howard, Executive Director, SWRCB
Ms. Felicia Marcus, Board Chairperson, SWRCB

Merced County Board of Education

Chris Chavez, Chairperson
Tom Bates, Vice Chairperson
Stan Mollart, Member
Fred Honoré, Member
Dennis Hanks, Member



Resolution No. 2017-08

**RECOGNITION OF
WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN
FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY/SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA ESTUARY**

- Whereas,** the Merced County Board of Education has been made aware that the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is considering amendments to the 2006 Water Quality Control Plan that call for significant increases to unimpaired flows from the Merced, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers, and
- Whereas,** the Merced County Board of Education along with the Merced County Superintendent of Schools are responsible for the oversight of the school systems within the County of Merced, and
- Whereas,** all School Districts rely on a healthy groundwater basin and many of the Districts in the County are responsible for maintaining these groundwater wells, and the health and safety of the children in the County rely on the water produced by these wells, and
- Whereas,** the proposed significant increases to river flows will eliminate the use of this stored water for irrigation purposes and therefore the recharging of groundwater basins as it has done for over 100 years of agricultural use in Merced County, and
- Whereas,** the lack of consideration by the SWRCB for the people, schools, farms and businesses in proposing a policy revision that impacts the ability of local communities to recharge these critical water basins, forces agricultural practices to rely more heavily on the pumping of ground water for sustaining crop production, thereby forcing communities to choose between maintaining a sound economic base or providing water for residents, and
- Whereas,** your policy change makes no provision for recognizing that local taxpayers built and maintained these water resources for the communities in which they exist, and
- Whereas,** substantial areas of developed California (Bay Area) benefit from a watershed that they wouldn't naturally have access to, but still receive water benefits from because of man-made infrastructure (Hetch-Hetchy Dam and Reservoir) are not being economically impacted by the water flow recommendations, thus putting a premium on the lives, the health, and lifestyles of bay area residents and harming those that live in the legitimate watershed areas of the Merced, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne Rivers,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Merced County Board of Education resolves to reject the illegitimate taking of water from our County that is necessary for the health and welfare of its' citizens and wants it known that the current proposal for the increase of flows of the Merced, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers is unacceptable and will be fought through every legal means necessary.

Passed and Adopted this 20th day of March year of 2017 by the following vote:

- AYES:
- NOES:
- ABSENT:
- ABSTAIN:

Steve M. Tietjen, Ed.D., Secretary to the Board
Merced County Superintendent of Schools