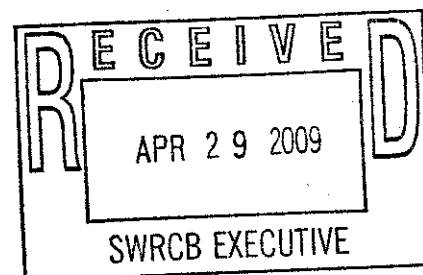


5/6/09 Board Workshop
SCWA - TUC Petition
Deadline: 4/30/09 by 12 noon

From: "robert sibley" <rwsibley@comcast.net>
To: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov
Date: Wed, Apr 29, 2009 9:05 AM
Subject: Proposed cut in Russian River flow

April 28, 2009



Dear Sirs:

I am a resident of Healdsburg, California and I've lived here for 16 years and visited often before I moved here. I would like to protest the proposed reduction in flow for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposed flow rate is so low that it will be bad for the environment, bad for the fish, bad for the riparian margin, bad for the quality of the water remaining in the river (same or greater emissions of bad things into the river plus less "pure" water mean greater concentration of pollutants).
- (2) The dramatically decreased flow rate in the Russian River means a little more water in the Eel River. But the Eel River valley is less farmed and less populated than the Russian River valley.
- (3) I suspect no one actually knows how low we can cut the flow before the wells that supply drinking water to hundreds of thousands of Californians run dry. Are you ready for such a possible outcome? There are a lot of staws in the glass. Here in Healdsburg we are lucky to have "first rights" as it were. The larger areas of Windsor and Santa Rosa are much more exposed.

I realize there is a crisis and the waterboard cannot unfortunately create water from thin air. The most constructive action I believe would at least involve:

- (1) A moratorium on building in Sonoma County (akin to the one in Marin) until water availability is assured.
- (2) A real and implemented plan to crack down on the illegal draining of the river by grape growers who just dip in and fire up a pump. I've spent many hours in a kayak on the river above and below Healdsburg and I have seen this frequently. A recent article in our local paper addressed an extensive fish kill that was probably initiated by grape growers fighting a frost warning by plundering the river water.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Sibley