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To: "AB2121Policy@waterboards.ca.gov" <AB2121Policy@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: Wed, Apr 23, 2008 1:22 PM
Subject: Comments on the Draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy

April 23, 2008
Chair & Members Tam Doduc
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Tam Doduc,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy. As all Californians know, the state's salmon and steelhead fisheries are in trouble. One of the biggest problems is clear: too many of our rivers and streams simply lack the water to support fish. I urge you to take decisive action with the Instream Flow Policy to conserve stream flows and to help put salmon and steelhead back on the road to recovery.

The final Policy must include a few basic things: scientifically-based criteria to limit diversions when stream flows drop below a certain level, measures to guard against the cumulative effects of multiple diversions, restrictions on new on-stream reservoirs, mandates for universal monitoring and reporting of both water diversions and stream flows, and provisions to periodically review the effectiveness of the Policy.

The Policy should take a broad, watershed-scale approach to the problem. It should provide incentives for landowners to go above and beyond the minimum required by the Policy, including measures to improve stream flows during the critical dry season. The State Water Board also needs to establish strong programs to ensure compliance with the law. Finally, the Board should conduct an honest assessment of the funding and staffing needed to implement the Policy and request adequate resources to get the job done.

With those steps, the Instream Flow Policy can be a crucial step forward for conservation in California. After more than 15 years of hard work by Trout Unlimited and others, it is time to finalize the Policy and get about the business of bringing back the fish.

When the clock is ticking thoughtful action is paramount. Mitigating the deteriorious effects of siphoning off the life blood of any species is serious business. Economics plays a role of course but many times we learn that we can find balance where we thought there could be none.

Please allow the scales of justice to favor the natural resource and allow the growers to be the spark for more creative solutions to water usage in the San Joaquin valley and cities to the south. Cities to the south could build desalination plants and 'we' would not lose a resource that can only be re-seeded and can not recuperate on its own.

The people of California deserve the continous enjoyment of wildlife as a part of the whole human experience. A natural environment that is undiminished by the needs of people in remote areas impinging upon our rights and priviledges. Their lack of foresight and unwillingness to 'carry their own load' will be the slippery slope that eventually will violate my rights. With population growth

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comes the necessity of a creative solution that steps towards autonomy on a regional basis. The true economic costs both long and short term while but a shadow at the moment will come into full bloom as we lose natural resources in the name of growth.

I vote for shifting the balance back to nature. Let's re-grow the fish populations before it is no longer a choice.

Sincerely

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