

**From:** "Jerry Lewis" <jerrylewisinsf@hotmail.com>  
**To:** AB2121Policy@waterboards.ca.gov  
**Date:** Wed, Apr 30, 2008 1:34 PM  
**Subject:** Comments on the Draft North Coast Instream Flow Policy

April 28, 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.

I've witnessed first hand some of the degradation of habitat that comes from low flows and high temperatures in formerly free flowing cold water streams. Algae, invasive fish species, declining numbers of trout and salmon, and other negative transformations are all in part caused by low flows and high temperatures.

Just how bad the effects are prove impossible to measure in a given year, but like smoking's effects on the health of older people today (cancer, emphysema, heart problems, leathery wrinkled skin, etc), the cumulative effects of years of mis-management result in horrible long-term problems. Is the absurdly low run of salmon California streams this past year due entirely to watershed and water flow mis-management? Probabaly not. Is there a link? Absolutely. No educated person believes that smoking isn't bad for you anymore.

Let's quit fooling ourselves and face the facts. Low water and high temperatures means death to trout, steelhead and salmon, and devastation to the industries that depend on them.

STATE WATER RESOURCES  
CONTROL BOARD  
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DIV. OF WATER RIGHTS  
SACRAMENTO

Sincerely

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