

WS

From: "Chris Shutes" <blancapaloma@msn.com>
To: <dirvin@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 4/9/05 11:17PM
Subject: Trout Unlimited Petition

1608 Francisco St.
Berkeley, CA 94703
April 9, 2005

Ms. Debbie Irvin, Clerk to the Board

State Water Board

dirvin@waterboards.ca.gov<mailto:dirvin@waterboards.ca.gov>

Dear Ms. Irvin:

I am writing in support of the petition by Trout Unlimited and the Audubon Society that was presented to the Board at the workshop held on March 17, 2005.

I am a member of Trout Unlimited, Cal Trout and Friends of Trinity River. I am a California native, age 53, and have fished most of the major streams covered by the petition. Over the past twenty years, I have been alarmed both by the increasing decline in the quality of the Central Coast steelhead fisheries (most egregiously, the Russian) and by the rapid increase in agricultural development along many of these streams (most notably, Russian and Navarro).

I will not review the background cited by petitioners, nor repeat the thrust of their descriptions of the situation. I will, however, affirm that I believe that the proposed resolution of the problems cited is practical and cost-effective.

I participated, with Mr. Bonham, in the FERC relicensing of the El Dorado Project (184). The collaborative setting of this process resulted in the resolution of controversies that many, agency members among them, thought could not be concluded outside of court. I am currently involved in the relicensing of the Upper American River Project (FERC 2101), and in spite of the contentious nature of many issues that have arisen there, am optimistic that a resolution will be achieved that satisfies the vast majority if not all stakeholders.

I would note that in Humboldt County, collaborative stakeholder venues established outside the FERC process have also been successful.

In an epoch when the default arena for the expression of California water issues has become litigation, a collaborative approach to cataloguing and evaluating water diversions on Central Coast rivers and streams is so sensible that it might actually succeed. Petitioners seek resolution, not retribution; agency coordination in place of mutual indifference; and involvement rather than intimidation by the water rights process.

This is a great opportunity to affirm and practice good government. I urge the Board to adopt the remedies suggested by the petitioners.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Shutes

CC: "chuck" <cbonham@tu.org>, <rrcollins@n-h-i.org>