

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 20, 2013

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Pritzker:

We are writing today to express our concern about projected water supplies for the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California next year. We urge you to take immediate action to mitigate the catastrophic effects on the people of California that environmental regulations in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta are having in our communities by denying them the water they contract and pay for.

In recent years, dry conditions in the State of California have been exacerbated by environmental restrictions placed on water supplies in the Delta, leaving California reservoirs in terrible shape for 2014. Cities and farmers in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys and Southern California continue to implement cutting edge water conservation practices, and through their resourcefulness have been able to compensate for some of the water losses caused by dry conditions and environmental regulation. However, another dry year in 2014, combined with continued burdensome, over-reaching environmental restrictions in the Delta, exercised without recognition of the severe consequences they cause, could be disastrous.

It is our understanding that the California Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation forecast extremely low initial water allocations for 2014, possibly as low as 0% of the Federal Central Valley Project (CVP) and 5% of the State Water Project (SWP), based on hydrology, reservoir storage and environmental restrictions in the Delta. Such an allocation will result in the continued depletion of local groundwater resources, fallowing of thousands of acres of productive farmland, rising food costs, skyrocketing agriculture and urban water rates, and the elimination of countless jobs in our state. Yet, this does not have to be the case.

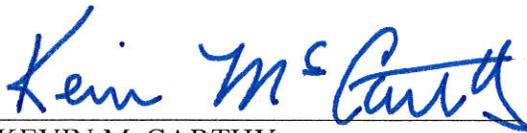
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) have the ability to improve California's water supplies in 2014 by taking actions already available to them. Many of the environmental restrictions that have exacerbated the effects of California's dry conditions were found by a federal court to be unlawful, but were temporarily left in place in a manner that provides flexibility in how they are implemented. We respectfully request your agencies take all available actions to increase water supplies for 2014, starting this Fall by relaxing restrictions on Old and Middle river reverse flow, modifying unwarranted restrictions on pumping in April and May, adjusting take limits in light of the available scientific evidence and holdings of the court, and increasing opportunities for late-year water transfers.

In addition, we request that FWS and NMFS be directed to prioritize development of a water operations plan for 2014 that maximizes water supplies to the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California that can be implemented by mid-December 2013. Working with California State agencies and local water districts that receive water through the Delta to develop an operations plan that maximizes deliveries for 2014 is crucial.

Furthermore, we believe it is a dereliction of duty toward our constituents that this Administration has not developed a plan to address water supply, reliability, and affordability beyond 2014. The Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), if it succeeds, will not be operational for at least a decade. The U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation (H.R. 1837) last year to immediately improve water supplies in California and in the future, while continuing to protect the environment in the Delta. Our California Senators and the Administration opposed H.R. 1837, but failed to offer any alternative. In the absence of support for the House-passed legislation, we want to know what the Administration's plan is to improve California's water supply by relieving the man-made, regulatory drought that has left millions of Californians high and dry while long-term solutions continue to be debated.

We look forward to your timely response and to working with you to increase water supplies in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, to ensure America's breadbasket is not jeopardized, and in Southern California, to protect its trillion-dollar economy, in time to avoid the consequences of a man-made disaster in our state.

Sincerely,



KEVIN MCCARTHY
Member of Congress



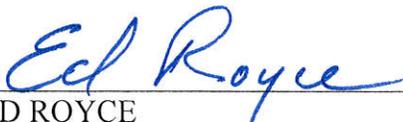
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