



CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

April 13, 2017

The Honorable John Laird
Secretary
California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, California 95814

Mr. William Croyle
Acting Director
California Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836, Room 1115-1
Sacramento, California 94236

Dear Secretary Laird and Mr. Croyle:

On January 18, 2017, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) issued a notice to State Water Project (SWP) contractors announcing only a 60 percent allocation for 2017. Then in March, DWR informed the SWP contractors their allocation would remain unchanged at 60 percent despite an extremely wet hydrology and expected high snowmelt and runoff during the spring and summer months.

Given the current hydrology, the level of water in our reservoirs, and the amount of water flowing through the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta), we believe a 60 percent allocation is unacceptably low. We urge DWR to look for every opportunity to increase the SWP allocation this year and to do so as soon as possible.

As you know, our state has suffered through catastrophic drought for the past several years and SWP final allocations have been as low as 5 percent, yet our constituents are still required to pay their full contract amount for water they do not receive. Continued low allocations, in spite of significantly improved hydrologic conditions and increased regulatory flexibility, unnecessarily compound the financial burden the State is imposing on communities and farmers in our districts.

Since December 2016, our state has received precipitation in the form of rain and snow that is 204% of average for this time of year. California's snowpack ranges from 139% to 170% of average as of March 2017. In fact, most of California's reservoirs are near capacity and some have filled to the point flood control releases are necessary. Likewise, inflows to the Delta are

very high from both the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River. For much of January and February, Delta pumping stations operated at or near capacity.

The Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation (WIIN) Act, approved by the United States Congress and signed into law by the President last December, introduced much needed regulatory flexibility to the restrictions that have limited pumping in the past, and current infrastructure failures at the SWP's Clifton Court Forebay are expected to be short-term. It is our understanding DWR expects pumping to return to normal once repairs are complete. With a very wet hydrology, new regulatory flexibility, and no interference from the issues at Clifton Court Forebay, the SWP allocation should be much higher.

While we understand that the situation at Oroville Dam creates uncertainty and we believe all steps must be taken to protect public safety, we are also aware that this infrastructure issue is only having minimal impact on the SWP allocation, whereas continued regulatory restrictions, such as Fall X2, are the primary reasons the allocation is so low. Accordingly, we respectfully request that DWR immediately provide our offices and the SWP contractors with a clear and concise description of the reasons DWR set the allocation at 60 percent and, absent a compelling reason, we believe the allocation should be increased immediately given the wet hydrology and regulatory flexibility in the WIIN Act. If the allocation cannot be increased given all the rain and snow in California over the past several months, we would like to know under what specific hydrologic conditions an allocation of 100% could be achieved given existing law and regulations.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



KEVIN McCARTHY
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives



JEAN FULLER
Republican Leader Emeritus
California State Senate



VINCE FONG
Member, California State Assembly



DAVID G. VALADAO
Member of Congress


DEVIN NUNES
Member of Congress


KEN CALVERT
Member of Congress



STEPHEN KNIGHT
Member of Congress


DARRELL E. ISSA
Member of Congress


DANA ROHRBACHER
Member of Congress


MIMI WALTERS
Member of Congress


PAUL COOK
Member of Congress



JIM COSTA
Member of Congress


ED ROYCE
Member of Congress


DUNCAN HUNTER M.C.
Member of Congress


PAT BATES
Republican Leader
California State Senate


JOEL ANDERSON
Senator, California State Senate


TED GAINES
Senator, California State Senate



MIKE MORRELL
Senator, California State Senate


JEFF STONE
Senator, California State Senate


ANDY VIDAK
Senator, California State Senate


SCOTT WILK
Senator, California State Senate


FRANK BIGELOW
Member, California State Assembly


STEVEN CHOI
Member, California State Assembly


ADAM GRAY
Member, California State Assembly


TOM LACKEY
Member, California State Assembly


DEVON MATHIS
Member, California State Assembly


JAY OBERNOLTE
Member, California State Assembly


JIM PATTERSON
Member, California State Assembly


MARC STEINORCH
Member, California State Assembly


MARIE WALDRON
Member, California State Assembly