



GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

September 1, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Salazar and Secretary Locke,

California's water crisis continues to grow. Three years of drought continue at serious cost to our farms, our people and our economy. As reservoirs remain low and water deliveries unreliable, those costs increase daily.

Water deliveries by the State Water Project and federal Central Valley Project to the two-thirds of California's population south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta are just 40 percent and 10 percent of normal, respectively. Sixty-four water agencies throughout the state have implemented mandatory rationing to respond to shortages and, on the agricultural front alone, we estimate that these reduced deliveries will result in a Central Valley farm revenue loss of as much as \$710 million and cost 35,000 jobs.

This cannot and must not go on. For the past four years, my administration has been working on solutions to California's water supply and the environmental crisis in the Delta. However, I am concerned that the catastrophic impacts of the current crisis on our economy and environment could take decades to reverse and significantly hamper any long-term solutions.

The recent biological opinions issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to protect threatened fish species in the Delta include overlapping and conflicting actions and restrictions that provide little or no fisheries benefit but do come at a high cost to the economy. The opinions cover both the state and federal water projects but were developed separately, by separate agencies. Ironically, these opinions work against each other, especially in wet years, which may lead to species conflict and devastating water shortages in following dry years.

It is clear that we are trapped in an outdated and rigid bureaucratic process that dictates fish protection actions one species at a time rather than evaluating the entire ecosystem and addressing its many stressors. State and federal water pumps clearly impact the Delta, but regulating as though they are the *only* influences ignores the complexity of the situation and creates new problems while failing to solve others.

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On May 7 of this year, my Director of Water Resources, Lester Snow, wrote to the USFWS requesting re-consultation on Delta smelt and the operations of the state and federal water projects. On August 10, Director Snow sent a similar letter to the NMFS asking for re-consultation on salmon and green sturgeon. These letters remain unanswered. If the federal government believes that re-consultation is the wrong path, then we need to know how to proceed, and we need to know now. We have entered an endless cycle of consultation that is guaranteed to reduce water supplies and water supply reliability, but is not guaranteed to recover or even reduce damage to endangered species. This cyclic regulatory process is not working for people, and it has not worked for fish.

The Delta's water supply is of state and national significance, and the so-called "reasonable and prudent alternatives" included in the two biological opinions impose significant water supply and economic impacts without demonstrating assured benefits for the environment.

Thirty-eight million Californians stand waiting for your formal response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold Schwarzenegger", written in a cursive style.

Arnold Schwarzenegger

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