



May 2, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: State Water Board Update to the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan & Impacts to the San Joaquin Valley

Dear Governor Newsom,

The State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) is currently proceeding through a public process to update the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan (Bay-Delta Plan). This process includes a number of alternatives to implement an updated Bay-Delta Plan, each of which will impact the San Joaquin Valley.

The San Joaquin Valley Collaborative Action Program (CAP) is a collective of over 80 leaders from agriculture, water agencies, safe drinking water advocates and technical assistance providers, environmental organizations, technical assistance organizations, academia, local government, and state and federal agencies, that are focused on building water and land resilience in the San Joaquin Valley. This watershed feeds California's and the nation's urban and rural populations. Virtually every census tract in the San Joaquin Valley meets the state's official definition of a disadvantaged community.

The CAP has agreed that water and land resilience in the San Joaquin Valley must drive towards advancing:

- **Safe Drinking Water.** All San Joaquin Valley (Valley) residents will have access in a timely manner to safe, reliable, and affordable drinking water - no matter the hydrologic conditions.
- **Sustainable Water Supplies.** Sustainable water supplies will be available to support a diverse economy, thriving ecosystems, the public health, safety, and social and cultural fabric of Valley residents, in addition to the production and sale and reliable food sources.

- Ecosystem Health. The Valley landscape will increase its habitat areas to support an array of species and healthy aquatic ecosystems, including floodplain, riparian, wetland, on-farm, and upland habitats.
- Sustainable Agriculture: California will continue to provide reliable, safe and secure food and fiber with industry-leading protections for workers, in-Valley communities, and the environment.

The ability to achieve these outcomes to improve the water and land resilience of the San Joaquin Valley for the benefit of agriculture, communities and ecosystems will be affected by the implementation of the updated Bay-Delta Plan.

The CAP acknowledges and appreciates the challenges the Water Board faces in determining how to balance beneficial uses of water in the Bay-Delta Watershed through the implementation of a Water Quality Control Plan and the associated impacts on various beneficial uses of water, including but not limited to municipal, industrial, agricultural, fish and wildlife, and proposed tribal beneficial uses. Importantly, both the Bay-Delta and the San Joaquin Valley are at inflection points – populations of native fish species in the Bay-Delta are in significant decline, and ecosystem health continues to deteriorate, while at the same time implementation of California’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, combined with climate change, is estimated to require the fallowing of over a million acres of prime farmland, negatively impacting the economy of the San Joaquin Valley, one of the most socioeconomically underdeveloped regions in the United States.

Implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan Update will reduce the availability of water supplies for existing beneficial uses in the San Joaquin Valley.

As a collaborative, we request that the State make every effort to fully analyze and address the impacts facing the San Joaquin Valley as a result of the implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan. The CAP is willing to meet with your staff to collaborate on ways to address these impacts.

Sincerely,



Ann Hayden
Environmental Defense Fund



Sarah Woolf
Water Wise

Co-Chairs
San Joaquin Valley Water Collaborative Action Program

CC: State Water Resources Control Board, Chair E. Joaquin Esquivel

State Water Resources Control Board, Vice Chair Dorene D'Adamo

State Water Resources Control Board, Member Sean Maguire

State Water Resources Control Board, Member Laurel Firestone

State Water Resources Control Board, Member Nichole Morgan

California Department of Water Resources, Director Karla Nemeth