

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

July 22, 2021

E. Joaquin Esquivel, Chair
State Water Resources Control Board
Via email: ScottShastaDrought@waterboards.ca.gov

Re: Scott/Shasta Drought Emergency Regulation

Dear Chair Esquivel,

We write to share our opposition to the draft Scott/Shasta Drought Emergency Regulation. This proposal would lead to severe curtailments of water use in pursuit of unrealistic flows when the valleys' water users are already burdened by the effects of a generational drought.

At bottom, it is not fair or feasible to raise the minimum flow standards for these rivers, using emergency regulations, during the driest year in a century. Based on a review of the Shasta River gage records, there is not one year in the past two decades when the river met the minimum flow of 50 cfs in May through September that the draft regulation demands. Over the same two decades, the Scott River has occasionally met its proposed standard – but only in very wet years. With the exceptionally dry conditions and vanished snowpack this year, the water simply doesn't exist.

Further, basing minimum flows on a single gage for each river is a crude tool for complex systems where listed fish have different needs through their lifecycles. We appreciate the work by the Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District to propose more finely tuned goals of flow and temperature for key reaches, and we suggest the Water Board work with these and other stakeholders to craft a more balanced approach. Landowners are more than willing to work with the state, but the threat of wholesale curtailments goes too far.

Thank you for your attention and your willingness to listen to the people of the Scott and Shasta valleys while crafting plans to protect California's fisheries.

Sincerely,



BRIAN DAHLE
Senator, 1st District



MEGAN DAHLE
Assemblywoman, 1st District