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Assembly California Legislature



ADAM C. GRAY
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CHAIR: GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC
MATERIALS

CHAIR: SELECT COMMITTEE ON RAIL

March 10, 2016

Estevan Lopez
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240-0001

Dear Commissioner Lopez:

President Obama often quotes Albert Einstein who famously said that insanity is “doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results” to describe why certain public policies should change. As Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, you have the opportunity stop the repetition of a failing policy and begin the effort to develop workable, sustainable, and effective programs to address endangered fisheries in California. Unfortunately, you have not yet exercised your authority to stop the failed policy that insists on allowing water to flow into the ocean during wet years, while prohibiting pumping for other beneficial uses.

Last July, over a dozen water districts and agencies, serving over two-thirds of California’s population, wrote to the State Water Board outlining how reliance on flow increases alone had not brought the expected and promised improvements to the Delta. They suggested that the State explore flow management and other techniques, including predation control, to achieve the goal of clean, sustainable water and fisheries. As has been demonstrated in several studies in other parts of the country, one of the best methods of restoring salmon runs is a reasonable predation program.

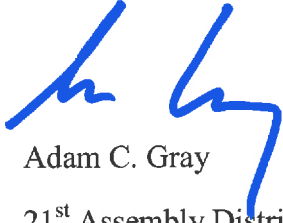
Your agency and the federal government should take the same approach and cease relying on flow increases alone, when there are other methods for promoting sustainability that should be investigated and instituted. One of the major reasons the public has lost so much trust in our government is that regulators are perceived to be following an agenda, rather than making decisions that are in the best interest of the public. You can take a step in addressing this distrust by hearing the recommendations of the people whose livelihoods rest on your decisions.

The quote is right; where is no basis upon which to expect different results, the policy should change. Prohibiting pumping while the water from the rains runs out to the ocean is repetition of a failing policy and benefits no one. It provides no environmental benefit and causes economic harm to those who could make beneficial use of the water. While the rain and snow that we have

recently received cannot alleviate the devastating impacts that years of drought have had on Valley communities, it can provide some relief.

I ask that you rescind your current action and allow pumping to be renewed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adam C. Gray', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Adam C. Gray

21st Assembly District

Cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Congressman Jim Costa
Congressman Jeff Denham