



"A Voice for Salmon"
365 Days a Year

May 23, 2022

California Assembly Members
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Fishing Community Support for AB 2639 (Quirk)

Dear Assembly Member:

I am writing on behalf of the Golden State Salmon Association to urge you to vote for AB 2639 (Quirk) on the Assembly floor. GSSA represents the California salmon fishing community, including commercial and recreational fishermen, party boats, restaurants, fishing equipment manufacturers and retailers, tribal members and more.

For years, our \$1.4 billion, 23,000 job industry has suffered from the decline of the naturally-produced salmon runs in the Bay-Delta and the Central Valley Rivers that feed it. Those runs are the backbone of commercial and recreational fishing in California and coastal Oregon. Because of excessive water diversions, all Central Valley runs are in steep decline, with some threatened by extinction. The State Board is the only agency with the authority to set flow standards to protect all Central Valley salmon runs. Yet has failed to do so for decades.

AB 2639 would do two simple things. First, it would create a legislative deadline for the State Water Resources Control Board to update and implement the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan. The flow requirements in the current Bay-Delta Plan were adopted in 1995 and are universally acknowledged as inadequate.

Second, AB 2639 would direct the State Water Board not to issue new water rights permits for new diversions from the overtapped Bay-Delta ecosystem and its rivers until the Bay-Delta Plan is updated.

Given the quarter century delay in updating Bay-Delta flow requirements and the dire condition of the ecosystem and its salmon runs, these are modest and overdue requirements.

Some water users have opposed AB 2638 because they prefer to negotiate voluntary agreements to address the pressing issues before the Board. This argument is unpersuasive. Water users have had more than a decade to develop voluntary agreements. Yet the current scheme for a Bay-Delta "voluntary agreement" is unenforceable, lacks support from key water agencies and is not supported by a single water agency, environmental, fishing, environmental justice or tribal organization from the Bay-Delta. Further, the State Board has expressed their willingness to consider voluntary agreements even after the Bay-Delta Plan's requirements are updated.

AB 2639 would require the State Board to do its job after decades of delay. This is essential to the largest estuary and river system in the state, as well as to the future of fishing jobs on the coast, in the Bay Area and along California rivers.

Thank you for considering our views.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John McManus".

John McManus
President