Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 24, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of our constituents and the residents of California, we write to request that you direct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to authorize increased water exports in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta immediately.

Through El Niño, Mother Nature has blessed our state with much-needed precipitation. Unfortunately, both FWS and NMFS have severely limited the ability of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to export water from the Delta to California's Central Valley and further south. Earlier this month, the amount of water flowing out of the Delta into the Pacific Ocean exceeded 114,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), while Delta water exports have remained at about -5,000 cfs at Old and Middle River. In fact, while Delta outflow has been substantially higher in 2016, Reclamation has exported roughly the same amount of water this year – during an El Nino year – that it did last year, one of the hottest and driest years on record.

Recently, Federal and California state water contractors proposed to Reclamation, FWS, and NMFS that Delta exports be modestly increased to -6,000 cfs at Old and Middle River, given the amount of water flowing through the Delta to the Pacific Ocean. It is our understanding that not only did the agencies reject this proposal, but that FWS will likely order Reclamation to *reduce* Delta exports to -3,500 cfs at Old and Middle River today, with the potential for future reductions. This is unacceptable.

You have traveled to our state. You have seen the devastating impacts the lack of water has caused to our communities, cities, farms and businesses. Your Presidential Memorandum, released just three days ago, acknowledged the effects of the drought and directed federal agencies to collaborate with local governments and non-governmental entities to help lessen the impacts from the drought and expand water resources.

While we need collaboration among different levels of government, we more urgently need specific leadership from our Chief Executive. That specific leadership is simple: a clear message to the relevant federal agencies to increase – not decrease – pumping over and above -5,000 cfs to take full advantage of these recent storms – perhaps the last of the season.

It will take years and tens of millions of acre-feet of water to replenish our groundwater resources and for Californians' lives to get back to normal. We cannot have

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Reclamation, FWS, and NMFS making our recovery all the more challenging. Accordingly, we implore you to direct these agencies to immediately increase Delta water exports, rather than reduce them. The fate of California and the lives and livelihoods of our constituents are at risk.

The time to act is now.

Sincerely,