

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 24, 2022

The Honorable Karla Nemeth
Director
California Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Director Nemeth,

We write to request your agency work with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to jointly resubmit a Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) for Water Year 2022 to the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to modify operational requirements over the next several months. Based on current reservoir storage conditions, this year's precipitation data, and forecasted weather conditions, we believe flexibility in the joint operations of the California water system will be necessary.

On December 1, 2021, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) submitted a TUCP for the February – April 2022 period, using data from early October 2021. Subsequent storms in late October and December 2021, according to the agencies, were sufficient to improve California's hydrology to a point where a TUCP was no longer deemed necessary. From October to December 2021, twenty-nine of the thirty-six river basins tracked by DWR had received 143% or more of their historical precipitation averages.¹ Although precipitation and snowpack remained low for the reservoirs at Shasta and Trinity, the agencies felt strongly that Oroville and Folsom would be able to accommodate higher flow releases to meet Delta outflow and salinity requirements for the February - April 2022 period. In recognition of this, the agencies withdrew their TUCP on January 18, 2022.²

Hydrologic conditions have worsened in January and February. Folsom Lake, which has been used for required Delta flows in recent weeks, has declined from 60% of total capacity and 146% of historical average on January 1, 2022 to 54% of total capacity and 110% of historical average on February 24, 2022.³ Despite the deluge of storms in October and December, precipitation levels measured by the Northern Sierra index are now below the historical average. Most pressing, the National Weather Service is currently forecasting that precipitation will remain below normal levels throughout the remainder of February.

In their TUCP withdrawal letter, Reclamation and DWR claimed, "If [dry] conditions occur, then modifications may be needed to protect upstream storage levels." Based on updated hydrologic conditions and weather forecasts, it is our belief that modifications to protect upstream storage levels and reduce flows to a level that still allows maximum south of Delta exports are needed. Lake Shasta is 580,000 acre feet short of its storage total on this date last year, and remains at 37% of total capacity and 52% of

¹ <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=PRECIPSUM.202112>

² https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/tucp/docs/2022/20220118_dwr-usbr-letter_tucp-withdrawal.pdf

³ <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/resapp/ResDetail?resid=FOL>

historical average.⁴ We believe it is both prudent and necessary to resubmit a TUCP to the State Water Board, and urge you to immediately do so.

Sincerely,


DOUG LaMALFA
Member of Congress


KEVIN McCARTHY
Member of Congress


KEN CALVERT
Member of Congress


TOM McCLINTOCK
Member of Congress


DAVID G. VALADAO
Member of Congress

⁴ <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=RES>