



June 11, 2025

President pro Tempore Mike McGuire
 California State Senate
 1021 O Street, Suite 8518
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Speaker Robert Rivas
 California State Assembly
 1021 O Street, Suite 8330
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Scott Wiener
 California State Senate
 1021 O Street, Suite 8630
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Jesse Gabriel
 California State Assembly
 1021 O Street, Suite 8230
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Benjamin Allen
 California State Senate
 1021 O Street, Suite 6610
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Steve Bennett
 California State Assembly
 1021 O Street, Suite 4710
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **FY 2025 – 2026 Budget – Oppose Proposed Reduction of Funding for the Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes**

Dear President pro Tempore McGuire, Speaker Rivas, Budget Chairs Weiner and Gabriel, and Subcommittee Chairs Allen and Bennett:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, I am writing to express our strong opposition to any reduction or reversion of previously committed funding for water resilience projects related to the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta).

Specifically, the Legislature is proposing to rescind critical funding that is currently available to support no-regrets habitat and water supply projects that are already providing drought resiliency for the environment, farms, and people. While these critical projects support early implementation of the Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Agreements), formerly referred to as the Voluntary Agreements, these types of projects are urgently needed regardless of what decision the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) may make regarding the updated Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan.

These Agreements, and these early implementation actions, represent a collaborative, modern, and holistic approach to improving the Bay-Delta ecosystem and water supply reliability. Through the Agreements, a group of public water agencies are proposing a comprehensive suite of actions that will improve habitat and flows in the Delta and its tributaries to help native fish and wildlife species. Collectively, our organizations represent hundreds of water systems throughout California that deliver the vast majority of water used for agricultural, commercial, and residential purposes. We have long supported the Agreements as a means to addressing some of the most critical issues in the Bay-Delta. These funds are critical to continue successful implementation of vital restoration projects throughout the Delta watershed.

In previous budget cycles, the Administration and Legislature committed funding through the budget process to support the types of projects proposed in the Agreements. In 2021, SB 170 (Chapter 240 Statutes of 2021) and SB 155 (Chapter 258, Statutes of 2021) appropriated funding for the purpose of improving environmental conditions to promote recovery of native fish species in the Sacramento-San Joaquin watershed. In addition, in 2022, AB 178 (Chapter 45, Statutes of 2022) provided \$100 million to the California Natural Resources Agency for these purposes. This funding had broad support from the water community, Legislature, and the Administration.

The Legislature's proposed funding cuts are two-fold with proposed cuts to existing unencumbered funding for the Agreements and rejecting the Governor's proposed reappropriation. The total funding cut will be reverting an unencumbered \$226.7 million and reappropriation of \$125 million for a total cut of \$351.7 million. This proposal would undo and delay the agreements that were made to fund projects that protect fish and wildlife, address environmental issues in the Bay-Delta, and preserve water supply reliability.

Our organizations recognize the state's current fiscal outlook and the budget reductions that must be made. However, the undersigned organizations strongly urge the Administration to reject the Legislature's proposal to cut funding for the Agreements.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact ACWA’s State Legislative Director, Julia Hall at JuliaH@acwa.com or 530-902-9746.

Sincerely,

Julia Bishop Hall
State Legislative Director
Association of California Water Agencies

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California State Budget – Funding for the Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes

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