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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0504

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER
CHAIRMAN

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

March 10, 2015

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

On July 1, 2014, several Members of Congress sent you a letter that pleaded with you to exercise your existing executive authority to convene the Endangered Species Committee (ESC). Once convened, the ESC would have had the authority to suspend or modify a litany of Endangered Species Act mandates placed upon water managers in California, thus providing those water managers with the necessary authority to prioritize California's water supply for human consumption and use.

While your administration's response, dated September 18, 2014, acknowledged the severity of the drought and the demanding nature of the mandates constraining the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the ESC was never convened, and the opportunity to save additional water for this year was lost.

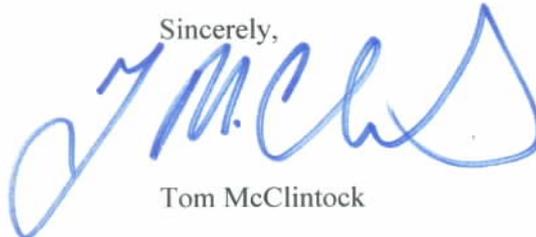
Since last year, the drought conditions have only grown more severe. The condition of the state's water supply is increasingly perilous, and many forecasts continue to predict drought conditions to continue.

The USBR recently announced 0% initial water allocations for north- and south-of-the-delta Federal water contractors and 40% initial water allocations for senior water rights holders. The state water contractors' allocation is not significantly larger, further reducing systemwide ability to absorb water releases mandated by the ESA.

We cannot allow water that should remain stored behind our dams for human use to be wasted. Nor can we allow released water that otherwise should and could be sent to drought-parched communities to be lost to the ocean again. Action must be taken to prevent another year of mandated releases for environmental flow. Absent such measures, it is increasingly likely that Californians across the state will face an even more dangerous water shortage this year that could do irreparable harm to our economy, state, and the environment.

Once again, I write to urge you to exercise your existing authority and convene the ESC now, before more valuable water is lost and before the summer heat begins.

Sincerely,



Tom McClintock